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'These whites never come to our game. What do they know about our soccer?' Soccer Fandom, Race, and the Rainbow Nation in South Africa

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PhD African Studies
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The thesis has been composed by myself from the results of my own work, except where otherwise acknowledged. It has not been submitted in any previous application for a degree.

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ABSTRACT

South African political elites framed the country's successful bid to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup in terms of nation-building, evoking imagery of South African unity. Yet, a pre-season tournament in 2008 featuring the two glamour soccer clubs of South Africa, Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates, and the global brand of Manchester United, revealed a racially fractured soccer fandom that contradicted these notions of national unity through soccer.

This thesis examines the racial divisions in Johannesburg soccer fandom, exploring the continuing wider importance of racial identities in post-apartheid South Africa. Sport is not merely a leisure activity but a space in which everyday identities are negotiated and contested. Specifically, soccer in South Africa has been a site in which racial divisions have been both entrenched and subverted, spanning the colonial era to the present day. However, in focusing on race, this thesis seeks to move beyond simple binaries that have characterised the debates on identity in South Africa; particularly race versus class. Race, through the perspective of creolisation, becomes unfixed and fluid. However, despite reinterpreting race, racial divisions still scar the post-apartheid city.

Extensive ethnographic fieldwork with the supporters' organisations of Kaizer Chiefs, Bidvest Wits and Manchester United football clubs in Johannesburg draws out narratives of fandom often marginalised in Africanist scholarship. Drawing on wide-ranging sources including participant observation, semi-structured interviews and local newspapers, themes of racial difference and otherness emerge. The divided Johannesburg soccer landscape reinforced feelings of disenfranchisement and marginalisation in everyday life from the predominantly white Manchester United supporters while the exclusively black Kaizer Chiefs constructed the domestic game as a black cultural space. While Bidvest Wits offers a symbolic case of multi-racial interaction, certain supporters began to challenge such fractures; some United supporters showed interest in attending domestic games while the Chiefs supporters viewed the researcher as a conduit to attracting these white supporters. Furthermore, the national euphoria generated during 2010 World Cup did temporarily alter perspectives of the city and how the supporters travelled through it, challenging perceived barriers. Yet, themes of exclusion and division remained, brought back to the fore after the tournament.

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ACRONYMS, NICKNAMES AND SOCCER TERMINOLOGY

ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
CAF	Confederation of African Football
DA	Democratic Alliance
FASA	Football Association of South Africa
FIFA	International Federation of Association Football
FPL	Federation Professional League
ICC	International Cricket Council
IFAB	International Football Association Board
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IRB	International Rugby Board
JBFA	Johannesburg Bantu Football Association
MCC	Marylebone Cricket Club
NFL	National Football League
NPSL	National Professional Soccer League
NSL	National Soccer League
PSL	Premier Soccer League
SAAFA	South Africa African Football Association
SACOS	South African Council on Sports
SAFA	South African Football Association
SAIFA	South African Indian Football Association
SARU	South African Rugby Union
SASF	South African Soccer Federation
SASL	South African Soccer League
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations

NICKNAMES

Bidvest Wits Football Club:	Wits; Clever Boys; The Students
Kaizer Chiefs:	Chiefs; <i>Amakhosi</i>
Manchester United:	United; Red Devils
South Africa:	Bafana Bafana (isiZulu for "Boys Boys," commonly shortened to Bafana)

TERMINOLOGY

<i>Makarapa</i>	A hard hat cut by hand and painted with the logos and colours of the wearer's soccer team.
<i>Vuouzela</i>	A plastic, one-metre long horn. A common sight at domestic and Bafana soccer games.

EXCHANGE RATE

The approximate exchange rate throughout the fieldwork was £1 = R12.

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SOUTH AFRICA

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: MANCHESTER UNITED AND THE WORLD CUP IN SOUTH AFRICA

Unity and division

From the bid process until after the tournament had ended, the 2010 FIFA World Cup had been marketed, both to its internal populace and globally, as a tournament that would bring the South African nation together. After the country's successful candidature was announced at FIFA headquarters in Switzerland in 2004, former president Nelson Mandela told South Africans that "*we are, after all, equal*".¹ Danny Jordaan, the CEO of the South African Organising Committee went further, claiming that "*The world cup will help unify our people. If there is one thing on this planet that has the power to bind people together it is football*".² Juxtaposed against a country that has struggled to identify what constitutes its national identity in the post-apartheid era, numerous questions emerged. On the eve of apartheid, the novelist Alan Paton encapsulated the apparent all-encompassing significance of race, writing, "*It is hard to be born a South African. One can be born an Afrikaner, or an English-speaking South African, or a coloured man, or a Zulu*".³ Mandela's claims of equality rang hollow in light of the challenges and inequalities of everyday life; the spectre of apartheid seemingly still haunting the country. White South Africans still generally had the better quality of life; better access to education, housing, sanitation and employment⁴ while those classified as black African were "*far more*

¹ FIFA.com, "Mandela: 'We Accept with Humility and without Arrogance'," <http://www.fifa.com/worldcup/archive/southafrica2010/news/newsid=92546/index.html>.

² Ibid.

³ Alan Paton, *Cry, the Beloved Country* (London: Vintage, 2002 (1948)), 150.

⁴ According to the 2001 census, 22.3% of Black Africans had not received any schooling as opposed to only 1.4% of whites. Similarly, the unemployment rate between the ages of 15-65 differed enormously from 28.1% of black Africans to 4.1% of whites (Statistics South Africa 2001b: 37 & 53).

likely to be working in elementary occupations".⁵ Furthermore, Jordaan's assertions assumed that sport was an inclusive process, yet sport in South Africa has often been divisive and exclusionary.⁶ This was to be the foundation block of the thesis, exploring the relationship between sport and national identity in the South African context. However, a combination of events early on my fieldwork revealed a more complex web of fluidic identities that were negotiated through everyday life, bringing social constructions of race to the fore; national identity was just a composite part. The key catalyst for this thesis was Manchester United's pre-season tour of South Africa in July 2008, competing in the Vodacom Challenge against the two glamour clubs of South Africa, Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates.

By this point, I had already been to a variety of South African domestic soccer fixtures and experienced a variety of reactions from the regular supporters to my presence at these games as a white Englishman in a seemingly black, male-dominated environment. I was often greeted with surprise and curiosity, which led to many requests to pose for photos with fans as evidence for them to prove that I had been there. In early July 2008, I travelled to Sasolburg, located in the Free State province, for a friendly pre-season tournament. After the first match, numerous Bloemfontein Celtic fans approached me, trying to persuade me to replace my Kaizer Chiefs shirt with one of their Celtic jerseys. Eventually, I managed to persuade them not to pull my shirt off but instead posed for photos with them. Throughout the day-long tournament, fans of all four teams regularly approached me to ask what I was doing there and attempted to get me to support their team, while recounting their personal life-stories. One fan admitted to me that he had taken money from the church collection plate so he could travel to follow his team.⁷

⁵ Statistics South Africa 2001 Key Facts, 10

⁶ Lloyd Hill, "Football as Code: The Social Diffusion of 'Soccer' in South Africa," *Soccer and Society* 11, no. 1 (2010).

⁷ Entry in research diary, 05/07/08.

Surveying the stadium, I was the only white spectator in a sea of thousands of football fans. On the pitch, there was only one white player from all four teams, a young midfielder named Michael Morton for Orlando Pirates. In contrast, there was only one black South African coach from the four teams.⁸ Attending further matches built a picture of the domestic game as the sphere of the black football fan, although there were the occasional exceptions. With these experiences lodged firmly in my mind, I approached the Manchester United tour with certain assumptions; namely that there would be few non-black football fans and my being there would raise eyebrows. As I entered the minibus taxi that would take myself and members of one of the Pretoria-based Kaizer Chiefs supporters' club branches on the daunting fifteen hour journey from Johannesburg to Cape Town to watch Pirates' great rivals take on United, I was met with the surprise that I had expected, even though they had known who they were picking up. Despite the fact that I was wearing a Kaizer Chiefs cap and carrying a Chiefs blanket, it transpired that the exclusively black group had assumed that I was going to be supporting United. Their reasoning was twofold; I was English and therefore would want to support the English-based team but also that because I was white, I had no interest in South African soccer. Their delight at having a white man supporting their team and making the great trek from one end of the country to the other was encapsulated when I was told, "*You must support Chiefs; Pirates already have two white fans!*"⁹ Yet, if they were surprised with my presence, I became surprised on entering the stadium in Cape Town. At first glance, there seemed to be more Manchester United supporters than Kaizer Chiefs, even though we were thousands of miles away from England. Furthermore, a large minority of these Manchester United fans appeared to be white, Indian or those formerly classified by the apartheid regime as coloured, in contrast to the largely black Chiefs supporters. Walking back to the minibus taxi after the game, the Chiefs fans I had travelled with complained about how they felt outnumbered by Manchester United fans in the stadium. Moreover, they bemoaned that the United

⁸ The coach was Steve Komphela of Free State Stars.

⁹ Entry in research diary, 19/07/08.

fans were mostly white and coloured, even going as far as accusing the white fans of being racist. I was told that *“these whites never come to our games”* and *“what do they know about our soccer?”*¹⁰

Subsequent Johannesburg newspaper reports and readers’ letter reaffirmed these ideas and were often framed in a racialised discourse. These ranged from more subtle critiques to direct accusations of racism. Editorials were generally worded more cautiously, arguing that it was the duty of all South Africans to support the South African team. One such editorial published in *The Sowetan*, a daily aimed at township readers, stated: *“In what looks like misdirected loyalty... fans in Red Devils colours outnumbered both Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates fans when these local sides played Manchester United”*.¹¹ Readers’ letters were more racially explicit. One such letter to Johannesburg’s *Star* newspaper argued: *“I think that white people still have this belief that just because Manchester United is from England, they should support them. There is still a mentality that whatever is done by Europeans is better”*.¹² This tournament revealed the paradox of using the World Cup as a nation-building force in South Africa. Hosting the global showpiece and the national soccer team as foci for national unity contradicted the fragmented and contested space of the domestic game, which the Chiefs supporters had claimed a ‘black ownership’ over.

Thesis synopsis

This thesis seeks to challenge these simplified racial dichotomies that have characterised the South African soccer landscape and sport in general. Purely in terms of the Vodacom Challenge tournament, subsequent reflection drew out alternative understandings of the stadium. From my vantage point in the stadium, a large minority of fans dressed in Manchester United shirts and colours were black;

¹⁰ Entry in research diary, 19/07/08.

¹¹ ‘Too Many Unanswered Questions Bedevil SA Soccer’. *Sowetan*, July 24, 2008.

¹² ‘One on One’. *The Star* (Shoot supplement), July 25, 2008.

simultaneously, a small minority of Chiefs fans were white, coloured and Indian. Although the match was reinforcing ideas of racial division and the salience of racial identities in post-apartheid South Africa, it was concurrently contesting these divisions and identities through the presence of these fans, their interactions with the people around them and the travelling through these spaces. Indeed, this thesis will question whether using race as a key marker to understanding identity in South Africa is helpful. However, attempts to develop alternative theoretical frameworks are met with the criticism that this ignores the continued significance of race and racial identities. What I will argue is that racial identities are regularly negotiated and interpreted in the everyday lives of people. This thesis draws together debates on race in post-apartheid South Africa along with the literature on sport, identity and popular culture. Until relatively recently, sport in Africa has been marginalised as an avenue for academic enquiry. Yet sport is not merely a reflection of society and everyday life where identities are displayed but is a space where identities are actively created and reified. Three small-scale case studies of Johannesburg soccer fandom throughout the 2008/9 soccer season are examined; the supporters' clubs of South African domestic clubs, Kaizer Chiefs and Bidvest Wits and the global brand of Manchester United. Utilising aspects of both ethnographic and autoethnographic methodologies including a combination of participant observation and semi-structured interviews, I look at why the supporters choose to support the teams they do and how they perceive the supporters in the other cases. From this, I draw out how they construct and experience everyday life in the city. Life in Johannesburg is characterised by a series of boundaries and barriers, which include race and class. Yet, studying soccer fandom reveals how these boundaries are also challenged and undermined. As a rare instance of sports ethnography in the African context, the unique data that this research has produced reveals the everyday ambiguities of race and racial identities in South Africa. Race is simultaneously ubiquitous and yet absent. Johannesburg remains scarred by the spatial legacies of apartheid and yet themes of division and difference in the city are also being rewritten.

Terminology of race

Although racial categories in South Africa are considered in greater depth elsewhere,¹³ it is essential to problematise the usage of racial terminology in this thesis. The racial categorisation implemented by the apartheid regime was designed to eradicate the ambiguities of racial classification¹⁴, yet it paradoxically reinforced them. These categories were constantly contested through the reclassification of people.¹⁵ Such haziness was made possible through the apartheid regime's understanding of race as more of a social construct than through the lens of scientific racism.

The 1950 Population Registration Act initially classified South Africans in three categories; white, coloured and native, although 'native' later became 'Bantu' and then 'black'.¹⁶ These categories were "*an artificial but powerful 'social reality'*";¹⁷ artificial in construction yet held a great salience in everyday life. Within such categories lay further sub-divisions, based on language, cultural and ethnic differences although such divisions were embellished by the apartheid state. There were three distinct sub-categories of whites; Afrikaans-speakers, English-speakers and Jews, although the latter ceased to be a distinct category after 1972.¹⁸ The ethnic identities of blacks were associated with a variety of different language groups (such as isiXhosa, isiZulu and Sesotho). The category of 'coloured' meant those of mixed race but also included sub-divisions. In 1959, there were seven sub-divisions of coloured people; Cape Coloured, Malay, Griqua, Chinese, Indian, Other Asiatic

¹³ For example, see Deborah Posel, "What's in a Name? Racial Categorisations under Apartheid and Their Afterlife," *Transformation* (2001).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 60.

¹⁵ A. J. Christopher, "Changing Patterns of Group-Area Proclamations in South Africa, 1950 - 1989," *Political Geography Quarterly* 10, no. 3 (1991): 16.

¹⁶ ———, "'to Define the Indefinable': Population Classification and the Census in South Africa," *Area* 34, no. 4 (2002): 402.

¹⁷ Gillian Finchilescu and Colin Tredoux, "The Changing Landscape of Intergroup Relations in South Africa," *Journal of Social Issues* 66, no. 2 (2010): 227.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*: 228.

and Other.¹⁹ Indians later became the fourth distinctive category. Racial identities were continually being rethought and redefined. Even something as 'trivial' as choosing to play soccer rather than rugby could result in being classified as native or black rather than Coloured.²⁰ The contradictions of apartheid were clearly visible in the gradual re-classification of the Chinese community of South Africa. Initially classed as Coloured under apartheid orthodoxy, they were allowed to live in residential areas reserved for whites on a case-by-case permit system but the permit system was rescinded in 1985. No longer Coloured but also not officially white, the Chinese of South Africa "*became increasingly 'in-between', operating in the gaps and grey spaces of apartheid*".²¹

Racial identities have been entrenched within everyday life in post-apartheid South Africa. Redressing an economic imbalance based on race was tackled with a race-based solution. The 1998 Employment Equity Act reclassified those who were black as 'African' and defined 'black' as those who were 'previously disadvantaged', or non-white.²² Fluidity of racial categorisation still remained however. The Chinese in South Africa were not initially classified as previously disadvantaged despite at one time being Coloured under apartheid. This was amended in 2008 when Chinese South Africans were officially recognised as black and therefore entitled to benefit from the government policy of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE). Nevertheless, such official terminology often does not translate to the everyday vernacular. However problematic, the categories constructed by the old regime are continually replicated by the media and reproduced in casual conversation. Such a focus on race can detract from alternative identities emerging in South Africa. For example, when referring to urban youth culture in Johannesburg, Sarah Nuttall argues that social class is emerging as an

¹⁹ Yvonne Erasmus and Yoon Jung Park, "Racial Classification, Redress and Citizenship: The Case of the Chinese South Africans," *Transformation*, no. 68 (2008): 100.

²⁰ Posel, "What's in a Name? Racial Categorisations under Apartheid and Their Afterlife," 68.

²¹ Erasmus and Park, "Racial Classification, Redress and Citizenship: The Case of the Chinese South Africans," 101.

²² Christopher, "'to Define the Indefinable': Population Classification and the Census in South Africa," 406.

alternative focus of identity, reinterpreting 'whiteness' and 'blackness' in terms of brand consumption.²³ Nonetheless, it is difficult to escape from race in everyday life in South Africa. The racial groupings of the apartheid regime have "*a historical reality that has shaped the subjectivities and world views of the South African Population*".²⁴

Constructing a workable usage of racial terms, I have employed the terms regularly used by the respondents; black, white, coloured and Indian, which cohere closely to those enshrined in the Population Registration Act. Acknowledging the social construction and ambiguous nature of racial categories in South Africa, this reflects the *lingua franca* of the respondents in the research.

Soccer or football? Supporter or fan?

As a football/ soccer fan brought up in England, I was taught that the term 'soccer' was a foreign term and not to use it. Yet, as Dunning notes, the etymology of 'soccer' can be traced back to late nineteenth century English university slang derived from association football to differentiate it from rugby football.²⁵ In the initial stages of fieldwork, I bristled in reaction when people referred to soccer and wanted to 'correct' them. On reflection, as both Hill²⁶ and Giulianotti and Robertson²⁷ note, 'football' refers to a variety of sporting codes in different cultural contexts, including rugby football, American football, Australian Rules football and Gaelic football; soccer is just one of these codes. In South Africa, two codes of football are predominant; soccer and rugby²⁸. As with much of the globe, rugby in

²³ Sarah Nuttall, "Stylizing the Self," in Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis, ed. Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe (London: Duke University Press, 2008), 110-1.

²⁴ Finchilescu and Tredoux, "The Changing Landscape of Intergroup Relations in South Africa," 228.

²⁵ Eric Dunning, "The History of Football (Soccer)," in Football (Soccer), ed. Björn Ekblom (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1994), 1.

²⁶ Hill, "Football as Code: The Social Diffusion of 'Soccer' in South Africa."

²⁷ Richard Giulianotti and Roland Robertson, "Recovering the Social: Globalization, Football and Transnationalism," *Global Networks* 7, no. 2 (2007).

²⁸ Specifically the code of rugby union, not rugby league. As such, references to 'rugby' in the thesis refer to rugby union.

South Africa is generally not referred to as football and its players 'footballers'. With regards to soccer in the country, both soccer and football can be used interchangeably. At the administrative level of the game, the governing body is known as the South African Football Association (SAFA) but the league organisation is called the Premier Soccer League (PSL). Such exchangeability could be seen in the sports pages of local newspapers and in the everyday usage of the respondents but soccer was the predominant term. Throughout this thesis, I use 'soccer' rather than 'football' unless directly quoted to reflect such regular usage.

'Supporter' and 'fan' are two more interchangeable terms that require definition. At first glance, both seem to refer the same idea but Giulianotti offers a taxonomy of soccer supporters in which supporter and fan are two categories of spectator identity. *Supporters* are spectators who are "culturally contracted to their clubs"²⁹ as the team is totemic of a deep-seated community identity. Supporters feel that they actively participate in the life of the club. While *fans* have a similar intensity in their relationship with their team, it is more of one-way, non-reciprocal bond. Through the commoditisation of the professional game, *fans* buy into their team. The consumption of replica shirts and other official merchandise are signifiers of such fandom, yet they often remain dislocated from the match day experience and community identity, consuming the team remotely via the television. Giulianotti identifies two other categories; the *follower* and the *flâneur*. The *follower* understands the passionate link between the club and the *supporter* but does not experience it. The choice of club is not an emotive decision but a cooler one based on factors such as favourite players, managers or even ideological perspectives. *Supporters* and *fans* can sometimes become *followers* of other clubs. The *flâneur* is a 'window-shopper', picking and choosing which team(s) to follow. He or she has a depersonalised relationship with the team, which itself can easily change dependent on success (or lack thereof) and the movement of favourite players. The relationship

²⁹Richard Giulianotti, "Supporters, Followers, Fans, and Flâneurs: A Taxonomy of Spectator Identities in Football," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 26, no. 1 (2002): 33.

is conducted purely through the media, while the socio-cultural significance of the club does not factor. Therefore, the *flâneur* is able to 'support' a combination of clubs that the *supporter* and *fan* would never contemplate; for instance Sheffield Wednesday and Sheffield United; Manchester United and Liverpool; Real Madrid and Barcelona.

While providing a basis for a workable terminology, this became problematic as the research progressed. Although focusing on soccer supporters' clubs, the members would define themselves as 'supporters' and 'fans' interchangeably. Some interviewees made the definition between themselves as "*real fans*" and non-members as "*part-timers*", although they believed that they were supporters. Members would periodically display characteristics of multiple categories, thus becoming supporter-fans or fan-supporters. This thesis will refer to the members as supporters due to their status as members of a soccer supporter's organisation but acknowledges that such categorisation is problematic. 'Fans' will be used to describe those soccer fans/ followers/ flâneurs who are not members of the case studies.

Approaching the research

South Africa's successful World Cup bid raised questions that I had from my own personal experiences as a soccer supporter and fan. Sport used to be just another leisure activity, whether participating or as a spectator. Occasionally I would delve into the world of competitive sport, playing rugby for my local club and university at different points in time but it did not occur to me to consider sport as an avenue of academic enquiry. It was standing on the terraces, watching my local non-league team Tiverton Town³⁰ play some years ago when I began to analyse why I supported them. It was hardly the admittedly mediocre standard of play that was

³⁰ Tiverton Town play in the Southern League Division One, the eighth tier of English football.

going to be attractive. Instead, my access to the team was. I had been a Manchester United fan as a child in part because of my cousin's obsession with the side but also due to the club's many successes in the 1990s. Unfortunately (or fortunately), my family could never afford to take me to see them play at Old Trafford, nor afford to buy the official team shirt; I remember my disappointment when they gave me a 'fake', pirated version as a child. The rise of subscription television in the UK in the 1990s and its almost monopolistic hold over FA Premier League broadcasting rights meant that I was further distanced from a team that was already hundreds of miles away. Supporting Tiverton gave me what United could never; a feeling of active participation and belonging. Cheering on Tiverton Town with 500 others felt as if I was making a difference. I believed that the money I spent on replica shirts and programmes would make more of a difference. Supporting this team also reinforced a sense of my local and regional identity, both that of coming from Tiverton and the southwest of England. Looking around the ground, I surmised that there was a plethora of reasons why these supporters chose to support this team; some would be similar to mine but others different. The ground became a space where people from various strands of local life, who might not otherwise socially interact, were brought together. Such a dynamic was magnified when approximately 10,000 of the town's 17,500 inhabitants made the journey to Wembley for the 1999 FA Vase Final.³¹ The potential for such a plethora of narratives derived from the support of a single team fuelled my motivation to explore such identities, albeit in a different context.

Chapter synopsis

Chapter two establishes sport as an avenue for academic enquiry; not merely a trivial leisure activity but a space where multiple identities are regularly negotiated

³¹ <http://www.tivertontownfc.com/club/history/general/> ; Wembley is the English national soccer stadium in London. The FA Vase is a knockout competition for teams in the ninth tier of English soccer and lower.

and re-negotiated. Fans and supporters are not simply empty vessels with badges and logos affixed to them, nor are they mindless consumers of sport. Concomitantly, sport is not just a space where fans and supporters actively form their identities. Utilising a combination of understanding of popular culture and sociology of sport theorisation, sport does not simply reflect society and the identities of its populace, nor is it removed from the everyday life of these people but instead operates within the sphere of everyday life. Therefore, researching sport is not, and should not be, restricted to sport itself but instead opens up a wider avenue of enquiry into the everyday identities of fans and supporters beyond the ninety minutes of the soccer game. Secondly, the chapter identifies a marginalisation of sports-related research in the African context compared to the far wider range of research in the UK and Europe. Even though the South Africa's hosting of the soccer World Cup, also marketed as "*Africa's turn*", has proved to be the catalyst for an increase in attention on African sport, the predominant focus has been on politics and development; the fans and supporters have been conspicuously absent. This thesis redresses this imbalance. Finally, the history of sport in South Africa contains dynamics that have both challenged and reinforced racial divisions in the country.

The continued importance of race and racial identities in post-apartheid South Africa is the key focus of chapter three. In challenging fixed notions of race, the chapter charts the theoretical history of identity formation in South Africa, which can be loosely grouped in four categories. Liberal theorists in the 1960s understood race and racial groupings to be fixed and the dominant marker of identity in the country. The 1970s witnessed the emergence of a challenge to liberal orthodoxy from Marxist scholars, arguing that racial groupings were artificial and hid deeper, class-based cleavages. In response to and growing from this Marxist school was a loose movement labelled social history. Social historians argued that the macro theorisation of the Marxist approach concealed processes of identity formation at the individual and group level, instead positing a small-scale, case

study approach. Finally, in the post-apartheid age, race versus class debates are being superseded by attempts to move beyond this dichotomy. However, I argue that theorising beyond race in South Africa actually emphasises its continued importance in the country. The use of creolisation and ideas of taste in response to the race/ class dichotomy opens up new understandings of identity, yet race pervades. However, racial identities are not fixed; the ambiguity and fluidity of these identities mean that people reinterpret these identities, moving between them and creating new ones. With the research based in Johannesburg, the chapter discusses the continued racial and spatial legacy of apartheid on the city but also argues that simultaneously, these divisions are being constantly challenged by its inhabitants. In light of this chapter and the previous one, I question the nation-building sentiments and pronouncements made by sporting and political elites in the run-up to the World Cup.

In chapter four, I provide the historical context of the soccer clubs supported by the three case studies; Kaizer Chiefs, Bidvest Wits and Manchester United, specifically the England-based team's relationship with South Africa. This thesis answers Bea Vidacs' call for ethnographic research on sport in Africa³² to provide more than generalised viewpoints and to move beyond sport itself, grounding it in the world connected to it. Using the respective ethnographic methodologies of Giulianotti and Armstrong as a foundation for social science research on sport³³, I argue that autoethnography also provides a vital basis for this research. As a reflexive project, it has been crucial to understand the impact and positionality of myself as a researcher in the field, acknowledging the self within the work. Nevertheless, with such a methodology, it has been important not to become self-

³² Bea Vidacs, "Through the Prism of Sports: Why Should Africanists Study Sport?," *Afrika Spectrum* 41, no. 3 (2006).

³³ For example, see Gary Armstrong, "Like That Desmond Morris?," in *Interpreting the Field: Accounts of Ethnography*, ed. D. Hobbs and T. May (Oxford: OUP, 1993), Richard Giulianotti, "Participant Observation and Research into Football Hooliganism: Reflections on the Problems of Entree and Everyday Risks," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 12, no. 1 (1995).

absorbed. The latter section of the chapter approaches the methods of data collection utilised, the challenges faced in the field, and the solutions found.

As the first empirical chapter, chapter five provides ethnographic accounts of the Johannesburg soccer landscape. Similar to my first impressions of the 2008 Vodacom Challenge, I argue that not only is soccer fandom in the city still scarred by racial divisions and an apartheid spatial legacy, it reveals that this extends to everyday life in the city and how the supporters perceive it. Through examining the reasons for supporting their respective teams and for not supporting other, I contend that the supporters' clubs inhabit different areas of the city, which affects how the supporters experience their surrounds. For instance, the predominantly white Manchester United supporters often refused to attend domestic soccer matches, conceiving local stadia as a dangerous, crime-infested space, which in turn fed into wider themes of fear, crime and marginalisation in everyday life. The act of supporting a European-based team reinforced a sense of distance and dislocation from their city. Reinforcing the theme of divisions and barriers, the Chiefs supporters constructed my presence as a white Englishman at the domestic game as unusual and alien. Additionally, material factors frequently restricted the Chiefs supporters from following their chosen European (often English) side to the same extent as the United supporters did. Both groups, while inhabiting the same city, remain largely disconnected from each other. Yet, in emphasising the racial and class divisions in the Johannesburg soccer landscape, other processes are uncovered. Instances of Manchester United supporters travelling across 'borderlands' to experience the domestic game create moments in which the fringes of a seemingly divided soccer fandom are revealed as hazy and unfixed. Both Chiefs and United supporters also tapped into 'global flows' of identity, albeit unevenly. The multi-racial fan base of the third study, Bidvest Wits, provided an alternative of the city's soccer supporting landscape where these divisions became blurred.

In contrast, chapter six explores the breaks and shifts in the Johannesburg soccer landscape. Both creolisation and taste destabilises the boundaries of soccer fandom, allowing it to break from a race/ class binary understanding. Through aspects of an autoethnographic methodology discussed in chapter four, this chapter focuses on the destabilisation caused by my presence with both the Kaizer Chiefs and Manchester United supporters' clubs. Although wary to prevent the research focusing on myself as a researcher rather than the supporters, acknowledging the impact of my presence opened up new themes. With the Kaizer Chiefs and Manchester United supporters knowing that I was researching the other, I began to act as a conduit between two previously disconnected groups. Some United supporters became curious as to my experiences in the domestic game and began asking me if they could attend a game with me. Meanwhile, Chiefs supporters openly requested on several occasions for me to bring along more 'whiteys'. The second half of the chapter concerns the events surrounding the Soweto Derby match between Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs in May 2009, when a small number of supporters from the Manchester United case study attended the game with the Chiefs supporters. This was a key episode in the fieldwork in which the mental and physical divisions of Johannesburg soccer fandom were being challenged. Yet the limitations of creolisation and taste also became clear. The changing nature of taste meant that these moments such as the Soweto Derby were temporary. Engaging with supporters beyond the boundaries of Johannesburg soccer fandom did not necessarily mean that new identities were being made as creolisation would suggest. Instead, events such as the derby reinforced racial and class divisions between and within the supporters

In the final empirical chapter, chapter seven explores how the dynamics of Johannesburg soccer fandom fed back into the discourse of the 2010 World Cup and the South African national football team as a focus for the 'rainbow nation'. For the Manchester United supporters, not following domestic soccer restricted their ability to be enthusiastic about Bafana Bafana as they knew few players in the team.

Furthermore, it was often argued that the lack of white players in the squad made the side unrepresentative of them; such a discourse again fed into a perceived marginalisation in everyday life. Yet, it would be erroneous to construct a simple dichotomy between the disinterest in Bafana from the United supporters in contrast to the pro-Bafana Kaizer Chiefs supporters. While they unanimously claimed to support Bafana, they were disillusioned with the mediocre performances of the side, with many unable to afford to travel to Bafana games outside of Johannesburg. The second half of the chapter examines the impact of the World Cup on the city's soccer landscape. At first glance, the tournament offered a new space that appeared to be encouraging the travelling through the barriers and divides of both the city's soccer fandom and the wider city as a whole. En masse, the domestic soccer stadia were attracting white, middle class soccer fans that were previously unwilling to travel to these areas. Soccer fans and supporters were connecting with each other and engaging with the city in new ways. Yet beneath this lay continuing exclusionary processes, reinforcing divisions. Post-World Cup, the optimism quickly dissipated, once more revealing the disconnection and divisions of not only soccer support but of life in the city.

CHAPTER TWO

SPORT, FANDOM AND POPULAR CULTURE: THE IMPORTANCE OF SPORT IN SOUTH AFRICA

When Irvin Khoza made the claim that the World Cup “*will not be hosted by the SAOC [South African Organising Committee] or the South African Football Association but by all of the 44 million South Africans*”,¹ he perceived an imagined community of people, of whom many would never meet, bound together by a sense of ‘South Africanness’ with the World Cup as a focal point. Tacit within this was the transcendence of other competing and conflicting identities, including race, class and ethnicity. The problem with this was, as Cornelissen and Swart point out, sports mega-events such as the World Cup “*are generally initiated and driven by cadres of societal elites*”.² Essentially, the South African populace was being told from above that the World Cup would make them feel South African. Such a construction appeared contrary to the events surrounding Manchester United’s pre-season tour of South Africa in 2008. The reaction of the Chiefs supporters to my presence in the minibus taxi, their construction of the domestic game as a ‘black’ cultural space, and the subsequent criticisms of the South African Manchester United supporters in the press (see Introduction) challenged the concept of South African soccer as a focal point for national unity. However, this conflict also raised the salience of fans in social science research on sport. These fans were not simply empty vessels connected by a sense of being South African but were challenging it.

This chapter argues that examining sport through a popular culture lens views sport not as a trivial leisure activity but as a site of cultural production in

¹ Fifa, “President Mbeki: In 2010, we will win in Africa with Africa”

² Scarlett Cornelissen and Kamilla Swart, “The 2010 Football World Cup as a Political Construct: The Challenge of Making Good on an African Promise,” *Sociological Review* (2006): 108.

which sports fans negotiate and re-negotiate multiple identities. Identifying the utilisation of Gramscian ideas of hegemony within late twentieth and twenty-first century popular culture theorisation, sport is not a simple case of an imposed mass culture that the masses mindlessly consume nor is it purely a space in which subaltern groups can assert their identities but rather, as Bennett contends, "*an area of negotiation between the two*".³ While sport can foster the binary paradigm of 'us' versus 'them'⁴ through competition, it is not a case of structure versus agency but instead it is where structure and agency meet. Furthermore, sport as popular culture is not just a mirror that reflects on society but is an active site where the everyday identities of fans are continuously redefined; it is not "*merely as a response to questions and conditions; it asks questions and creates conditions*".⁵ Soccer is not merely a game but holds a multiplicity of meanings for fans and operates in the much wider sphere of everyday life. Such an approach is mirrored by calls within the sociology of sport. For instance, Dixon calls for the use of Giddens' structuration theory as a theoretical grounding to move beyond such dichotomies. With this understanding and examining issues of nationalism and globalisation in sport, the chapter contends that a structuralist approach to sport and identity becomes problematic. Soccer fans do not simply uncritically tap into an imagined community⁶ of fans but instead mediate wider identities with localised ones although, as Lechner argues, these imagined communities are not always static.⁷ Secondly, despite Dolby⁸ and Vidacs⁹ calls for further research in popular culture and sport in Africa respectively, I highlight the relative lack (until recently) of sports-related research on the African

³ Tony Bennett, "Introduction: Popular Culture and 'the Turn to Gramsci'," in *Popular Culture and Social Relations*, ed. Tony Bennett, Colin Mercer, and Janet Woollacott (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986), xiii.

⁴Vivi Theodoropoulou, "The Anti-Fan within the Fan: Awe and Envy in Sport Fandom," in *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*, ed. Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington (London: New York University Press, 2007), 316.

⁵ Johannes Fabian, "Popular Culture in Africa: Findings and Conjectures," *Africa* 48, no. 4 (1978): 316.

⁶ See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

⁷ Frank J Lechner, "Imagined Communities in the Global Game: Soccer and the Development of Dutch National Identity," *Global Networks* 7, no. 2 (2007): 226.

⁸ Nadine Dolby, "Popular Culture and Public Space in Africa: The Possibilities of Cultural Citizenship," *African Studies Review* 49, no. 3 (2006).

⁹ Vidacs, "Through the Prism of Sports: Why Should Africanists Study Sport?."

continent when compared to the wealth of literature in the European, and especially British, context. Such an absence reinforces the wider discourse of a marginalised Africa in global sports, although as Darby emphasises in the context of soccer, Africa is not consistently marginalised.¹⁰ Although a sizeable portion of the literature available focuses on South Africa, soccer scholarship has tended to lag behind similar work on rugby union and cricket. However, this tends towards major tournaments and clubs or the political relations between major actors in African football such as FIFA and its president Sepp Blatter and the Confederation of African Football (CAF); fandom and the everyday experiences of fans are conspicuously absent. Responding to these calls, the second half of the chapter emphasises the significance of sport in the South African context (primarily soccer, rugby union and cricket). Divided into three chronological periods, colonial and segregation, apartheid, and post-apartheid, I argue that sport in South Africa has acted as a catalyst for the simultaneous reinforcement and challenge of racial and class divisions. Even at the height of apartheid, when sport was utilised by the regime to enforce 'separate development', soccer especially created a space in which racial classifications were contested.

The significance of sports fandom

Social science research on sport has often been prefixed by justifications of sport as a legitimate focus of social enquiry. Horne and Manzenreiter write, "*It is surprising that the sociological and social scientific study of sport... was still seen as something as a joke by mainstream sociology until recently*".¹¹ Indeed, as Vidacs argues, one of the key reasons that sport has been ignored by Africanists is that it is seen as "*trivial and frivolous*"¹² and therefore unworthy of academic scrutiny. Consequently, "*there are*

¹⁰ Paul Darby, *Africa, Football and Fifa: Politics, Colonialism and Resistance* (London: Frank Cass, 2002).

¹¹ John Horne and Wolfram Manzenreiter, "An Introduction to the Sociology of Sports Mega-Events," *The Sociological Review* 54, no. s2 (2006): 1.

¹² Vidacs, "Through the Prism of Sports: Why Should Africanists Study Sport?," 336.

very few works of any depth on the subject."¹³ It is the concept of sport as 'fun' that has hamstrung such enquiry. Boyle and Haynes contend that the field of leisure in the academy has been largely deemed unimportant as it has been seen "*as the antithesis of work*".¹⁴ However, as Black and van der Westhuizen argue, ignoring sport has become "*increasingly untenable*" due to the worldwide popularity of major sporting games and the constant pursuit of the benefits of hosting such events by state and economic elites.¹⁵ In the case of Africanist scholarship on sport, such an untenable position has been reflected in a rapid growth of research and literature on sport on the continent.¹⁶ Similarly, Bennett reasons that popular culture studies experiences a similar phenomenon compared with what he terms 'high culture' when he writes:

"It is not that the argument is wrong but that constant making of it merely confirms the existing hierarchy of the arts in accepting the claim that 'high culture' constitutes a pre-given standard to which popular culture must measure up or be found wanting".¹⁷

As with Bennett, I do not wish to fall into the trap of an apologetic discourse,¹⁸ yet it has provided a foundation for the research to build upon. Sugden and Tomlinson succinctly summarise the paradoxical nature of sport as simultaneously trivial and serious.¹⁹ At one level, the hyper-intensity generated by global 'mega-events'²⁰ such as the FIFA World Cup or the Olympics can evoke intense national fervour and patriotism causing "*otherwise sober people to suspend*

¹³ *Ibid.*: 333.

¹⁴ Raymond Boyle and Richard Haynes, *Power Play: Sport, the Media and Popular Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 2000), 4.

¹⁵ David Black and Janis Van Der Westhuizen, "The Allure of Global Games for 'Semi-Peripheral' Politics and Spaces: A Research Agenda," *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 7 (2004): 1211.

¹⁶ For example, special editions of *Soccer and Society* and *Politikon* in 2010 have been dedicated to the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

¹⁷ Bennett, "Introduction: Popular Culture and 'the Turn to Gramsci'," xviii.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, "Soccer Culture, National Identity and the World Cup," in *Hosts and Champions: Soccer Cultures, National Identities and the USA World Cup*, ed. John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson (Aldershot: Arena, 1994), 3.

²⁰ Maurice Roche, "Mega-Events and Modernity Revisited: Globalization and the Case of the Olympics," *The Sociological Review* 54, no. s2 (2006).

their critical faculties on a mass basis".²¹ Bairner writes, "[e]xcept in the time of war, seldom is the communion between members of the nation... as strongly felt as during major international [sporting] events".²² The tournament itself is arguably unparalleled in its global coverage and popularity. Comparing global television viewing figures, Reuters claims that the global audience for the 2006 World Cup was the equivalent of that of 64 Super Bowls.²³ Sport holds a critical importance in the lives of millions across the globe. To illustrate this, I encountered a village in Lesotho in 2009, which did not have regular electricity supply or running water but they had a generator to power their community satellite television so they could watch 'their' teams, such as Manchester United and Liverpool play on a regular basis. Sport matters to people. It pervades our everyday lives. Large sections of newspapers are dedicated to the discussion and analyses of various sporting codes. The explosion of dedicated sports television channels, radio stations and websites in the last twenty years provides a continual stream of information on our favourite teams and players. Unlike Billig's banal nationalism concept,²⁴ these media sources can explicitly 'flag' the nation or a number of other identities and affiliations on their pages. Yet, the regularity of sports coverage has meant that it has simultaneously become a banal part of our existence to the point that, as Rowe astutely notes, the pervasiveness of sport "*is really acknowledged when its supply is interrupted*".²⁵ Nevertheless, just because sport has become an important part of everyday life does not necessarily automatically translate to a worthwhile field of academic study, a standpoint that Gray, Sandvoss and Harrington ascribe to when conceptualising fandom. To say

²¹ Black and Westhuizen, "The Allure of Global Games for 'Semi-Peripheral' Politics and Spaces: A Research Agenda," 1195.

²² Alan Bairner, *Sport, Nationalism, and Globalization* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001), 17.

²³ Reuters, "World Cup Scores TV Equivalent of 64 Super Bowls".

²⁴ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995).

²⁵ David Rowe, *Sport, Culture and the Media: The Unruly Trinity* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2004), 2.

that "*fandom matters because it matters to those who are fans*"²⁶ is insufficient as a theoretical basis.

From the outset it needs to be clarified what I mean by 'sport', 'culture' and 'popular'. Sport is not a homogenous entity. Various codes of sport are imbued with different cultural, social and symbolic capital²⁷. For instance, soccer has often been considered as a working class game in many countries (although not in the USA) whereas a sport such as croquet is instilled with elitist connotations. When referring to sport, this thesis concentrates on soccer, rugby union and cricket as the three predominant sporting codes in South Africa, each of which is imbued with different levels of social and cultural capital, which will be explored in the second half of this chapter. Culture is taken to mean "*the shared meanings we make and encounter*" and "*the practices and processes of making meanings with and from the 'texts' we encounter in our everyday lives*".²⁸ The 'popular' in popular culture is problematic. As Fabian notes, the term has "*a journalistic currency [which] does not speak in its favour*".²⁹ It is not to be confused with mass culture, something which Strinati defines as culture "*produced by the industrial techniques of mass production, and marketed for profit to a mass public of consumers*".³⁰ Understanding sport, and especially sports fandom in these terms, leads to the assumption that these fans are just "*vast, anonymous and atomised audiences*";³¹ they mindlessly consume sport rather than actively engage with it. Barber draws attention to the binary paradigm of 'mass' versus 'elite' or 'high' culture in which the mass of cultural consumers are marginalised; their voices are left unheard. In the African context, she argues that another binary paradigm in

²⁶ Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington, "Introduction: Why Study Fans?," in *Fandom: Identities and Communities in a Mediated World*, ed. Jonathan Gray, Cornel Sandvoss, and C. Lee Harrington (London: New York University Press, 2007), 1.

²⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

²⁸ John Storey, *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture*, Second ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 2-3.

²⁹ Fabian, "Popular Culture in Africa: Findings and Conjectures," 315.

³⁰ Dominic Strinati, *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*, Second ed. (London: Routledge, 2005), 10.

³¹ Karin Barber, "Introduction," in *Readings in African Popular Culture*, ed. Karin Barber (London: James Currey, 1997), 4.

early studies on culture in Africa, a high versus traditional/ folk culture has meant that the *"cultural activities, procedures, and products of the majority of people in present day Africa"* have similarly remained tacit.³² In response to the anonymous crowds that mass culture postulates, there has been a response that has focused on the agency that popular culture has given to subaltern groups outside of traditional political power.³³ Coplan's study of black urban performance arts, such as music and dance, focuses on the agency that these cultural forms gave to those marginalised from the power structures of apartheid; *"urban black South Africans were eager, like people elsewhere, to have their voices heard"*.³⁴ Popular culture in this sense can become a site of resistance and protest outside of traditional power structures. Diouf argues that popular culture in Africa is an *"ideological and cultural reorganisation that flows from this position of defiance [that] takes place in the spaces deserted by political power and outside the community and their dominant cultures"*.³⁵ However, there is a danger of exceptionalising popular culture, focusing too heavily on the agency that popular culture can bring to marginalised groups outside of the structures of power. Storey reasons that *"shopping is not a passive ritual of subjugation to the power of consumerism"*³⁶ yet it would be difficult to argue that the shopper is actively utilising his or her agency devoid of any structural influences.

The movement in popular culture studies to utilising Gramscian thoughts of hegemony has moved popular culture discourse from a binary, and confrontational, paradigm to one in which both structure and agency are constantly negotiated. Gramsci argued that hegemony is not a simple matter of an elite exercising power over subordinate groups:

³² Ibid., 1-2.

³³ Iain Chambers, "Waiting on the End of the World?," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 205.

³⁴ David Coplan, *In Township Tonight!* (London: Longman, 1985), 2.

³⁵ Mamadou Diouf, "Engaging Postcolonial Cultures: African Youth and Public Space," *African Studies Review* 46, no. 2 (2003): 5.

³⁶ Storey, *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture*, 150.

“the dominant group is coordinated concretely with the general interests of the subordinate groups, and the life of the State is conceived of as a continuous process of formation and superseding of unstable equilibria between the interests of the fundamental group and those of the subordinate groups – equilibria in which the interests of the dominant group prevail, but only up to a certain point”.³⁷

Consequently, popular culture is not just a top-down imposed mass culture nor is it a site of “*cultural self-affirmation*” but instead “*a force field of relations shaped, precisely, by these contradictory pressures*”.³⁸ At this juncture, it is constructive to make clear both my usage and the wider appropriation of Gramsci in popular culture theory. Employing Gramscian concepts of hegemony does not mean utilising a Marxist framework. Hall argues that Gramsci does not offer an overarching framework, “*which can be applied to the analysis of social phenomena*”,³⁹ due to his theorising being scattered throughout his writing. Gramsci did not submit a grand theory of everything but instead realised that “*as soon as these concepts have to be applied to specific historical social formations... the theorist is required to move from the level of ‘mode of production’ to a lower, more concrete level of application*”.⁴⁰ Through this, Gramsci reasoned against the economic reductionism of Marxist orthodoxy. For him, such reductionism was “*a line of reasoning which is as simplistic as it is fallacious: the ones who profit directly are a certain fraction of the ruling class*”.⁴¹ The implication of this is that his non-reductionism does not fall into a polarised debate, be it structure versus agency, or race versus class. In arguing for the relevance of Gramsci in studying race and ethnicity, Hall writes:

“Though these two extremes appear to be the polar opposites of one another, in fact, they are inverse, mirror images of each other, in the sense that, both feel required to produce a single and exclusive determining principle of articulation”.⁴²

³⁷ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), 182.

³⁸ Bennett, "Introduction: Popular Culture and 'the Turn to Gramsci'," xiii.

³⁹ Stuart Hall, "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 411.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 414.

⁴¹ Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 166.

⁴² Hall, "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity," 436.

As such, the study of popular culture is not the question of whether agency or structure has primacy. Utilising Gramscian ideas of hegemony in popular culture theorising offers a crowbar to prise apart dualistic theorisation. Furthermore, this holds great significance for the next chapter, in which approaches to identity construction in South Africa has often been typified by the race/ class binary. Non-reductionism and the subsequent recognition of the non-homogeneity of groups open up a new understanding of a fluidic interplay and reinterpretation of identities. Popular culture still retains the marginalised voices of the subaltern but this is no longer just in the context of resistance, although popular culture can still be such a vehicle. As Hall writes, popular culture still voices "*local hopes and local aspirations*" but these are now viewed as "*the everyday practices and everyday experiences of ordinary folks*"⁴³ rather than exceptional experiences. According to Marx, "[m]an makes his own history, but he does not make it out of the whole cloth; he does not make it out of conditions chosen by himself".⁴⁴ Although man may make his own history, the wider picture of everyday life is difficult to grasp. In contemplating the inhabitants of New York from the vantage point at the top of the World Trade Centre, but equally applicable to sports fans, de Certeau conceives the inhabitants as 'walkers', "*whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban 'text' they write without being able to read it*".⁴⁵ Fans in a sports stadium have a myriad of reasons why they have chosen to be there and why they support the teams that they do yet they are not always aware of the choices that they make.

Approaching sport and fandom from a popular culture perspective can become problematic. Sport does not fit comfortably within the auspices of popular culture. It is noticeable by its absence in collections of popular culture studies;⁴⁶ the focus often is primarily on music, film and television. However, this is not to say

⁴³ Stuart Hall, "What Is This 'Black' in Black Popular Culture?," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1996), 469.

⁴⁴ Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (London: Arc Manor, 2008), 9.

⁴⁵ Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (London: University of California Press, 1984), 93.

⁴⁶ For example, Storey, *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture*.

that sport is divorced from the wider sphere of popular culture; Carlsson's work on sports novels and computer games is such an example.⁴⁷ In attempting to answer why this is, Schimmel, Harrington and Bielby draw attention to the perceived difference between sport and popular culture. Key is the "centrality of competition and uncertainty of outcome",⁴⁸ whether the team wins or loses. Determining who or what 'wins' between different music genres, soap operas or works of literature is constantly contested by different groups of fans whereas sport provides distinct results (win, lose or draw). As Rowe wryly notes, "*Milton versus Mills and Boon, or Verdi versus The Verve, etc – the outcome is rarely as self-evident as Brazil 3 Germany 0*".⁴⁹ Furthermore, the act of 'being there' can create the sense that sport is more 'real' as opposed to watching a film in a cinema or listening to music.⁵⁰ Sport becomes distinctive and is separated from art as the 'realism' of sport is constructed as the antithesis of the artistic. Hughson notes that the founder of the modern Olympic Games, Baron Pierre de Coubertin saw a 'natural' connection between art and sport but needed to be reconnected because they "*had been effectively separated within industrialized society*".⁵¹ The active participation in cheering on a team from the stands has the potential to influence the performance of players on the pitch/field/court and the final outcome. In contrast, the outcome of the film or the piece of music has already been written and no amount of fan support will be able to alter it.

This certainly suggests a division between popular culture studies and sport, with the latter viewed as a 'lowest of the low' culture. For example, with regards to soccer hooligan subcultures, Redhead argues that a relative lack of social scientific enquiry has created a space in which "*low culture' amateur journalistic accounts have*

⁴⁷ Bo Carlsson, "The Representation of Virtues in Sport Novels and Digital Sport," *Sport in Society* 13, no. 2 (2010).

⁴⁸ Kimberly S. Schimmel, C. Lee Harrington, and Denise D Bielby, "Keep Your Fans to Yourself: The Disjuncture between Sport Studies' and Pop Culture Studies' Perspectives on Fandom," *Sport in Society* 10, no. 4 (2007): 581.

⁴⁹ Rowe, *Sport, Culture and the Media: The Unruly Trinity*, 12.

⁵⁰ Schimmel, Harrington, and Bielby, "Keep Your Fans to Yourself: The Disjuncture between Sport Studies' and Pop Culture Studies' Perspectives on Fandom," 581.

⁵¹ John Hughson, "Re-Uniting Sport and Art: The Potential of Olympic Posters " *Physical Culture and Sport. Studies and Research* 50 (2010): 63.

proliferated".⁵² Yet, concentrating on the differences between sport and popular culture detracts from its similarities. With regards to the three ideals of the Olympic movement, Garcia asserts that "*rather than separate identities that must be 'blended', sport, culture and education should be seen as dimensions of the very same principle*".⁵³ Furthermore, Schimmel *et al.* question whether this means that "*sports fans [are] somehow different from fans of other popular cultural forms*", which in turn has ramifications for understanding sport as popular culture. They argue that although sport may have some noticeable differences from popular culture, sports fandom and pop culture fandom are far more comparable.⁵⁴ Similarly, Gantz and Wenner view sports fandom within the wider fan continuum, arguing that studies in both fields often concentrated on fans as deviant,⁵⁵ which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Complimenting the development of popular culture studies have been more recent calls for sports sociologists to move away from focusing on exceptional cases to conceptualising sport in everyday life,⁵⁶ examples of such cases will be considered later in this chapter. Similar to Hall in the field of popular culture, Dixon argues that fandom studies in sports sociology need to advance beyond the structure/ agency dichotomy, contending that "*it is in everyday life that football is primarily perpetuated, expressed and experienced*".⁵⁷ He proposes Giddens' Structuration Theory as a sociological model to understanding fandom. Giddens asserts that structure and agency should not be viewed as mutually exclusive. Instead, the "*notion of human*

⁵² Steve Redhead, "Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Hooligans: Low Sport Journalism and Hit-and-Tell Literature," *Soccer and Society* 11, no. 5 (2010): 627.

⁵³ Beatriz Garcia, "One Hundred Years of Cultural Programming within the Olympic Games (1912–2012): Origins, Evolution and Projections," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 14, no. 4 (2008): 366.

⁵⁴ Schimmel, Harrington, and Bielby, "Keep Your Fans to Yourself: The Disjuncture between Sport Studies' and Pop Culture Studies' Perspectives on Fandom," 581.

⁵⁵ Walter Gantz and L. A. Wenner, "Fanship and the Television Sports Viewing Experience," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 12, no. 1 (1995): 57-58.

⁵⁶ Kevin Dixon, "A 'Third Way' for Football Fandom Research: Anthony Giddens and Structuration Theory," *Soccer and Society* 12, no. 2 (2011), Chris Stone, "The Role of Football in Everyday Life," *Soccer and Society* 8, no. 2/3 (2007), John Williams, "Rethinking Sports Fandom: The Case of European Soccer," *Leisure Studies* 26, no. 2 (2007).

⁵⁷ Dixon, "A 'Third Way' for Football Fandom Research: Anthony Giddens and Structuration Theory," 280.

'action' presupposes that of 'institution', and vice versa".⁵⁸ Structure and agency do not operate independently of each other but impact on each other.⁵⁹ He warns that a preoccupation with a structural analysis of life makes the erroneous assumption that actors become nothing more than "cultural dopes or mere 'bearers of a mode of production'".⁶⁰ However, there are problems with Dixon's suggestion of structuration as a theoretical framework for sports sociologists. For instance, Archer asserts that Giddens does not transcend the structure/ agency dichotomy through structuration but instead "they are simply clamped together in a conceptual vice".⁶¹ She argues that Giddens' conflates structure and agency when, ontologically, she perceives the two as "distinct strata of reality"⁶² entwined in a continual interplay. Structure does not always impact on agency as action can be trivial and "irrelevant to the social system".⁶³ Nevertheless, both Archer and Giddens do agree that "'action' and 'structure' presuppose one another".⁶⁴ In both the popular culture and recent sports sociology approaches, it is in everyday life that the interplay between structure and agency unfurls and as such, where the multiple identities of sports fans and supporters are continually reinforced and renegotiated. Everyday life is not "merely the backdrop of mundane happenings that allows the more important aspects of life to take place".⁶⁵ While the everyday is often equated to ordinary, Bennett argues that it is this "inherent taken-for-grantedness of everyday life that renders it valuable as an object of social research".⁶⁶

⁵⁸ Anthony Giddens, *Profiles and Critiques in Social Theory* (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), 8.

⁵⁹ ———, *Central Problems in Social Theory* (London: Macmillan Press, 1979), 70.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁶¹ Margaret S. Archer, "Morphogenesis Versus Structuration: On Combining Structure and Action," *British Journal of Sociology* (2010): 231.

⁶² ———, *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.

⁶³ Archer, "Morphogenesis Versus Structuration: On Combining Structure and Action," 231, Anthony King, "The Odd Couple: Margaret Archer, Anthony Giddens and British Social Theory," *British Journal of Sociology* (2010): 254.

⁶⁴ Archer, "Morphogenesis Versus Structuration: On Combining Structure and Action," 226.

⁶⁵ Stone, "The Role of Football in Everyday Life," 170.

⁶⁶ Andy Bennett, *Culture and Everyday Life* (London: Sage, 2005), 1.

A key consequence of placing sports fandom within everyday life is that it becomes embedded within wider society, rather than apart from it. Foucault provides a useful framework when arguing that a book is more than just an object. It is impossible to identify and understand the meanings of the object by itself. Instead, it is from the interconnectivity of the object in a wider context in which the object derives its meaning:

“[The book] is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network.. The book is not simply the object that one holds in one’s hands; and it cannot remain within the little parallelepiped that contains it: its unity is variable and relative”.⁶⁷

Applying this to sports, soccer, as with any other sport, becomes more than just a game. It holds a multiplicity of meanings for fans and operates in the much wider sphere of everyday life. It is not simply society in microcosm but a space, as Dolby argues, for the negotiation of a variety of identities and has “*important implications for the public spaces and social fabric of a society*”.⁶⁸ Popular culture needs to be understood in the cultures and societies that it is rooted in rather than as an isolated process. Focussing on sports fandom, Gray *et al* argue that the current wave of fan studies is employing this understanding of fandom “*as part of the fabric of our everyday lives*”, which “*aims to capture fundamental insights into modern life*”.⁶⁹

Utilising this approach has important consequences as it understands South African soccer as more than just a game and its fans and supporters as more than merely receivers of a mass produced culture. Studying soccer supporters in Johannesburg becomes a lens through which we can gain such insights into everyday life in the post-apartheid city. Therefore, the events of Manchester United’s pre-season tour of South Africa in 2008 did not happen in a vacuum but

⁶⁷ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1989), 23.

⁶⁸ Dolby, "Popular Culture and Public Space in Africa: The Possibilities of Cultural Citizenship," 34.

⁶⁹ Gray, Sandvoss, and Harrington, "Introduction: Why Study Fans?," 9.

were influenced by and had influenced the social, cultural and political context that it was rooted in, which will be considered in chapter three.

An imagined community of supporters?

Returning to the nation-building and rallying calls surrounding the World Cup, claiming that the World Cup would be for all South Africans, conceptualising sport within everyday life opens up new questions. Sporting and political elites repeatedly assume that hosting sports mega-events will incubate national sentiment. As Kertzer argues, nations “*present themselves to people through symbolic representations of the collectivity*”.⁷⁰ In the case of international sports events, national flags are waved, replica shirts are worn and anthems sung. However, underneath such visibility, it is questionable whether these fans are interpreting these national sporting symbols in the same way. Fans and supporters are bombarded by messages in newspapers and other media, both implicit and explicit, “*to all get behind ‘our’ boys*”.⁷¹ Yet despite these discourses of unity and national togetherness, such messages and the mythologies that are generated are not universally accepted. For instance, with reference to England’s 1966 World Cup win and the subsequent myths that arose, Porter notes that despite the victory being portrayed as a ‘British achievement’, it was seen as “*insufferable English arrogance*” by Scots.⁷² Furthermore, while sitting in Newlands Stadium to watch Manchester United versus Kaizer Chiefs in 2008, it became problematic to understand the United fans simply as mass nodes within a global network of United fans. At a glance, it was apparent that they remained rooted in aspects of a South African identity. For instance, some blew *vuvuzelas*, a sight and sound alien to Old Trafford but common in South African soccer. Through placing sport within everyday life, this section argues that the

⁷⁰ David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics and Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 64.

⁷¹ John Vincent, Edward Kian, and Paul M. Pedersen, "Flying the Flag: Gender and National Identity in English Newspapers During the 2006 World Cup," *Soccer and Society* 12, no. 5 (2011): 616.

⁷² Dilwyn Porter, "Egg and Chips with the Connellys: Remembering 1966," *Sport in History* 29, no. 3 (2009): 534.

identities of sports fans are not imposed in a top-down structure. Instead, there is a myriad of identities in constant interplay.

In Hobsbawm's *Nations and Nationalism*, he devotes two brief pages to sport, indicative of the triviality he tacitly ascribes to the importance of sport in nationalism and nation-building. In these pages, he describes sport in early twentieth century Britain as "*an expression of national struggle... primary expressions of their imagined communities*".⁷³ This description deproblematizes what these imagined communities represent to the members of the nation. Elsewhere, he expresses late nineteenth century British soccer "*as a mass proletarian cult*"⁷⁴ that had a national reach, which "*would provide common ground for conversation between virtually any two male workers in England or Scotland*".⁷⁵ National sports teams play with national symbols emblazoned on their chests while national flags adorn the stadium. Appropriating from Durkheim, these symbols become totemic:

"The soldier who falls defending his flag certainly does not believe he has sacrificed himself to a piece of cloth. Such things happen because social thought, with its imperative authority, has a power that individual thought cannot possibly have".⁷⁶

Fans watching 'their' team play, be it at the stadium, in the pub or at home are connected through Anderson's concept of the 'imagined community'. Despite the unlikely chance of knowing every member of the nation or community, Anderson argues that "*in the minds of each lives the image of their communion*".⁷⁷ Sporting myths are produced and reproduced to reinforce the positive characteristics of the nation. For instance, Critcher notes that for the English, 1966 is

⁷³ Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, Second ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 143.

⁷⁴ ———, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 288.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 288-9.

⁷⁶ Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Karen E. Fields (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 229.

⁷⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 6.

often “recalled and reinterpreted as *The Golden Age of English Football*”,⁷⁸ forming the basis of English soccer culture. Certainly, sport can produce strong outpourings of national emotion within disparate groups and in the context of African soccer, the sport has provided intense moments of national togetherness. Armstrong places emphasis on the role of international football fixtures as “[t]he only occasions that produced a sense of national unity during the civil conflict” in Liberia during the 1990s, with combatants laying down their arms for the duration of the match.⁷⁹ In Nigeria, Boer similarly argues that due to the many ethnic and religious divisions, support of the national team “offers a rare foci for collective identity”.⁸⁰ In Zambia, Darby argues that when the national team died in the *Zambian Air Disaster* of 1993 in Gabon, “a sense of national loss became palpable”.⁸¹ As if it was a scripted national fairytale, the *Zambian team* won their first African Cup of Nations in Gabon in 2012 near the site of the disaster, dedicating their victory to the deceased.⁸² While soccer in these contexts has fostered a shared sense of national identity, its effects can intensify distrust, even hatred of the other. It is not simply nationalism *per se* but “*hypernationalism*”.⁸³ At this juncture, Mearsheimer provides a valuable distinction between nationalism and hypernationalism. Regarding nationalism, he writes:

“Although nationalists often believe that their nation is unique or special, this conclusion does not necessarily mean that they think they are superior to other peoples”.

⁷⁸ C Critcher, “England and the World Cup: World Cup Willies, English Football and the Myth of 1966,” in *Hosts and Champions: Soccer Cultures, National Identities and the USA World Cup*, ed. John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson (Aldershot: Arena, 1994), 83.

⁷⁹ Gary Armstrong, “Talking up the Game: Football and the Reconstruction of Liberia, West Africa,” *Identities* 9 (2002): 482.

⁸⁰ Wiebe Boer, “A Story of Heroes, of Epics: The Rise of Football in Nigeria,” in *Football in Africa: Conflict, Conciliation and Community*, ed. Richard Giulianotti and Gary Armstrong (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 50.

⁸¹ Paul Darby, “A Context of Vulnerability: The *Zambian Air Disaster*, 1993,” *Soccer and Society* 5, no. 2 (2004): 257.

⁸² BBC.co.uk, “Zambia Coach Dedicates Africa Cup of Nations Win to Crash Dead,” <http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/football/17008081>.

⁸³ Boer, “A Story of Heroes, of Epics: The Rise of Football in Nigeria,” 75.

However:

“This benevolent nationalism frequently turns into ugly hyper-nationalism – the belief that other nations or nation-states are both inferior and threatening and must therefore be dealt with harshly”.⁸⁴

With regards to the 2004 Indian cricket tour of Pakistan being styled as the ‘Friendship Series’, Majumdar argues that rather than fostering reconciliation between adversaries, cricket “has helped sustain local resentments, insecurities and inferiorities”.⁸⁵ Boykoff similarly argues that international sports are “proven conducive to ramping up flag-flailing hypernationalism that all too often rears its head as rampant xenophobia”.⁸⁶ Yet, whether nationalist or hypernationalist sentiment is being stirred through sport, it is often temporary.

Sport is not the only medium through which national symbols are displayed and reified. For instance, Burdsey notes that Englishness is associated “with public ceremonials”⁸⁷ such as Trooping the Colour and Remembrance Sunday, although these are British events. Yet, these public ceremonies used to reinforce and remember national myths, events and symbols do not necessarily capture the national imaginary. Both Burdsey and Fox respectively argue that such events do not attract the youth. For example, with regards to Romanian national commemoration events, Fox writes, “in an age when national celebrations generate tepid national interest at best, sporting events attract the exuberant and uncoerced support of multitudes of fans around the world”.⁸⁸ In essence, what distinguishes national sporting events from other nationalistic moments is “their effectiveness in inspiring synchronised

⁸⁴ John J. Mearsheimer, “Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War,” in *The Perils of Anarchy: Contemporary Realism and International Security*, ed. Michael E Brown, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, and Steven E Miller (London: MIT Press, 1995), 94.

⁸⁵ Boria Majumdar, “Prologue: Transcending National Boundaries,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 22, no. 4 (2005): 499.

⁸⁶ Jules Boykoff, “Space Matters: The 2010 Winter Olympics and Its Discontents,” *Human Geography* 4, no. 2 (2011): 49.

⁸⁷ Daniel Burdsey, “‘If I Ever Play Football, Dad, Can I Play for England or India?’ : British Asians, Sport and Diasporic National Identities,” *Sociology* 40, no. 11 (2006): 16.

⁸⁸ Jon E. Fox, “Consuming the Nation: Holidays, Sports, and the Production of Collective Belonging,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29, no. 2 (2006): 226.

emotional reactions".⁸⁹ Giulianotti identifies the support for national sporting teams as a carnival; it is not simply ritualised as with more formal national moments but can become excessive.⁹⁰ Fox similarly concurs when writing that the "*carnavalesque atmosphere combined exuberant celebration with a more menacing undertone of unleashed aggression*".⁹¹ It is this spontaneity of intense emotional outpouring that other national moments can struggle to generate. While national moments such as the UK's Remembrance Day are sombre, state-organised affairs, other moments also draw on the carnivalesque. For instance, of the Thanksgiving Parade in New York, Taylor writes "*not for New York the pomp and ceremony of a mercantilist Lord Mayor's Show as in London; rather in America's largest city it is a show that leads the civic celebration*".⁹² However, it is the drama and uncertainty that an international sporting fixture can bring that distinguishes it from other national moments. With specific reference to Argentina's 6-1 defeat to Czechoslovakia in the 1958 FIFA World Cup, Archetti argues that the unforeseen shock of losing to a team, which was not considered to be a world class side created a sense of "*moral crisis, as the crisis of 'our tradition'*".⁹³ The uncertainty of the outcome threatens to plunge the nation into crisis as much as it has the potential to galvanise its people.

After the match or tournament has ended, the underlying social problems of that country re-emerge. Illustrating this point, Darby highlights that after the initial national outpouring of grief, subsequent memorials have been characterised by low attendances due to overwhelming economic pressures forcing people to work to survive.⁹⁴ Armstrong encapsulates the superficiality of togetherness through sport when he asks:

⁸⁹ Ibid.: 229.

⁹⁰ Richard Giulianotti, "Football and the Politics of Carnival: An Ethnographic Study of Scottish Fans in Sweden," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 30, no. 2 (1995).

⁹¹ Fox, "Consuming the Nation: Holidays, Sports, and the Production of Collective Belonging," 227.

⁹² Peter J Taylor, "Places, Spaces and Macy's: Place-Space Tensions in the Political Geography of Modernities," *Progress in Human Geography* 23, no. 1 (1999): 8.

⁹³ Eduardo P. Archetti, *Masculinities: Football, Polo and the Tango in Argentina* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 170-71.

⁹⁴ Darby, "A Context of Vulnerability: The Zambian Air Disaster, 1993," 259.

“if there is no homogenous political identity that is capable of constituting ‘Liberia’ then what use is a game of football which would seem to be no more than an artificial creation allowing a 90-minute delusion... before a return to the reality of a de facto fission and fusion wrapped up at times in hatred and mistrust?”⁹⁵

What Armstrong’s argument illustrates is that the imagined community assumes a cultural homogeneity, whereas in these cases at least, cultural plurality is at best only temporarily negated for the duration of the match. Mewett criticises Anderson’s concept of the imagined community through what he sees as the “*de-problematisation of the popularisation of national sentiment*”.⁹⁶ From this perspective, the members of the community become anonymous units within this community yet, as Hobsbawm admits, “*we know too little about what went on, or what still goes on, in the minds of most relatively inarticulate men and women*”.⁹⁷ When the eleven soccer players or fifteen rugby players on the pitch decorated in national symbols are competing, it is not obvious what the nation means to these people and how they understand it. For example, with respect to nationalism and national identity, Cohen argues for a ‘personal nationalism’. In this perspective, he warns that “*we should be alert to the difference between the regime’s representations of the nation and individuals’ interpretations of those representations*”.⁹⁸ Reflecting on his ‘Scottishness’, he argues that he “*substantiate(s) the otherwise vacuous national label in terms of my own experience*”.⁹⁹ Complimenting this perspective, Anderson’s theorising on imagined communities argues that it is a necessity not to view individuals as simply connecting into an identity but to seek to “*explain the attachment that peoples feel for the inventions of their imaginations*”.¹⁰⁰ Mewett’s criticism of the concept of imagined communities further

⁹⁵ Gary Armstrong, "Life, Death and the Biscuit: Football and the Embodiment of Society in Liberia, West Africa," in *Football in Africa: Conflict, Conciliation and Community*, ed. Richard Giulianotti and Gary Armstrong (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 186.

⁹⁶ Peter G Mewett, "Fragments of a Composite Identity: Aspects of Australian Nationalism in a Sports Setting," *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 10, no. 3 (1999): 360.

⁹⁷ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 78.

⁹⁸ Anthony P Cohen, "Personal Nationalism: A Scottish View of Some Rites, Rights, and Wrongs," *American Ethnologist* 23, no. 4 (1996): 803-4.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*: 805.

¹⁰⁰ Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 141.

is challenged by Phillips, when he emphasises that such a concept does not marginalise the agency of the individual. In a similar vein to Cohen, Phillips argues that Anderson's concept of the imagined community operates not as a homogenous entity but as a "*combination of interacting layers... to which the individual feels a sense of attachment, (which) can be conceived of as a type of independent variable*".¹⁰¹ Subsequently, these 'variables' can "*come together in socially meaningful ways*",¹⁰² in imagined communities. Therefore, the power of national symbols in the sporting arena is contingent on the ability of the fan, supporter or spectator to personally identify with the nation beyond some abstract concept. Although I have focused on national identity, the polyvalence and multivocality is not restricted to the nation but equally applicable to other forms of self-identification.

In turn, as Vidacs argues, "[f]ootball's symbolic nature makes multiple interpretations possible"¹⁰³. For example, while some will identify with the national team, others perceive the team as representative of something they are not. For instance, the 2002 edition of the African Nations tournament, hosted by Mali, saw the Tuareg and other Arab minorities in Mali support other North African teams "*to mark their cultural difference from the wider Malian population*".¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, the composition of the national team itself may not be representative of the diversity of the population, favouring certain ethnic, religious or racial groups over another. For example, the Mauritian under-23 national team in a match against Egypt was booed by Muslim Mauritians as they claimed that there were no Muslims playing for their team.¹⁰⁵ It is imperative to remember that choosing not to support a national sports

¹⁰¹ Tim Phillips, "Imagined Communities and Self-Identities: An Exploratory Quantitative Analysis," *Sociology* 36 (2002): 602.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Bea Vidacs, "France in the Cameroonian Football Imagination," in *Football in Africa: Conflict, Conciliation and Community*, ed. Gary Armstrong and Richard Giulianotti (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 170.

¹⁰⁴ Richard Giulianotti and Gary Armstrong, "Drama, Fields and Metaphors: An Introduction to Football in Africa," in *Football in Africa: Conflict, Conciliation and Community*, ed. Richard Giulianotti and Gary Armstrong (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 16-7.

¹⁰⁵ Tim Edensor and Frederic Augustin, "Football, Ethnicity and Identity in Mauritius: Soccer in a Rainbow Nation," in *Fear and Loathing in World Football*, ed. Gary Armstrong and Richard Giulianotti (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 96.

team does not automatically equate to an active, conscious resistance. Reflecting on his own sporting allegiances, Bairner points out that he would happily choose Dunfermline Athletic over the Scottish national team but this “*does not make [him] any less Scottish and proud to be so. Rather it serves to illustrate just one aspect of a multidimensional structure of identity.*”¹⁰⁶

As mentioned earlier, different sporting codes are rooted in a variety of different social and historical contexts and therefore will inculcate different ideas of nationhood within different social groups. For instance, Bairner notes that soccer in the UK is rooted in a working class culture characterised by “*heavy drinking, sexism and profanity*”,¹⁰⁷ which is in contrast to cricket and rugby union rooted in a middle class, public school culture. However, it is interesting to note that soccer in England has undergone a partial class transformation to “*middle-class fare in a way it had not been before*”,¹⁰⁸ a consequence of increasingly prohibitive ticket prices and merchandise costs. In contrast, soccer in the USA is widely perceived as a middle class game.¹⁰⁹ Yet, Bairner’s point begins to reveal further complexities in understanding fandom, emphasising a specific masculine identity involving violence, aggression and alcohol. If fans and supporters are not merely a homogenous group consuming soccer, then it is vital to acknowledge differing gendered identities generated and reified through fandom. Women are often absent from the study of soccer. Constant and unfair comparisons are made between female and male sports teams and, when one refers to ‘sport’, it is tacitly understood that it is actually the male game that is in question; men’s soccer is just ‘soccer’ whereas the women’s version has to be specified as ‘women’s soccer’. This is indicative of what Willis sees in popular culture, “*which sees the very presence of*

¹⁰⁶ Bairner, *Sport, Nationalism, and Globalization*, 165.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁰⁸ Toby Miller, “Manchester, USA?,” in *Manchester United: A Thematic Study*, ed. David L Andrews (London: Routledge, 2004), 242.

¹⁰⁹ For example, see Susan J Carroll, “The Disempowerment of the Gender Gap: Soccer Moms and the 1996 Elections,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 32, no. 1 (1999).

women in sport as bizarre.”¹¹⁰ Pelak critiques much of the existing scholarship on South African sport, labelling it as “profoundly androcentric”¹¹¹. The study of women in sports scholarship needs to be advanced, to consider their significance in different sporting contexts. For instance, Manzenreiter argues that young women were the most important consumer group in Japanese soccer as they had “repeatedly shown their power to move entire leisure markets”.¹¹² Yet, in arguing for greater research on women in sport and sports fandom, it has been easy to frame it in a dichotomy; the silence of women and hyper-masculinity of male fans. For example, Leseth writes, “[f]ootball as a key to masculine culture seems to be a virtually world-wide phenomenon”¹¹³ and Pelak concurs when she labels football as “a site of rigid expressions of chauvinist masculinity”.¹¹⁴ However, the focus on male sport and male supporters does not necessarily equate to the study of masculine identities. With reference to Northern Irish soccer, Bairner argues it could be perceived that “that the study of virtually every facet of life in Northern Ireland... is necessarily a study of men”, but they are “studied not first and foremost as men” but as what they do.¹¹⁵ This reflects Morrell’s argument regarding the study of gendered identities in South African history, that “(T)he way men are, the way they behave and act, fills the pages of history books in an unreflective way, which suggests that all men are the same”.¹¹⁶ It is not enough to differentiate the masculine from the feminine but it is imperative to use a gender lens “to differentiate

¹¹⁰ Paul Willis, “Women in Sport in Ideology,” in *Sport, Culture and Ideology*, ed. Jennifer Hargreaves (London: Routledge, 1982), 121.

¹¹¹ Cynthia Fabrizio Pelak, “Negotiating Gender/ Race/ Class Constraints in the New South Africa: A Case Study of Women’s Soccer,” *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 40, no. 1 (2005): 54.

¹¹² Wolfram Manzenreiter, “Football in the Reconstruction of the Gender Order in Japan,” *Soccer and Society* 9, no. 2 (2008): 248.

¹¹³ Anne Leseth, “The Use of Juju in Football: Sport and Witchcraft in Tanzania,” in *Entering the Field: New Perspectives on World Football*, ed. Gary Armstrong and Richard Giulianotti (Oxford: Berg, 1997), 160.

¹¹⁴ Pelak, “Negotiating Gender/ Race/ Class Constraints in the New South Africa: A Case Study of Women’s Soccer,” 57.

¹¹⁵ Alan Bairner, “Soccer, Masculinity, and Violence in Northern Ireland: Between Hooliganism and Terrorism,” *Men and Masculinities* 1, no. 3 (1999): 285.

¹¹⁶ Robert Morrell, “Of Boys and Men: Masculinity and Gender in Southern African Studies,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, no. 4 (1998): 8.

the experiences of men within various contexts".¹¹⁷ Echoing the multivocality and polyvalence of Cohen's social identity argument, men have uneven and unequal access to power and as such have differing experiences of masculinity. As such, it is not masculinity but masculinities that need to be considered.

Scholarship on soccer masculinity has often focused on the chauvinistic, aggressive identity that Pelak refers to. Bairner argues that soccer spectatorship is not merely an "aggression-displacer" but instead "feeds hegemonic masculinity, which in turn can reflect and encourage violence by men at large".¹¹⁸ This masculinity is able to incorporate men for whom this machismo is not the norm; even the quiet fans can become aggressive. Yet, hegemonic masculinity is not fixed. As Connell notes, hegemonic masculinity from a Gramscian perspective is "in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable".¹¹⁹ Racial identities were a factor in shaping masculinities. Regarding the South African context, despite the physical separation between white and black men in the colonial era, Morrell argues that "they were related to one another in specific and hierarchic ways", specifically in a white men/African boys structure.¹²⁰ For example, Breckenridge highlights black mineworkers in South Africa during the inter-war years, where black workers were perceived as boys while the subordinate relationship was maintained through violence.¹²¹ Similarly, Shear contends that black policemen were also infantilised through wearing shorts as part of their uniform.¹²² Poverty and socioeconomic change also have consequences for hegemonic masculinity as it threatens the ability of men "to

¹¹⁷ Stephan F Miescher and Lisa A Lindsay, "Introduction: Men and Masculinities in Modern African History," in *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa*, ed. Lisa A Lindsay and Stephan F Miescher (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003), 2.

¹¹⁸ Bairner, "Soccer, Masculinity, and Violence in Northern Ireland: Between Hooliganism and Terrorism," 284-5.

¹¹⁹ Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities*, Second ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 76.

¹²⁰ Morrell, "Of Boys and Men: Masculinity and Gender in Southern African Studies," 616.

¹²¹ Keith Breckenridge, "The Allure of Violence: Men, Race and Masculinity on the South African Goldmines, 1900–1950," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, no. 4 (1998): 670, 76.

¹²² Keith Shear, "'Taken as Boys': The Politics of Black Police Employment and Experience in Early Twentieth-Century South Africa," in *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa*, ed. Lisa A Lindsay and Stephan F Miescher (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003), 119.

honour their expected role as heads of households and breadwinners".¹²³ There are other masculinities including gay and feminine masculinities that challenge hegemonic masculinity and may do so in the soccer environment. Furthermore, Connell argues that many men do not fully buy into hegemonic masculinity and male domination and move between different masculinities.¹²⁴ Therefore, when considering race, class and national identity in South African soccer supportership, it is imperative that the fluidity of masculinities and gendered identities do not remain tacit.

If we return to the Vodacom Challenge match between Manchester United v Kaizer Chiefs featured in the introduction, understanding the Manchester United fans at Newlands as simply tapping into an imagined global nexus of fans also needs to be considered. Harvey contends that globalising processes homogenise space; *"the more Europe becomes Disneyfied, the less unique and special it becomes"*.¹²⁵ This, in turn, challenges the cultural, historical and geographical roots of major sports teams. The success of major sports teams such as Barcelona and the New York Yankees attracts a global fan base, most of whom will never see their team in the flesh. Instead, these teams become symbols of success. Giulianotti and Robertson argue that *"[f]ootball's strongest 'brands' have longstanding associations with quality competitive success... and the promise of spectacle"*;¹²⁶ the rebranding of Manchester United's Old Trafford stadium as the 'Theatre of Dreams' being a prime example. The wearing of replica football shirts is a visible sign of belonging to a community of supporters, fostering an emotional, almost kinship bond that can be easily identified by other fans but Silk and Chumley emphasise that this production and reproduction of community *"takes place mostly within a global hyperspace, through*

¹²³ Margrethe Silberschmidt, "Poverty, Male Empowerment, and Male Sexuality: Rethinking Men and Masculinities in Rural and Urban East Africa," in *African Masculinities : Men in Africa from the Late Nineteenth Century to the Present* ed. Lahoucine Ouzgane and Robert Morrell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 200.

¹²⁴ Connell, *Masculinities*, 79.

¹²⁵ David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001), 396.

¹²⁶ Richard Giulianotti and Roland Robertson, "The Globalisation of Football: A Study in the Glocalization of the Serious Life," *British Journal of Sociology* 55, no. 4 (2004): 555.

communications technology".¹²⁷ The increased coverage of English Premiership in the South African media has been a key vehicle for the proliferation of the Manchester United brand. In the case of major European football teams, both free-to-air and satellite television channels in South Africa broadcast their games live. Newspapers regularly report on the major European leagues, sometimes dominating the sports pages. The increased complexity and sophistication of coverage on television allows the individual geographically removed from the club/ brand to actively follow and support the team, creating an attractive "*recipe for spectacularization*".¹²⁸

However, it is problematic to construct the fans of these teams as participants in a cosmopolitan global community. Immediately prior to the end of the Cold War, Hobsbawm argued for the death knell of nations and nationalism, foretelling of "*a world which can no longer be contained within the limits of 'nations' and 'nation-states'*".¹²⁹ In doing so, he evoked Hegel's 'Owl of Minerva' metaphor, which "*takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering*".¹³⁰ This may initially hold a certain resonance with the concept of a globalised soccer fandom; by wearing the shirt and supporting the team, the person connects to a global network of fandom no matter where in the world he or she is. Nonetheless, Lefebvre states, "*no single place has disappeared completely*"¹³¹ despite globalising processes. As such, Giulianotti and Robertson argue that "*All clubs are 'ethnocentric': they retain key symbolic ties to home*".¹³² By maintaining these ties, fans can perceive these teams to be representative not only of the home town but of the home nation, "*a safe indicator of*

¹²⁷ Michael Silk and Emma Chumley, "Memphis United?: Diaspora, S(t)imulated Spaces and Global Consumption," in *Manchester United: A Thematic Study*, ed. David L Andrews (London: Routledge, 2004), 250.

¹²⁸ Toby Miller et al., *Globalization and Sport: Playing the World* (London: Sage, 2001), 84.

¹²⁹ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 191.

¹³⁰ Georg W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. S.W. Dyde (New York: Cosimo, 2008), xxi.

¹³¹ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 412.

¹³² Giulianotti and Robertson, "The Globalisation of Football: A Study in the Glocalization of the Serious Life," 552.

*the 'quality' and 'competence' of the country and its inhabitants".*¹³³ For example, South African Manchester United fans may not be simply asserting their support for the team but signalling a connection, an affinity to England. For those South Africans with English ancestry, supporting an English team could be a way to signal their belonging, or desire to belong, to a former 'home'. Furthermore, the consumption of the global brand is not necessarily a basic, one-way process. Giulianotti and Robertson argue that "*globalization is marked culturally by processes of 'glocalization', whereby local cultures adapt and redefine any global product to suit their particular need*".¹³⁴ While participating in global networks, the participants reinterpret these global brands into a local context. Regarding English football supporters in Scandinavia, Reimer argues that the supporters are "*not so much delocalising the club as re-localising them.*"¹³⁵ Likewise, the Manchester United Supporters' Club of South Africa (MUSCSA) has taken the brand of Manchester United and attached a South African locale. Supporters' clubs such as this will meet together in locations that "*have become demarcated within the locale as 'legitimate' sites in which to consume Manchester United and England games*",¹³⁶ quite often pubs and bars. In these spaces, the supporters can come together as a community of not just Manchester United fans but South African Manchester United fans.

Wearing the replica shirt or waving the flag is loaded with multiple and conflicting meanings. Even if we can make the "*requisite imaginative leap*"¹³⁷ and accept that national sports teams represent the nation, it is imperative that such a

¹³³ João Nuno Coelho and Nina Clara Tiesler, "The Paradox of the Portuguese Game: The Omnipresence of Football and the Absence of Spectators at Matches," *Soccer and Society* 8, no. 4 (2007): 580.

¹³⁴ Giulianotti and Robertson, "The Globalisation of Football: A Study in the Glocalization of the Serious Life," 546.

¹³⁵ Bo Reimer, "For the Love of England: Scandinavian Football Supporters, Manchester United and British Popular Culture," in *Manchester United: A Thematic Study*, ed. David L. Andrews (London: Routledge, 2004), 272.

¹³⁶ Silk and Chumley, "Memphis United?: Diaspora, S(t)imulated Spaces and Global Consumption," 259.

¹³⁷ Adrian Smith and Dilwyn Porter, "Introduction," in *Sport and National Identity in the Post-War World*, ed. Adrian Smith and Dilwyn Porter (London: Routledge, 2004), 2.

leap “*should not be dismissed as the inconsequential delusions of the dupe*”.¹³⁸ Although these supporters may feel an affinity to an imagined network of fans, whether it be a national team or a club side, they can interpret what these teams represent and mean to them. The study of sports fandom can explore this.

Locating the research

Until recently, Africa has been marginalised in the field of sports studies, in contrast to the more established fields of European, North American and Australasian sport. The announcement that South Africa would host the 2010 FIFA World Cup sparked a greater scholarly interest in the continent. Admittedly, this has had the consequence of creating a South African-centric feel to the field although there is an increasing number of scholars looking beyond South Africa. Regardless, such an emergence has led to a growing diversity of research in the field. The World Cup has provided the core of recent scholarship, including the politics of stadium building,¹³⁹ the economics of sports mega-events,¹⁴⁰ and the racial transformation of South African sport.¹⁴¹ Beyond South Africa, scholarly coverage is more sporadic although Darby and Solberg’s study of player migration in Ghana,¹⁴² Baller’s research on soccer and urban identities in Senegal¹⁴³ and Jarvie’s work on globalisation and Kenyan runners¹⁴⁴ illustrate a growing awareness of African sport in the academic sphere. However, with the majority of these cases fandom remains

¹³⁸ Alan Tomlinson, "Theorising Spectacle: Beyond Debord," in *Power Games: A Critical Sociology of Sport*, ed. John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson (London: Routledge, 2002), 55.

¹³⁹ For example, see Peter Alegi, "A Nation to Be Reckoned with: The Politics of World Cup Stadium Construction in Cape Town and Durban, South Africa," *African Studies* 67, no. 3 (2008).

¹⁴⁰ For example, see Cornelissen and Swart, "The 2010 Football World Cup as a Political Construct: The Challenge of Making Good on an African Promise."

¹⁴¹ For example, see Ashwin Desai, ed. *The Race to Transform: Sport in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010).

¹⁴² Paul Darby and Eirik Solberg, "Differing Trajectories," *Soccer and Society* 11, no. 1-2 (2010).

¹⁴³ Susann Baller, "Transforming Urban Landscapes: Soccer Fields as Sites of Urban Sociability in the Agglomeration of Dakar," *African Identities* 5, no. 2 (2007).

¹⁴⁴ Grant Jarvie, "The Promise and Possibilities of Running in and out of East Africa," in *East African Running: Towards a Cross-Disciplinary Perspective*, ed. Yannis Pitsiladis, et al. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007).

tacit. If African sport is to continue its emergence as a valid field of academic enquiry, it needs to be rooted in the everyday lives of those who identify with, experience and live it rather than remain exceptional.

Schimmel, Harrington and Bielby note that there have been recent calls for a move from the study of “‘exceptional fans’ to the more ordinary and everyday social practices of sport fan culture”.¹⁴⁵ As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there has been a tendency to concentrate on exceptional groups. For instance, British-based fan studies have a large focus on hooliganism. Armstrong and Giulianotti,¹⁴⁶ and Dunning, Murphy and Williams¹⁴⁷ have made vital contributions to the theorisation of hooliganism and the establishment of sports fan studies as a legitimate field of study. Stemming from this, there has been a growing wealth of empirical data in this field, such as Armstrong’s research on Sheffield United hooligans¹⁴⁸ and Robson’s study on Millwall.¹⁴⁹ However, Giulianotti realises the need to advance fan studies “post-hooligan”,¹⁵⁰ a call reflected in his studies of the carnival in Scottish and Irish national team supporters.¹⁵¹ In the African context, much of the literature takes a ‘top-down’ approach by focusing on the major tournaments or the political relations between major actors in African football such as FIFA and its president Sepp Blatter and the Confederation of African Football. For instance, both Darby and Sugden and Tomlinson chart the power relations between Africa and CAF and

¹⁴⁵ Schimmel, Harrington, and Bielby, "Keep Your Fans to Yourself: The Disjuncture between Sport Studies' and Pop Culture Studies' Perspectives on Fandom," 581.

¹⁴⁶ Gary Armstrong and Richard Giulianotti, "Avenues of Contestation: Football Hooligans Running and Ruling Urban Spaces," *Social Anthropology* 10, no. 2 (2002).

¹⁴⁷ Eric Dunning, Patrick Murphy, and John Williams, *The Roots of Football Hooliganism: An Historical and Sociological Study* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988).

¹⁴⁸ Gary Armstrong, *Football Hooligans: Knowing the Score* (Oxford: Berg, 1998).

¹⁴⁹ Garry Robson, *'No One Likes Us, We Don't Care': The Myth and Reality of Millwall Fandom* (Oxford: Berg, 2000).

¹⁵⁰ Richard Giulianotti, *Football: A Sociology of the Global Game* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), 40.

¹⁵¹ Giulianotti, "Football and the Politics of Carnival: An Ethnographic Study of Scottish Fans in Sweden.", Richard Giulianotti, "Back to the Future: An Ethnography of Ireland's Football Fans at the 1994 World Cup Finals in the USA," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 31, no. 3 (1996).

the Euro-centric FIFA.¹⁵² By focusing heavily on major sporting institutions, there is the danger of keeping football “*apart from the larger society in which it [is] embedded thus making it rather thin and irrelevant for an understanding of social processes*”,¹⁵³ treating sport as existing in a vacuum even though it “*gains its significance and meaning from the outside world*”,¹⁵⁴ such as South African soccer as a site of struggle against apartheid. Alegi’s social history of South African soccer breaks away from this pre-occupation with major events and actors in African sport, instead concentrating on the fractured development of the domestic game.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, Bolsmann’s exploration of white soccer in South Africa brings to light an often ignored aspect of the domestic game.¹⁵⁶ While these are valuable contributions to understanding the various facets of sport in South Africa, and Africa in general, the fans still remain silent in much of this research. However, there are instances within African sports studies in which supporters come to the fore. Both Farred and Jacobs provide autobiographical insights into why they chose to support Liverpool while they were growing up in the Cape Flats, the group of townships on the periphery of Cape Town.¹⁵⁷ For them, supporting Liverpool provided an escape from the realities of township life in the 1980s. Vidacs’ ethnographic research on Cameroonian soccer and national identity is another precious resource but these are in the minority.

Despite the predominance of South Africa in Africanist sports research, soccer has often been marginalised by cricket and rugby. With regards to post-apartheid sport, Nauright primarily concentrates on the 1995 Rugby World Cup and nation building, relegating the importance of 1996 African Cup of Nations to a few

¹⁵² Darby, *Africa, Football and Fifa: Politics, Colonialism and Resistance*, John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, *Fifa and the Contest for World Football: Who Rules the People's Game?* (Oxford: Polity, 1998).

¹⁵³ Vidacs, "Through the Prism of Sports: Why Should Africanists Study Sport?," 332.

¹⁵⁴ Bea Vidacs, "The Postcolonial and the Level Playing-Field in the 1998 World Cup," in *Sport and Postcolonialism*, ed. John Bale and Mike Cronin (Oxford: Berg, 2003), 151.

¹⁵⁵ Peter Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004).

¹⁵⁶ Chris Bolsmann, "White Football in South Africa: Empire, Apartheid and Change 1892-1977," *Soccer and Society* 11, no. 1-2 (2010).

¹⁵⁷ Grant Farred, *Long Distance Love: A Passion for Football* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), Sean Jacobs, "'It Wasn't That I Did Not Like South African Football': Media, History, and Biography," *Soccer and Society* 11, no. 1-2 (2010).

sentences.¹⁵⁸ Similarly, Booth's work on sport in South Africa makes very little reference to football at all, preferring to concentrate on rugby.¹⁵⁹ Alegi and Bolsmann suggest that the lack of documentary evidence, especially for black-run clubs and leagues, as a consequence of a lack of funds and the threat of police repression "*has egregiously harmed football*".¹⁶⁰ The lack of preserved documentation of South African soccer, especially during apartheid was further emphasised when in early 2009 I discovered a collection of soccer trophies including the Johannesburg Bantu Football Association's 'Floating Trophy' and the Mainstay Cup gathering dust and rust in the fireplace of a respondent's home. Alegi and Bolsmann further note that other sports governing bodies in South Africa, specifically cricket, have provided research funding.¹⁶¹ By placing the emphasis on fandom, researching supporters' clubs in Johannesburg will help to embed the study of African sport in the everyday life of these fans and the wider social implications that sport holds. By focusing on soccer, this research becomes part of the wider movement to establish the social significance of soccer in South Africa and Africa in general.

The significance of sport in South Africa

When embedding sport in everyday life, it is imperative to recognise that sport is not globally homogenised. While the codification of various sports has often taken place through international bodies such as the International Football Association Board (IFAB) and the International Rugby Board (IRB)¹⁶², it is also rooted in different histories and can hold different social meanings across the globe. In the South African context, sport and sports fandom have historically been spaces in

¹⁵⁸ John Nauright, *Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa* (London: Leicester University Press, 1997).

¹⁵⁹ Douglas Booth, *The Race Game: Sport and Politics in South Africa* (London: Frank Cass, 1998).

¹⁶⁰ Peter Alegi and Chris Bolsmann, "South Africa and the Global Game: Introduction," *Soccer and Society* 11, no. 1-2 (2010): 4.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² FIFA, as the global governing body of soccer, does not decide the rules of the game. In cricket, it is still the London-based Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) that writes the rules and not the ICC.

which racial identities and divisions have been reinforced while simultaneously, and paradoxically, been challenged and traversed. This still remains today; sport in South Africa still retains a racially divided character, as was illustrated during my initial experiences with the Johannesburg soccer landscape, yet sport has concurrently been held up by sporting and political elites as something that can transcend such divisions. As Cornelissen keenly notes, one of the key challenges surrounding sport in South Africa is, *“how to grasp the dynamics between sport, politics and identity in the country and how to understand the role that sport has historically played in societal processes”*.¹⁶³ In the final section of this chapter, I chart these tensions in three stages: the colonial and segregation period, the apartheid era, and post-apartheid democracy. Throughout these stages, similar themes of separation and resistance pervade. Soccer especially has been a site for compliance and contestation.

Sport during colonial times and the segregation period

European sports codes were brought to South Africa by British soldiers and civil servants in the mid-nineteenth century. The first recorded soccer matches in the Cape Colony and Natal were played in 1862 in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth respectively. These games pitted British-born whites against South African-born whites.¹⁶⁴ Sport was a tool in the armoury of Christian missionaries to ‘civilise’ the indigenous population; the link between sport and civilisation extended beyond southern Africa. For example, Fair contends that for missionaries in Zanzibar, they believed that sport *“would transform the ‘lazy’ African into a disciplined man working hard in the interest of empire”*.¹⁶⁵ The proliferation of soccer in southern Africa

¹⁶³ Scarlett Cornelissen, "Prologue: Sport Past and Present in South Africa: (Trans)Forming the Nation?," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no. 1 (2011): 2.

¹⁶⁴ Peter Alegi, *African Soccerescapes: How a Continent Changed the World's Game* (London: G Hurst & Co, 2010), 2.

¹⁶⁵ Laura Fair, "Ngoma Reverberations: Swahili Music Culture and the Making of Football Aesthetics in Early Twentieth-Century Zanzibar," in *Football in Africa: Conflict, Conciliation and Community*, ed. Richard Giulianotti and Gary Armstrong (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 105.

received a boost from the influx of working class British soldiers into Natal during the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, the war against the Transvaal in 1880-1 and the South African War of 1899-1902. As Hill notes, soccer was the most popular sport in the colonial army.¹⁶⁶ However, Alegi attributes the growth of soccer's popularity with black South Africans outside of the small number of mission-educated elites to the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley in 1867 and gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, which transformed social dynamics through rapid urbanisation in the interior.¹⁶⁷ Sport in the new mining compounds served a dual purpose. Badenhorst and Mather contend that, similar to missionaries, liberal mine operators believed that they could utilise organised sport to counter "*the demoralising influences of urban life on African social practices*"¹⁶⁸ including drinking and gambling. For instance, the creation of the Johannesburg Bantu Football Association (JBFA) in 1929 by a mixture of liberal white and educated black men was designed to "*fill the vacuum*"¹⁶⁹ of leisure time with a structured league system. Simultaneously, soccer provided these labourers, who were suffering from the "*dislocations of urbanisation*",¹⁷⁰ the opportunities to develop new social networks in order to survive this upheaval. Its popularity also stemmed from the fact that as a game, it was "*easy to grasp and could be played on any surface under any conditions, by indeterminate numbers of men.*"¹⁷¹ Although the sport was becoming increasingly appropriated by black labourers, soccer remained significant for whites. Bolsmann observes that in 1910, the whites-only South African Football Association¹⁷² was the first non-European national governing body to join FIFA. However, white interest in the game waned in part due to the relative uncompetitiveness of the white 'national' soccer team. Unlike their rugby

¹⁶⁶ Hill, "Football as Code: The Social Diffusion of 'Soccer' in South Africa," 21.

¹⁶⁷ Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*.

¹⁶⁸ Cecile Badenhorst and Charles Mather, "Tribal Recreation and Recreating Tribalism: Culture, Leisure and Social Control on South Africa's Gold Mines, 1940-1950," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 23, no. 3 (1997): 473.

¹⁶⁹ Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, 43.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁷¹ J Walvin, quoted in Tim Couzens, "An Introduction to the History of Football in South Africa," in *Town and Countryside in the Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Popular Response*, ed. Barbara Bozzoli (Johannesburg: Raven Press, 1983), 205.

¹⁷² Not to be confused with the present-day, non-racial national governing body of the same name.

counterparts who had recorded victories against the home nations during the UK tours of 1906-07 and 1912-13, the latter tour included England's first loss at Twickenham,¹⁷³ South African soccer fell short. Bolsmann remarks that in the five tours of South Africa from 1910 by an English FA representative team, which was not even a full strength national side, the English side won all 66 games.¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, the development of soccer "from a mission-school pastime for the amakholwa (Christian, educated) elite to a popular form of urban African leisure during the segregation era"¹⁷⁵ was stigmatising the sport as "the corrupt persuasion"¹⁷⁶ of blacks in the eyes of the white inhabitants, while rugby and cricket were entwined with ideas of white cultural superiority.

Nauright and Black argue that the 1906-07 rugby tour was integral to the promotion of unity and reconciliation of South Africa's white population after the South African War.¹⁷⁷ The appalling conditions of the British concentration camps that Afrikaner prisoners were forced to endure had left a bitter resentment. However, the travelling team combined a mixture of Afrikaners and English-speaking whites, whose successful exploits against various British teams, provided a focal point of unity between South Africa's white population. Rugby, cricket and soccer became embodiments of empire and vehicles for English-speaking whites to assert their links to the metropole. Murray and Merrett contend that cricket was bound up in British/ English values of fair play while the gentrification of the game "defined British imperial space in far-flung corners of the world".¹⁷⁸ The imperialist character of cricket was reinforced through the creation of the Imperial Cricket

¹⁷³ David Black and John Nauright, *Rugby and the South African Nation: Sport, Cultures, Politics, and Power in the Old and New South Africa* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 34.

¹⁷⁴ Bolsmann, "White Football in South Africa: Empire, Apartheid and Change 1892-1977," 31.

¹⁷⁵ Peter Alegi, "Playing to the Gallery? Sport, Cultural Performance, and Social Identity in South Africa, 1920s-1945," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 35, no. 1 (2002): 17.

¹⁷⁶ Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, 17.

¹⁷⁷ Black and Nauright, *Rugby and the South African Nation: Sport, Cultures, Politics, and Power in the Old and New South Africa*, 33.

¹⁷⁸ Bruce Murray and Christopher Merrett, *Caught Behind: Race and Politics in Springbok Cricket* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2004), 13.

Council in London in 1901, membership of which was restricted to the British Empire. As Archer and Bouillon highlight, it was "*particularly offensive to the Afrikaners, who were scarcely likely, at the very moment of their recent and bitter defeat, to take up a game that had voluntarily and explicitly chosen to identify itself with British imperialism*".¹⁷⁹ Rugby was similarly entwined with the colonial project. For instance, public schools were key incubators of a middle class Englishness through discipline, strength and athleticism. Playing the game signalled, as Morrell emphasises, a belonging to England and its cultural norms.¹⁸⁰ White soccer also retained an Anglo-centric perspective. SAFA had been affiliated to the English FA from 1897 to 1907 and again from 1926 until Commonwealth expulsion 1961, and Bolsmann argues that SAFA were "*primarily focussed on securing a visit by a British team to the country*".¹⁸¹ Nevertheless, by the beginning of apartheid, the importance of soccer to white South Africa had been relegated.

However, the 'white' rugby and cricket/ 'black' soccer model is inadequate. White soccer had largely become a working class game. Illustrating this, Grundlingh argues that for working class Afrikaner children in the 1920s and 1930s, soccer was more accessible; "*it was easier to kick a soccer ball in some dusty and stony backstreet than to play a hard, physical game like rugby on an unyielding surface*".¹⁸² However, as Alegi notes, black urban elites in Natal and Johannesburg saw soccer as "*an attractive aspect of Western culture*"¹⁸³ in attempts to further class mobility. In the late nineteenth century in Cape Colony, the gentrified nature of cricket had led to black elites choosing to play cricket as "*a means for blacks in search of the franchise to*

¹⁷⁹ Robert Archer and Antoine Bouillon, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism* (London: Zed Press, 1982), 86.

¹⁸⁰ Robert Morrell, "Forging a Ruling Race: Rugby and White Masculinity in Colonial Natal C. 1870-1910," in *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity*, ed. John Nauright and T J L Chandler (London: Frank Cass, 1996), 93.

¹⁸¹ Bolsmann, "White Football in South Africa: Empire, Apartheid and Change 1892-1977," 31.

¹⁸² Albert Grundlingh, "Playing for Power? Rugby, Afrikaner Nationalism and Masculinity in South Africa, C. 1900-70," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 11, no. 3 (1994): 416.

¹⁸³ Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, 24.

prove their social acceptability".¹⁸⁴ Although there had been an increasing social move towards racially segregated teams by the turn of the twentieth century, Murray and Merrett note that multi-racial cricket teams still existed in the Cape in the early 1890s.¹⁸⁵ After segregation, cricket was still viewed by non-white elites as having greater social capital but were forced to play in racially segregated teams and leagues. Soccer was also not purely a black sport. Recent research has highlighted the existence of coloured leagues in Cape Town¹⁸⁶. The formation of the South African Indian Football Association (SAIFA) in Kimberley in 1903 was the first non-white national association.¹⁸⁷ There were also geographical divisions. The spread of soccer in Natal and the Transvaal was not replicated in the Cape Colony. Hill notes that in the Cape by the turn of the twentieth century, rugby was actively participated in by black and coloured teams.¹⁸⁸ Rugby and cricket had respectively come to embody different aspects of white South Africa; Afrikaner masculinity and the maintenance of colonial linkages to the metropole, whereas soccer had been largely appropriated by black labourers. Yet the history of South African sport during colonisation and pre-apartheid was more complex than simple racial boundaries. However, by the eve of apartheid, sport was usually segregated along racial lines.

Sport and Apartheid

Sport in South Africa has been entwined with both the enforcement and resistance of apartheid. Posel writes, "*[a]partheid social engineering was shot through with contradictions, uncertainties, irrationalities, and lapses of control*",¹⁸⁹ and soccer during the apartheid era was especially a focus for such contradictions. National

¹⁸⁴ Murray and Merrett, *Caught Behind: Race and Politics in Springbok Cricket*, 10.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ The 'Fields of Play: Football Memories and Forced Removals in Cape Town' exhibition at the District Six Museum, Cape Town, 2009.

¹⁸⁷ Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, 18.

¹⁸⁸ Hill, "Football as Code: The Social Diffusion of 'Soccer' in South Africa," 22.

¹⁸⁹ Deborah Posel, "Race as Common Sense: Racial Classification in Twentieth-Century South Africa," *African Studies Review* 44, no. 2 (2001): 88.

soccer associations were often founded along racial lines such as SAIFA, the African-only South Africa African Football Association (SAAFA) and the white National Football League (NFL); mixed-race teams were prohibited although there were occasions when teams from different racial groups met each other in one off matches.¹⁹⁰ Even when the South African Soccer Federation (SASF) was set up in 1951, the first non-racial soccer organisation, "*barring nobody on the grounds of race, colour or creed*",¹⁹¹ it still reinforced apartheid racial divisions as the teams competing were still composed of single racial groups.

The apartheid regime in the early years did not pay significant attention to mixed-race sports. Alegi attributes this in part to the more pressing challenge that African liberation movements such as the ANC were posing. He further contends that due to the popularity of the sport, it became a good source of tax revenue.¹⁹² Alternatively, Desai notes that the regime did not need to enforce segregation as segregation was already "*maintained within the local institutional structures*".¹⁹³ However, this was to change in 1956 with the first specific apartheid sports policy. The Minister of the Interior, T.E. Dönges, declared that "*sport within the borders of South Africa had to be practiced in accordance with the principle of 'separate development'*".¹⁹⁴ This was the first substantial move from the ruling National Party that made "*explicit the state's commitment to the separate organisation of sports*".¹⁹⁵ According to Booth, ministers from the National Party in the 1960s believed that "*interracial contact in sport exacerbated social stress*".¹⁹⁶ In following the policy of separate development, apartheid sport, and the regime as a whole, came under pressure from international sporting sanctions. In fact, as Cornelissen observes, with

¹⁹⁰ Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 107.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 119-20.

¹⁹³ Ashwin Desai and Ahmed Veriava, "Creepy Crawlies, Portapools and the Dam(N)S of Swimming Transformation," ed. Ashwin Desai (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2010), 18.

¹⁹⁴ Quoted in Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, 113.

¹⁹⁵ Desai and Veriava, "Creepy Crawlies, Portapools and the Dam(N)S of Swimming Transformation," 19.

¹⁹⁶ Douglas Booth, "Hitting Apartheid for Six? The Politics of the South African Sports Boycott," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 3 (2003): 478.

only white athletes allowed to represent South Africa, it was “*significant that the first concrete international sanctioning occurred through the International Olympic Committee’s (IOC’s) expulsion of the country from the 1964 Olympic Games*”.¹⁹⁷ For Booth, the key turning point in the international cricketing community’s position on South Africa was the d’Oliveira Affair.¹⁹⁸ The South African government’s refusal to allow the 1968-69 touring England side include a South African-born, coloured cricketer led to England withdrawing from the tour. Shortly after, in 1970, the ICC voted to indefinitely suspend South Africa. By this time, South African soccer was already internationally isolated. Although a founder member of the Confederation of African Football, the white-run Football Association of South Africa (FASA) had been thrown out of the inaugural African Cup of Nations in 1957 for failing to field a mixed-race squad, although FASA representative claimed that they had withdrawn.¹⁹⁹ FIFA suspension followed in 1961 and while the suspension was lifted in 1963, FASA was suspended once more in 1964, with expulsion in 1976 shortly after the Soweto uprising. In contrast, South Africa still remained within the international rugby community, highlighted by continued membership of the IRB and through Springbok tours of the UK, Australia and New Zealand up until the early 1980s. However, they did not participate in the first two Rugby World Cups in 1987 and 1991.

Increasing international sporting isolation led to the government’s development of ‘multinationalism’ in South African sport in 1971. This meant that mixed race teams could represent the country internationally but below this level, segregation remained. For instance, a multiracial soccer team was chosen to play against Australia in 1974 although this game did not take place. In contrast, as Bolsmann and Parker note, domestic soccer “*remained segregated at club level and*

¹⁹⁷ Scarlett Cornelissen, “Resolving “the South Africa Problem””: Transnational Activism, Ideology and Race in the Olympic Movement, 1960–91,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no. 1 (2011): 154.

¹⁹⁸ Booth, “Hitting Apartheid for Six? The Politics of the South African Sports Boycott,” 480.

¹⁹⁹ Alegi, *African Soccerescapes: How a Continent Changed the World’s Game*, 67.

moreover black spectators were barred from many white stadiums".²⁰⁰ During the same year, the Embassy Multinational Series featured a representative team from each racial group plus a team name the 'Continental' comprised of white foreign nationals. The 1976 Soweto Uprising became the catalyst for further reform in apartheid sport. Multinationalism was now extended to provincial and club level meaning that racially segregated teams could compete against each other. Mixed teams were still prohibited but significantly, "no legislation would be passed to enforce the rule".²⁰¹ For instance, in 1977, Eddie Lewis coached both Wits University in the NFL and Kaizer Chiefs in the black-run National Professional Soccer League (NPSL). He recalled how "someone from Chiefs would wait for me on the outskirts of the township and smuggle me in".²⁰² Despite these precautions, he later found out that the police had been keeping track of his 'illicit' movements in and out of Soweto but chose not to act on it. Booth argues that consequently, "bureaucratic controls over sport, such as the permit system became obsolete, ignored or unenforced".²⁰³ Considering that the restrictive Pass Laws were only repealed by the apartheid regime in 1986, sport, and especially soccer, was breaking new ground in South African race relations. The Soweto Uprising became a catalyst for another process. The non-racial sporting movement and the anti-apartheid struggle became entwined and as such, non-racial sporting organisations such as the South African Council on Sport (SACOS) came to the realisation that "sport did not transcend politics";²⁰⁴ deracialised sport changed little for the non-white athlete. This was encapsulated by the slogan, 'No normal sport in an abnormal society', which became the "standard defence of the sporting boycott of apartheid".²⁰⁵ Sport thus became increasingly overtly politicised

²⁰⁰ Chris Bolsmann and Andrew Parker, "Soccer, South Africa and Celebrity Status: Mark Fish, Popular Culture and the Post-Apartheid State," *Soccer and Society* 8, no. 1 (2007): 115.

²⁰¹ Archer and Bouillon, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism*, 212.

²⁰² Quoted in Neilson N Kaufman and Eddie Lewis, *The Eddie Lewis Story: From Manchester to Soweto* (Derbyshire: Derwent Press, 2008), 221.

²⁰³ Booth, "Hitting Apartheid for Six? The Politics of the South African Sports Boycott," 482.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*: 84.

²⁰⁵ Adrian Budd, "Capitalism, Sport and Resistance: Reflections," *Sport in Society* 4, no. 1 (2001): 1.

and “*an object of civil struggle*”.²⁰⁶ Nauright notes that particularly towards the end of apartheid, soccer matches were used as venues for anti-apartheid rallies as there were ready-made audiences and the activists could hide in the crowd. Furthermore, soccer administration became heavily politicised and populated with ANC elites.²⁰⁷

However, to see apartheid sport simply as a power play between the apartheid state and the anti-apartheid movement is misleading. The preservation of racial boundaries in sport was not solely the domain of the state but was reinforced by those it repressed. Booth notes that the lack of resources available to Indian and African sporting organisations exacerbated racial tensions, which hindered attempts to create non-racial organisations.²⁰⁸ For example, when the non-racial South African Soccer League (SASL) was setup in 1961, many African teams instead preferred to defect to the Bantu Football Association, which was a junior member with no voting rights of FASA, to protect their access to resources and preserve their existence, fearful of becoming swallowed up by the league.²⁰⁹ Yet, while soccer conformed to apartheid racial boundaries, it paradoxically muddied them. The SASL was a non-racial league in which white, black and coloured players could participate. Even after SASL had collapsed due to the refusal of the state to allow SASL teams to play on municipal grounds, folding before the beginning of the 1966 season, some subsequent competitions in apartheid South Africa were created on a non-racial basis, such as the anti-racist Federation Professional League (FPL) in 1969. By upholding non-racial ideals, like SASL, the FPL found itself squeezed by the government, whereas African clubs in the NPSL “*received a major boost from United Party members*”,²¹⁰ as the league upheld the principles of ‘multinationalism’; teams had to be comprised of individual racial groups. However, the state and the various soccer associations were not the only actors. As Alegi and Bolsmann argue, “*there*

²⁰⁶ Grant Jarvie, “Sport, Power and Dependency in Southern Africa,” in *Sport and Leisure in the Civilizing Process: Critique and Counter-Critique*, ed. Eric Dunning and Chris Rojek (London: Macmillan, 1992), 186.

²⁰⁷ Nauright, *Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa*, 121.

²⁰⁸ Booth, *The Race Game: Sport and Politics in South Africa*, 157.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, 140.

was a broader trend blurring the boundaries between race, politics, football and big business", which South African Breweries (SAB) epitomised.²¹¹ The emergence of televised black soccer in the late 1970s and early 1980s became a key target for white capital to advertise their products to "millions of black households at a time when consumption among white households had slowed considerably".²¹² The R400,000 commitment from the company provided the financial impetus needed for the creation of the non-racial National Soccer League (NSL, now known as the Premier Soccer League or PSL) by disillusioned NSPL clubs and officials.²¹³ As such, soccer again became a vehicle to challenge apartheid orthodoxy.

Post-Apartheid, sport and identity

Two key themes in post-apartheid sport have been nation-building and transformation. The nation-building rhetoric surrounding the 2010 FIFA World Cup has been part of a wider project of hosting major international sporting events to foster and incubate national unity. At a glance, both the 1995 Rugby World Cup and the 1996 African Nations Cup suggested that sport could provide the catalyst for a new South African identity. Booth highlights that the symbolism of Nelson Mandela presenting the 1995 Rugby World Cup to the host South African team, wearing a Springbok jersey and cap and hugging captain Francois Pienaar, "was a moment of intense multicultural nationalism, a moment when South Africans formed a 'natural' community whose interests transcended individual differences and social conditions".²¹⁴ Similarly, the 1996 African Cup of Nations, hosted and won by South Africa, seemed to add proof to the idea that a successful, post-apartheid South Africa existed, projecting this new, rainbow union to both the international

²¹¹ Peter Alegi and Chris Bolsmann, "From Apartheid to Unity: White Capital and Black Power in the Racial Integration of South African Football, 1976–1992," *African Historical Review* 42, no. 2 (2010): 11.

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ *Ibid.*: 12.

²¹⁴ Doug Booth, "The Antinomies of Multicultural Sporting Nationalism: A Case Study of Australia and South Africa," *International Sports Studies* 21, no. 2 (1999): 16.

community and within the country. Nelson Mandela presented the trophy to the winning team wearing his South African soccer shirt, while across racial groups, South Africans were celebrating victory. Nic Koornhof, the National Party spokesman for sport in August 1997 said, "*we can all be proud of Bafana Bafana [the South African national football team] and their spectacular contribution towards the rainbow nation's quest for excellence.*"²¹⁵ As such, the ANC government views sport as a crucial vehicle tool for national unity and cohesion. This can be seen, for instance, in the ANC's 2009 Manifesto Policy Framework in which it states, "*the collective celebration of our cultural and sporting achievements is part of building a sense of national pride and patriotism*".²¹⁶

Yet, while there have undoubtedly been successful, and sometimes euphoric, nation-building moments, sport in the post-apartheid 'Rainbow Nation' has not always had the positive influence on that was desired by politicians; at times sport has served to reinforce racial divisions. Guelke and Sugden argue that the South African team competing at the 1996 African Nations Cup was met with indifference by the white population.²¹⁷ This was a reflection of the previous year in the Rugby World Cup when the build-up to the tournament met with similar indifference from black South Africans.²¹⁸ Since then, soccer has at times become the site of racial contestation and social segregation. Forty-three people died and 158 were injured in the Ellis Park stadium disaster in April 2001. Peter Alegi notes that many black spectators complained of racial abuse from the white stadium security at this fixture and a number of others. There were reports of security threatening and intimidating fans with electric shock batons. One eyewitness account said that "*the white securities*

²¹⁵ Quoted in Grant Jarvie and Irene Reid, "Sport in South Africa," in *The International Politics of Sport in the Twentieth Century*, ed. James Riordan and Arnd Krüger (London: E & FN Spon, 1999), 234-5.

²¹⁶ ANC, "African National Congress 2009 Manifesto Policy Framework," http://www.anc.org.za/docs/manifesto/2009/policy_frameworkz.pdf.

²¹⁷ Adrian Guelke and John Sugden, "Sport and the 'Normalising' of the New South Africa," in *Sport in Divided Societies*, ed. John Sugden and Alan Bairner (Oxford: Mayer & Mayer Sport, 1999), 90.

²¹⁸ Booth, "The Antinomies of Multicultural Sporting Nationalism: A Case Study of Australia and South Africa," 16.

are racists, they treat a black man like a pig."²¹⁹ As a point of comparison, rugby had also failed to create a lasting South African national identity as the politicians had hoped. Many white South Africans struggled to redefine themselves within a new society. The first two test matches in 1992 against New Zealand and Australia respectively were supposed to be the beginning of a new, pan-racial rugby. Instead, the Springbok, which was the emblem of white dominance, was kept and the white anthem, *Die Stem van Suid-Afrika* was played in defiance. Nauright argues that although there was national euphoria immediately after the success of South Africa in the 1995 Rugby World Cup, rugby as a vehicle for national unity failed. The sport became increasingly centralised under Afrikaner executives, pushing non-Afrikaners out of the national governing body of the sport.²²⁰ As late as 2003, the Springbok squad was mired in a racism controversy when Afrikaner forward Geo Cronjé refused to share a room with Quinton Davids, who was coloured.²²¹ Rugby was the Afrikaner's way of clinging to past memories of 'better days', creating what Nauright has termed "*a cultural security-blanket.*"²²²

In utilising sport as a nation-building tool in post-apartheid South Africa, the controversial policy of formal racial quotas in national representative sports teams has had a paradoxical effect. For example, with only one black player in the 1995 Rugby World Cup-winning Springbok squad, questions of what nation was the team representing arose. In some sports, formal quotas forcing the national team to include a certain number of players from 'previously disadvantaged' backgrounds were introduced. For example, selections for the Proteas, the national cricket side, had to include a minimum of four black²²³ players. Yet, despite using formal quotas to encourage the development of non-white players in sports such as rugby and

²¹⁹ Peter Alegi, "Like Cows Driven to a Dip': The 2001 Ellis Park Stadium Disaster in South Africa," *Soccer and Society* 5, no. 2 (2004): 241-2.

²²⁰ Nauright, *Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa*, 183-4.

²²¹ Mark Keohane, *Springbok Rugby Uncovered* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2004), Chapter 13.

²²² Nauright, *Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa*, 166.

²²³ The definition of black here conforms to affirmative action terminology, not the usage of the respondents

cricket, it also created a new question. As Desai and Ramjettan surmise, *"in a nutshell, how much less proficient than the nearest white contender does a black player have to be before their presence over better players is no longer justifiable?"*²²⁴ This, in turn, gave *"affirmative action a bad name by associating it with lower standards"*²²⁵ was a black, coloured or Indian player in the side on merit or because of politics? By seeking to make national sports teams more representative of the nation's demographics, it has actually helped to reinforce those categories that are trying to be eradicated. Even with formal quotas dropped (the cricket quota was axed in 2002), informal quotas existed. A case of this was the furore surrounding the selection of the Proteas squad for the 2008 tour of Bangladesh, in which only four players of colour were chosen. Additionally, the choice of Peter de Villiers as Springbok coach in 2008 caused controversy as the South African Rugby Union (SARU) President, Oregan Hoskins admitted that the *"appointment did not take into account only rugby reasons"*²²⁶ but included issues of transformation. As Höglund and Sundberg argue, such incidents illustrate *"that a true transformation of attitudes has not taken place"*²²⁷ In contrast, the selection process for Bafana Bafana has not been subjected to such quotas, formal or informal. Merrett, Tatz and Adair criticise the squad selection for the 2010 FIFA World Cup as it included just one white player, Matthew Booth. They ask the following questions: *"Was this because no others were of suitable merit, or plain merit? Are there so few whites playing soccer? Where is the racial quota here?"*²²⁸ Such questions reinforce the commonly perceived racial divide between rugby and cricket on one side and soccer on the other.

²²⁴ Ashwin Desai and Dhevarsha Ramjettan, "Sport for All? Exploring the Boundaries of Sport and Citizenship in 'Liberated' South Africa," in *Racial Redress and Citizenship in South Africa*, ed. Kristina Bentley and Adam Habib (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2008), 294.

²²⁵ Kogila Moodley and Heribert Adam, "Race and Nation in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *Current Sociology* 48, no. 3 (2000): 59.

²²⁶ Mariette Le Roux, "Rainbow Nation Wrestles with Race," *Mail and Guardian Online* 13/02/2008.

²²⁷ Kristine Höglund and Ralph Sundberg, "Reconciliation through Sports? The Case of South Africa," *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (2008): 810.

²²⁸ Christopher Merrett, Colin Tatz, and Daryl Adair, "History and Its Racial Legacies: Quotas in South African Rugby and Cricket," *Sport in Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 769.

Certainly, as Keim argues, *“social mixing is still very limited”* outside of the workplace. From the initial observations made in the introduction of the thesis, this appears to be replicated in the domestic soccer stadium as most white soccer fans choose to stay away from the stadium *“since the sport has become predominantly black”*.²²⁹ Similar preliminary observations made at rugby matches would suggest that the rugby stadium is predominantly a space for white South Africans.²³⁰ However, while race remains key to understanding sport in South Africa, it is not the single focal point. For Nauright, high-priced tickets are another way in which segregation in sports spectatorship remains. Although the white minority no longer has political power, in the sphere of business and sport, *“whites still dominate and real social change has not occurred”*;²³¹ only those who can afford it can join in. Illustrating this, the usual price for a Premier Soccer League (PSL) game is R20 - R30 (approx £1.60 - £2.40)²³² whereas top level domestic rugby matches range between R60 and R120 (£4.80 - £9.55); a vast difference. Furthermore, while PSL matches are broadcast on the free-to-air SABC, the vast majority of rugby is broadcast by the satellite channel, Supersport. As Walsh and Giulianotti argue, *“pay-TV effectively segregates the majority of the market from habitual encounters with the ‘product’”*.²³³ Soccer is far more accessible for South Africans on low incomes than other major sports. As will be discussed in chapters three and five, the links between race and class are weakening yet this structure of ticket pricing in South African sport still reinforces racial divisions in sport.

²²⁹ Marion Keim, *Nation Building at Play: Sport as a Tool for Social Integration in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (Oxford: Meyer & Meyer Sport, 2003), 11.

²³⁰ Entries in research diary, 23/02/08 and 15/03/08.

²³¹ Nauright, *Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa*, 193.

²³² Although post-World Cup, prices have risen to R40 (£3.20).

²³³ Adrian Walsh and Richard Giulianotti, *Ethics, Money and Sport: This Sporting Mammon* (London: Routledge, 2007), 115.

Conclusion

Sport pervades our everyday lives. Coverage of various sports matches can be accessed around the world through an array of media sources. The proliferation of global sports teams and brands is such that fans can support 'their team' despite geographical distance. Even for those who have little interest in supporting a sports team, sport is constantly replicated through newspaper and television reports, conversations with friends and the sight of people wearing replica team shirts. It is not merely a leisure activity but a space in which fans and players continually negotiate a myriad of identities. These fans are not simply empty vessels that mindlessly accept the symbolism of sports teams and tap into a wider imagined community. Nor is supporting a team a continuous, active assertion of self-identity. Instead, sports fandom is constructed within these tensions. The assertions of South African political elites that the 2010 World Cup could act as a focal point for national unity failed to take into consideration the everyday agency of the fans, especially in the light of the fractured fandom on display during the 2008 Vodacom Challenge. It is therefore imperative that social science research on sports fandom examines the everyday, and sometimes banal, experiences of sport. Especially in the African context, the voices of the sports fans are seldom heard in academic enquiry, thus merging into the background. It is these voices that this research will bring out. Furthermore sport does not happen in a vacuum.

In this chapter, I have framed South African sport as a site of struggle, racial division and contestation. Sport in South Africa, especially soccer, cricket and rugby union has had "*an undeniable moral and political content and its history has influenced its modern social role*".²³⁴ It has been the site of segregation and the reinforcement of apartheid orthodoxy and yet has simultaneously been the site of struggle and challenge. Today, the legacy of apartheid still scars the South African sporting landscape. Similarly, Jarvie "*does not deny the relative importance of sport as a field of*

²³⁴ Archer and Bouillon, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism*, 6.

cultural struggle" but argues that the focus on race and class dynamics have "often concealed the realities of apartheid".²³⁵ What embedding sport in the everyday lives of these fans can provide are "insights into social, cultural, and historical processes which go beyond the sporting arena".²³⁶ The next chapter considers some of these processes in which sport is entrenched.

²³⁵ Jarvie, "Sport, Power and Dependency in Southern Africa," 192.

²³⁶ Vidacs, "Through the Prism of Sports: Why Should Africanists Study Sport?," 334.

CHAPTER THREE

DIVISION, EXCLUSION, OTHERNESS: THE CONTINUING SIGNIFICANCE OF RACE IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

The 2008 Vodacom Challenge match between Kaizer Chiefs and Manchester United at Newlands Stadium in Cape Town revealed the continuing salience of race as a key marker of identification in post-apartheid South Africa. The complaints from the exclusively black Chiefs supporters framing the United fans as white intruders into 'their' cultural space constructed race as a "*self-evident, common-sensical and therefore utterly uncontroversial 'fact' of life in South Africa*".¹ The subsequent newspaper commentaries and letters similarly viewed race in an essentialised dichotomy; black South Africans supported the domestic game while whites were only interested in the European game. Yet, such a superficial binary glossed over a far more complex set of dynamics, which raised a new set of questions. Such a simplistic viewpoint was blurred by the large minority of United fans at the game who were black and the small number of white Chiefs supporters. It ignored the significant number of Indian and coloured fans dressed in the colours of United. While these people are classified as 'black' or previously disadvantaged under the government's policy of affirmative action, the cultural lens of this football match banded them together with the white 'intruders'. While disregarding the plethora of motivations and reasons why these fans chose to attend a game that they would not normally do, the dichotomy ignored the significance of these fans crossing boundaries, both physically and mentally. What the Vodacom Challenge revealed was that although race was a significant marker of identity, it was not always fixed but instead underwent a process of reinterpretation, albeit temporarily.

¹ Posel, "What's in a Name? Racial Categorisations under Apartheid and Their Afterlife," 63.

Outside of this single football match, race remains salient in the everyday lives of many South Africans. Posel writes, *"the idea that South African society comprises of four distinct races... has become a habit of thought and experience"*.² The paradox of post-apartheid South Africa is that accompanying the de-racialisation of the state has been the policies of affirmative action and black economic empowerment (BEE), which have had the unintended consequence of entrenching *"the very racial categories that undermine the possibility of attaining a truly non-racial democratic South Africa"*.³ Legislation such as the 1998 Employment Equity Act recognised that apartheid had created inequalities and disparities within its inhabitants but its solution was race-based. The purpose of this act was to implement *"affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups (my emphasis)"*⁴. The act identifies these groups as black people, women and people with disabilities. Here, 'black people' denote those who were classified as African, Coloured and Indian, rather than the everyday usage of the respondents. The attempts to eradicate racial inequality through legislation have in fact reinforced apartheid-style categories. More broadly, Gqola notes that despite his intentions, the mainstream acceptance of Archbishop Tutu's analogy of post-Apartheid South Africa as the *"rainbow nation of God"* transformed it into an *authorising narrative which assisted in the denial of difference"*.⁵ The discourse of 'Rainbowism' suppresses the inequalities between and within the various racial groups, thus illustrating the paradox of South Africa today. It is, as Dolby depicts, *"a world of upheaval: one in which the racial divides of apartheid are both absent and fiercely present"*.⁶

² Ibid.: 51.

³ Neville Alexander, "Affirmative Action and the Perpetuation of Racial Identities in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *Transformation* 63 (2007): 103.

⁴ "Employment Equity Act, No.55 of 1998," (South African Department of Labour, 1998). Accessed at <http://www.labour.gov.za/downloads/legislation/acts/employment-equity/Act%20-%20Employment%20Equity.pdf>

⁵ Phumla Gqola, "Defining People: Analysing Power, Language and Representation in Metaphors of the New South Africa," *Transformation* 47 (2001): 99.

⁶ Nadine Dolby, *Constructing Race: Youth, Identity, and Popular Culture in South Africa* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 61.

I am acutely aware that such a concentrated focus on race and racial identities runs the risk of essentialising the very categories that I am trying to move beyond. Race is a component of a broader collection of identities in South Africa. For example, Seekings and Natrass argue that *“interclass inequality [that] has become the driving force of overall inequality”* rather than racial inequality.⁷ Øverland bemoans the lack of theorisation on gender and sexuality in South Africa despite the fact that *“nonsexism and nonracism stand side by side in the South African constitution”*.⁸ Franchi and Swart ask whether young South Africans are able to construct other identities independent of race or whether race is still *a central defining feature of self- and other-identity*.⁹ However, it is not simply a question of which identity is more prominent or important than the others. Zegeye identifies the social identity of a person as fluidic; *“conflicting racial, ethnic, gender, class, sexual, religious and national identities are a reality”*.¹⁰ Furthermore, considering self-identity alone is insufficient. Self-identification is just one part of wider social identity. Jenkins contends that this incorporates *“how we identify ourselves, how others identify us, and the ongoing interplay of these in processes of social identification. This is also, simultaneously, a matter of how we identify them, how they identify themselves, and so on”*.¹¹ As Pillay argues, to understand South Africa, social enquiry has to progress beyond simply constructing apartheid as *“the combined legacy of race and class as the defining constituent logics of a system of domination”*.¹² Drawing on Nadine Dolby’s work on social constructions of race in post-apartheid South Africa, I argue in this chapter that race is not a fixed and isolated identity but is entwined in interaction with others. While racial identities

⁷ Jeremy Seekings and Nicoli Natrass, *Class, Race, and Inequality in South Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 4.

⁸ Lene Øverland, "Another Male Fantasy: Race, Gender and Advertising," in *Shifting Selves: Post-Apartheid Essays on Mass Media, Culture and Identity*, ed. Herman Wasserman and Sean Jacobs (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2003), 267.

⁹ Viji Franchi and Tanya M Swart, "From Apartheid to Affirmative Action: The Use of 'Racial' Markers in Past, Present and Future Articulations of Identity among South African Students," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 27, no. 2 (2003): 211.

¹⁰ Abebe Zegeye, "Imposed Ethnicity," in *Social Identities in the New South Africa: After Apartheid - Volume One*, ed. Abebe Zegeye (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2001), 1.

¹¹ Richard Jenkins, "Categorization: Identity, Social Process and Epistemology," *Current Sociology* 48, no. 3 (2000): 7.

¹² Suren Pillay, "Transforming 'South Africa': Race, Colonialism and Challenges of Critical Thought after Apartheid," in *Re-Imagining the Social in South Africa*, ed. Heather Jacklin and Peter Vale (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009), 263.

and the legacy of race remains apparent in the everyday lives of South Africans, Dolby enquires into how these identities are constructed and renegotiated. Race, according to her, “is not simply a matter of discarding or embracing already formed racial positions, but of renegotiating it in a new context”.¹³ Since they are not fixed, people are able to “tinker with the borders of identity”,¹⁴ reinterpreting different cultural forms and challenging previously held conceptions of what race ‘means’. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, apartheid racial categories had the illusion of being fixed when categorising people was often a subjective and uneven process. Racial inequality, tensions and conflict still remain despite the end of apartheid, yet they are in a perpetual process of being transformed.

This chapter is arranged in four sections. Firstly, I examine how academic enquiry into race and identity in South Africa has developed and evolved. In summary, the liberal modernists in the 1960s championed apartheid racial categories as paramount while subordinating the interests of class and capital. The rise of radical Marxist scholars in the 1970s challenged this position arguing that apartheid was not in conflict but supported and advanced the interest of capital. This loose school of thought sought to place the emphasis on class, rather than race, as the primary focus for enquiry. In turn, an offshoot of the radical school developed from the Wits History Workshop in the 1980s became disillusioned with what they saw as grand theorisation at the expense of empirical data collection, thus creating a polemic structure/ human agency debate. More often known collectively as the Social History approach, Bozzoli argued that the school “*seeks to uncover the history of the person in the street, of whatever race, gender, creed or origin*”.¹⁵ In post-apartheid times, race and racial identities have gained predominance once again. This time, influenced by tenets of postmodernism and postcolonialism, racial categories have been deconstructed although this has led to some criticism that class has been

¹³ Dolby, *Constructing Race: Youth, Identity, and Popular Culture in South Africa*, 8.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁵ Belinda Bozzoli, "Preface," in *Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectives*, ed. Belinda Bozzoli (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), xvii.

marginalised as an avenue for critical enquiry. As has already been stated in this chapter, there is a need to move beyond such race/ class dichotomies. Dolby's approach, viewing race in a constant process reinterpretation and reconstruction allows the research to explore the areas where racial boundaries are blurred and challenged. Such constructions and fluidity are made not just through self-agency of people but are also influenced by the environment around them. Additionally, Nuttall seeks to progress beyond racial difference and segregation as the overriding characteristic of life in South Africa through the use of creolisation as a theoretical perspective. However, attempting to move away from race actually reinforces race as a key marker of identity. The second section of the chapter uses these concepts to return to the 2008 Vodacom Challenge to interpret and analyse these events. Thirdly, I analyse the spatial dynamics of present-day Johannesburg. This research takes place in a city which is simultaneously trapped and breaking away from continuous informal segregation, physically and mentally. This does not provide a simple backdrop to the research but actively impacts on the soccer supporters. Finally, I conclude by asking how these fluidic and contested identities impacted on nation-building calls emanating from sporting and political elites in light of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Calls for South African unity and references to the rainbow nation were contradicted by such ambiguities.

Approaches to Identity in South Africa

Liberalism/ Pluralism

In the 1960s, race was the primary concern for scholarly enquiry in South Africa, the focus of which was largely on pluralism and inter-group segregation and separation.¹⁶ According to Kuper, white settlers utilised segregation, and later apartheid, *"to build a system of domination resting on the manipulation of social cleavages*

¹⁶ For example, see Pierre L van den Berghe, *Race and Ethnicity: Essays in Comparative Sociology* (London: Basic, 1970).

and cultural diversity",¹⁷ to maintain superiority as a racial group. Similarly, van den Berghe often concentrated on conflicts and tensions between groups demarcated by apartheid orthodoxy. Notably, he stated that "*conflict is certainly the most important characteristic of South African society*".¹⁸ Characteristically of this school, and a key criticism levelled by later Marxist scholars, apartheid racial groupings were treated as fixed, unproblematic categories. For example, van den Berghe contended that racial groups were "*racially determined*", not "*culturally defined*"¹⁹ and that membership in these groups "*is by birth and for life*",²⁰ with scant chance for movement between them. Furthermore, he developed a hierarchy of importance for scholarly interest. Although race was paramount, the concept of difference and conflict between ethnic groups was also significant but still subordinate to race. The definition of ethnic conflict was often limited to English/ Afrikaner cleavages within the white group but these were subsumed by the perceived, overriding need to preserve white settlerdom and unify against the *swart gevaar*, or black peril.²¹ Class was relegated to the sidelines because of the perception of "*the all-encompassing and over-whelming nature of race*"²² in South Africa. As such, the central themes of segregation and difference were inter-racial, ethnic and cultural.

A major feature of this school was the relationship between apartheid and the economy. Apartheid racism was seen as contradictory to and restrictive to economic growth. The large and cheap pool of black unskilled labour that apartheid policies had created was viewed as retarding development. To Horwitz, this contradiction was evidence of the primacy of race in apartheid South Africa. He argued that, "*the polity has always sought its ideal and its ideology – the White man's supremacy. The network*

¹⁷ Leo Kuper, "Political Change in White Settler Societies: The Possibility of Peaceful Democratization," in *Pluralism in Africa*, ed. Leo Kuper and M. G. Smith (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 177.

¹⁸ Pierre L van den Berghe, *South Africa: A Study in Conflict* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1965), 3.

¹⁹ ———, *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective* (London: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), 101.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 102.

²¹ Kuper, "Political Change in White Settler Societies: The Possibility of Peaceful Democratization.", van den Berghe, *South Africa: A Study in Conflict*.

²² van den Berghe, *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective*, 106.

of economic development had to follow accordingly".²³ Likewise, with the illogical nature of apartheid juxtaposed against the rationality of the market, Hutt's labelling of the free market economy as "*The Liberating Force*";²⁴ which could liberate black South Africans if the market was 'unshackled' further emphasised race and racial division as the fundamental lens as to which to understand South Africa; social class was nothing more than a 'tertiary' factor. Racial divisions and difference were so deep-seated that van den Berghe forebodingly concluded that, left unchecked, "*a South Africa divided against itself awaits its impending doom*".²⁵ This approach is insufficient to understanding the Johannesburg soccer landscape as it would limit analysis to an immutable series of racial divisions.

Marxist/ radical

By the 1970s, Marxist scholars were challenging the liberal view of South Africa. Highly critical of how the liberal school had placed emphasis on race above all else, Johnstone argued that it had vastly restricted the scope of scholarly enquiry. Taking apartheid racial categories as natural and absolute was to assume that, "*therefore everything was actually about race and ethnicity... So to understand South Africa, this is where you began (and this, unfortunately, is where you tended to remain)*".²⁶ Race and difference was viewed as obscuring what was really occurring in South Africa. All that the liberal, pluralist interpretation did was to produce "*a tautological redescription of the phenomenon*"²⁷ rather than explain it. Equally, in O'Meara's work on class and Afrikaner nationalism, he argued that essentialising race and ethnicity turned it into

²³ Ralph Horwitz, *The Political Economy of South Africa* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967), 12.

²⁴ W. H. Hutt, *The Economics of the Colour Bar* (London: Merritt & Hatcher, 1964), 173.

²⁵ van den Berghe, *Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective*, 110.

²⁶ Frederick Johnstone, "'Most Painful to Our Hearts': South Africa through the Eyes of the New School," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 16, no. 1 (1982): 6-7.

²⁷ ———, *Class, Race and Gold: A Study of Class Relations and Racial Discrimination in South Africa* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976), 211.

*"a monolithic political, social and ideological phenomenon"*²⁸ rather than a more fluidic, adapting, evolving phenomenon.

Writing from within this 'new' school, Legassick argued radical Marxist scholarship on South Africa was not a homogenous school of thought, but instead an umbrella grouping that emphasised the importance of class and class production in South Africa.²⁹ Johnstone scathingly critiqued the liberals:

"it did not seem to dawn on anyone that perhaps the massive fact of South African history, the massive experience of the mass of the people in modern South Africa, was the super-exploitation of black labour by a racially structured capitalism, and that this, rather than ethnic groups, political parties, constitutions and so on, should be a starting point of analysis".³⁰

However, this was not necessarily creating a race v class binary in which proponents on both side staked their claim. Johnstone was careful to iterate that this approach did not merely amount *"to some kind of simple linking of all minority group phenomena to capitalism"*.³¹ Wolpe later argued that it was necessary to move beyond the idea that *"explanations of the social order are assumed to be explicable by either of these phenomena operating in isolation from one another"*.³² While the Marxist understanding created new problems, the value of this scholarship was in the creation of *"new directions of intellectual interest"*,³³ although Legassick's assertion that Marxist enquiry had *"transcended the 'race and industrialization' debate"*³⁴ was less certain. However, race and racism was no longer viewed as the illogical antithesis of the rational market but instead had become entwined. For instance, the racial policies of the

²⁸ Dan O'Meara, "The Afrikaner Broederbond 1927-1948: Class Vanguard of Afrikaner Nationalism," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 3, no. 2 (1977): 157.

²⁹ Martin Legassick, "Race, Industrialization and Social Change in South Africa: The Case of R. F. A Hoernle," *African Affairs* 75, no. 299 (1976).

³⁰ Johnstone, "'Most Painful to Our Hearts': South Africa through the Eyes of the New School," 7.

³¹ ———, *Class, Race and Gold: A Study of Class Relations and Racial Discrimination in South Africa*, 217.

³² Harold Wolpe, *Race, Class and the Apartheid State* (London: James Currey, 1988), 2.

³³ Legassick, "Race, Industrialization and Social Change in South Africa: The Case of R. F. A Hoernle," 239.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

apartheid state emphasised the state's reliance on the mining industry. Wolpe contended that racism and repression were tools with which to maintain a cheap pool of black labour for the capitalist classes;³⁵ Trapido concluded, "*the mines may need the state, but the state also needs the mines*".³⁶ Difference and segregation was no longer an ethnic and cultural issue. Whites were now the "*accumulators of capital... while the majority of blacks (though not all blacks) are the unemployed, the ultra-exploited, the poor, and the powerless*"³⁷ and racism was used to maintain and reinforce this power dynamic. O'Meara argued that the *Afrikaner Broederbond* was not solely a secretive organisation for the promotion and preservation of Afrikaner cultural interests and heritage but "*a united, disciplined body of petty bourgeois militants, the vanguard which prepared the ground for a new class alliance to capture state power*".³⁸

More significantly for this research, Marxist enquiry uncovered workers crossing supposedly immutable racial boundaries, forming multi-racial groups based on class, which liberal scholars had omitted. Formed in 1934, the Garment Workers Union (GWU) was attributed to have fostered "*a socialist consciousness among the newly proletarianised Afrikaner women*".³⁹ Consequently, Berger notes that by the 1940s, the GWU was class-based and progressively multi-racial.⁴⁰ However, this was not denying the impact of racial identities and racism. The white female workers of the GWU were still "*shaped by the profoundly racist daily practices of the segregationist and apartheid state*";⁴¹ a unified proletariat was in the end stunted by ideas of racial

³⁵ Harold Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid," in *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, ed. William Beinart and Saul Dubow (London: Routledge, 1995), 80.

³⁶ Stanley Trapido, "South Africa in a Comparative Study of Industrialization," *Journal of Development Studies* 7, no. 3 (1971): 315.

³⁷ Martin Legassick, "Legislation, Ideology and Economy in Post-1948 South Africa," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 1, no. 1 (1974): 29-30.

³⁸ O'Meara, "The Afrikaner Broederbond 1927-1948: Class Vanguard of Afrikaner Nationalism," 186.

³⁹ Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido, "The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism," in *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, ed. Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido (Harlow: Longman, 1987), 25.

⁴⁰ Iris Berger, "Solidarity Fragmented: Garment Workers of the Transvaal, 1930-1960," in *The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa*, ed. Shula Marks and Stanley Trapido (Harlow: Longman, 1987), 126.

⁴¹ Marks and Trapido, "The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism," 26.

difference and otherness. Finally, in a similar vein to van den Berghe, Johnstone also predicted that South Africa was a ticking time-bomb but rather than a race war, his outcomes were based on class and the mode of production; "*continued racialised super-exploitation or socialist revolution*".⁴² In summary, Marxist scholarship opened up alternative understandings of South Africa in which race and class were not operating in isolation but as an intertwined and interconnected force in which it was not possible to discuss one without the other. Class permeated racial borders and boundaries, previously thought of as absolute. Such an approach would allow seeing beyond unchallenged racial divisions within South African soccer fandom. Yet this is still restrictive as it just replaces race with class as the primary, binding marker of identity.

The Challenge of Social History

In the 1980s, the Marxist approach received sustained criticism from within its own ranks. Firstly, it was argued that the Marxist linkage between race and class was insufficient and too inflexible to encompass a far more complex process. Posel argued that the liberal/ Marxist dichotomy that had come to dominate scholarship on South Africa failed to recognise that capitalist interests were diverse. Furthermore, apartheid racial policies "*had a complex and heterogeneous relationship to capitalist interests*".⁴³ However, in the defence of the Marxist/ revisionist standpoint, Johnstone had earlier acknowledged that "*the kind of functional linkage between capitalism and racial domination argued... by the Marxist approach, is obviously not some fixed and immutable feature*".⁴⁴ Posel emphasised that while the mining sector may have initially benefitted from the large pool of black labour, which was kept artificially cheap through influx control, apartheid racial policies "*had certain long-term costs for*

⁴² Johnstone, "'Most Painful to Our Hearts': South Africa through the Eyes of the New School," 21.

⁴³ Deborah Posel, *The Making of Apartheid 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 267.

⁴⁴ Johnstone, "'Most Painful to Our Hearts': South Africa through the Eyes of the New School," 20.

the capitalist class".⁴⁵ For instance, influx control had stunted the growth of a domestic consumer market, which was unable to counter international economic sanctions.

A key criticism levelled at Marxist scholars was that their 'grand theorising' obscured complex processes happening at the individual level and thus rendering the agency of the individual worker irrelevant. Keegan asserted that the Marxist "*megaview not only conceals as much as it reveals; it can often result in a distortion of vision... Consideration of the life experiences of individual people and communities can quickly reveal inadequacies in the prevailing interpretations of historical change*".⁴⁶ The structuralist perspective of the Marxists was perceived to reduce workers to hollow units. What this new social history perspective offered was "*the points of view of workers, of women and of the poorer strata*"⁴⁷ that Marxists failed to account for. The problem was, as far as social historians were concerned, that the primacy given to theorisation was at the expense of empirical data. In response, social history sought "*to uncover the history of the person in the street*"⁴⁸ through oral histories. In his work on Kas Maines, a Coloured sharecropper who died in 1985, van Onselen argued that such a narrow focus brought out his story, which was "*one of great complexity and infinite subtlety*".⁴⁹ Life, he further contended, "*transcends bureaucratic notation and legal formulations*";⁵⁰ it was not enough to rely on figures and statistics to capture the complexities of everyday life. In critiquing Wolpe, Beinart and Dubow stated that his focus on white power structures rendered the black man as empty vassals, "*cast as passive objects of policy and victims of segregation*",⁵¹ ignoring their own agency.

⁴⁵ Posel, *The Making of Apartheid 1948-1961: Conflict and Compromise*, 269.

⁴⁶ Tim Keegan, *Rural Transformations in Industrializing South Africa* (London: Macmillan Press, 1987), xvi.

⁴⁷ Bozzoli, "Preface," xiv.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, xvii.

⁴⁹ Charles van Onselen, *The Seed Is Mine: The Life of Kas Maine, a South African Sharecropper, 1894-1985* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996), 11.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵¹ William Beinart and Saul Dubow, "Introduction: The Historiography of Segregation and Apartheid," in *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa*, ed. William Beinart and Saul Dubow (London: Routledge, 1995), 8.

Significantly, social history began to move beyond race and class as the sole forces from which to understand South Africa. Bozzoli argued that the aim of social history was to *reincorporate racial, cultural and other determinants back into our social thought*".⁵² The importance of social class, emphasised by Marxist scholars, was challenged by Bozzoli. According to her, social history had revealed that *"on every level the forces promoting the development of a non-class consciousness have been greater than those promoting class awareness"*.⁵³ The interplay between race and class had obscured issues of gender, which Bozzoli now introduced to the equation. In her work, rural black women were not simply victims of a patriarchal society but on closer inspection, she asserted that there was a *"vast underworld of female activity and resistance which awaits research"*.⁵⁴

The Marxist/ social history debate became a dominant feature of 1980s academic enquiry into South Africa. Parallels can be drawn between the challenge that social history posed to Marxist interpretations of South Africa and the structure/ agency binary that encompassed both cultural studies and sociology discussed in the previous chapter. Marxists such as Morris and Murray responded to the critique that social history offered by countering that social history had placed far too much emphasis on the agency of peasant farmers, which in turn had caused *"an unwarranted romanticized 'sentimentalism'"*.⁵⁵ Central to the counter-argument was that the social history standpoint withdrew from theorisation. Focusing on 'the man in the street' meant that they could not *"grasp and reveal the totality of contradictions and forces structuring the lives"*⁵⁶ of these people. Likewise, Murray, who acknowledged the wealth of empirical data that social historians had brought to the debate, argued that reducing investigation to the individual or community meant it *"falls short of*

⁵² Belinda Bozzoli, "Class, Community and Ideology in the Evolution of South African Society," in *Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectives*, ed. Belinda Bozzoli (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), 2.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁵⁵ Martin J. Murray, "The Origins of Agrarian Capitalism in South Africa: A Critique of the 'Social History' Perspective," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 15, no. 4 (1989): 649.

⁵⁶ Mike Morris, "Social History and the Transition to Capitalism in the South African Countryside," *Review of African Political Economy* 41 (1988): 62.

providing a consistent and coherent framework for social analysis and historical investigation".⁵⁷ Coupled with this perceived absence of social theorisation, it was questioned whether these small scale studies were "*individually privileged in reality*"⁵⁸ or whether they only had significance for the individual or community in question. The charge that the Marxist approach was too inflexible to understand the complexities of everyday life in South Africa was reversed. In re-introducing the primacy of racial difference and conflict to scholarly enquiry, social historians were seen to be failing to capture the complexities of other identities. For instance, Murray contended that Keegan treated 'landed whites' "*as a generic and undifferentiated 'social type' [that] glosses over the inner dynamics of class differentiation*".⁵⁹ Consequently, this was perceived as a return to the liberalist viewpoint in which apartheid racial groupings were the primary and unchallenged variables from which to explain South Africa.

In response to this critique, Keegan argued that the Marxist perception that social history had "*reduced all history to the subjective experiences of the individuals*", was a "*breathhtaking collapse of logic*".⁶⁰ The structure/ agency debate was misleading, polarising scholars into two camps, when in fact Bozzoli noted that the social history project did not attempt to claim "*to have a monopoly on 'objectivity'*",⁶¹ that it was not asserting the primacy of human agency over structural forces. Instead, this "*grassroots focus*"⁶² was not for the sake of empirical data collection but was to inform understandings of institutions and structures, which impacted on human agency. Similarly, Delius and Beinart argued that the social history framework considered the interplay between structure and agency as it "*emphasizes the way in which individual agency, social differentiation, and regional characteristics meshed with broader*

⁵⁷ Murray, "The Origins of Agrarian Capitalism in South Africa: A Critique of the 'Social History' Perspective," 647.

⁵⁸ Morris, "Social History and the Transition to Capitalism in the South African Countryside," 63.

⁵⁹ Murray, "The Origins of Agrarian Capitalism in South Africa: A Critique of the 'Social History' Perspective," 655.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*: 668.

⁶¹ Bozzoli, "Preface," xvii.

⁶² ———, "Class, Community and Ideology in the Evolution of South African Society," 3.

patterns to condition the course of change".⁶³ Emphasising the importance of race was not a return to the uncritical racial categories of the liberalists. With reference to new black labour migrants arriving in the cities, Bozzoli identified ethnicity as a key marker of identification as they built new social networks in order to adapt to their new environment. Race could not simply be reduced to class relations as *the complexities of such stratification are far greater than the simplistic categories of 'race' which many South African scholars... would tend to allow for*".⁶⁴ While the debate was not resolved, it revealed that constructions of racial identities were far more complex than the liberal perspective recognised. Furthermore, the simplistic binaries of class v race and agency v structure belied such complexities. Applying the social history standpoint to South African soccer fandom begins to move away from the race/ class dichotomy that pluralists and Marxists entrenched. The focus on individuals connects with the arguments in the previous chapter to entrench sport in everyday life. Sharecroppers and soccer supporters alike, identities are not just imposed on these people but they too construct and interpret them.

Reinterpreting race

Post-apartheid, the scholarly gaze appeared to swing back toward race as the primary source of investigation. Pillay attributes this as a consequence of the policy of deracialisation post-apartheid; South African universities felt compelled to conform to government expectations, supporting the deracialisation agenda.⁶⁵ Correspondingly, Vale and Jacklin concurred. In what they saw as the marginalisation of critical thinking in South African higher education, they asserted

⁶³ William Beinart and Peter Delius, "Introduction," in *Putting a Plough to the Ground: Accumulation and Dispossession in Rural South Africa, 1850-1930*, ed. William Beinart, Peter Delius, and Stanley Trapido (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986), 16.

⁶⁴ Bozzoli, "Class, Community and Ideology in the Evolution of South African Society," 24.

⁶⁵ Pillay, "Transforming 'South Africa': Race, Colonialism and Challenges of Critical Thought after Apartheid," 263.

that it was being “subjected only to the dominant discourse of the market”.⁶⁶ In essence, such critical thinking was not seen to have ‘value’ in the new South Africa. Seekings and Natrass became concerned that class appeared “to be in danger of falling off the map of South African Studies”.⁶⁷ For them, class had superseded racial identities as “the basis of inequality”⁶⁸ in South Africa. Race had been instrumental as a device for creating and maintaining a class divide along racial lines through the privileged access to education and employment, but the skills gained from this meant that class privilege remained as deracialisation progressed. In essence then, “most rich people were not rich simply because they were white”.⁶⁹ Again, the argument that such a focus on race using case studies was devoid of theoretical understanding was made. For example, Schatzki argued that abstract theorisation and empirical data to some extent ‘reflected’ each other but it was theory that acted as a net to connect and inform the data; that “all social inquiry, however, is theoretically informed”.⁷⁰ Vale and Jacklin correspondingly urged research to move beyond “both inherited and everyday framings”⁷¹ to avoid uncritically accepting racial categories. However, as Wicomb argues, apartheid-era categories and labels should not simply be discarded. Instead, there is a “new meaningfulness of ethnic tags” that can and should “be divested of received meanings and can be negotiated afresh”.⁷² Returning to the beginning of the chapter, the racial identifications used by the soccer fans were concealing as much as they were revealing. Although treating the non-black fans as foreign intruders encroaching on their ‘black’ cultural space, what remained tacit was the meanings that these fans attributed to racial identities. The challenge for scholarship on

⁶⁶ Peter Vale and Heather Jacklin, "Framing and Revisiting: Debate Old and New," in *Re-Imagining the Social in South Africa*, ed. Heather Jacklin and Peter Vale (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009), 5.

⁶⁷ Seekings and Natrass, *Class, Race, and Inequality in South Africa*, 28-9.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁷⁰ Theodore R. Schatzki, "Dimensions of Social Theory," in *Re-Imagining the Social in South Africa*, ed. Heather Jacklin and Peter Vale (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009), 38.

⁷¹ Vale and Jacklin, "Framing and Revisiting: Debate Old and New," 10.

⁷² Zoe Wicomb, "Five Afrikaner Texts and the Rehabilitation of Whiteness," in *Culture in the New South Africa: After Apartheid - Volume Two*, ed. Robert Kriger and Abebe Zegeye (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2001), 180.

identity in post-apartheid South Africa, and in turn this thesis, is to escape the simple binary of race and class.

One approach in seeking to escape the race/ class binary has been through the idea of creolisation. Proponents of creolisation in South Africa argue that South African cultural studies have been too focused on ideas of segregation and separation.⁷³ According to them, what creolisation does is *“disturbs or destabilizes notions of fixed identities”*.⁷⁴ Creolisation is deemed to be a necessary lens as multiculturalism reinforces difference and boundaries. Multiculturalism is understood to be akin to ‘rainbowism’, which they perceive to be *“about polite proximities, about containment, which is antithetical to a notion of the ‘creole’”*.⁷⁵ Instead, creolisation emphasises the fluidity of movement, travelling across borders and multiple social interactions between people. Reminiscent of de Certeau in the previous chapter, Nuttall describes creolisation as a series of *“mutual entanglements, some of them conscious but most of them unconscious”*.⁷⁶ The new spaces of such entanglements have opened up new avenues of inquiry. For instance, Dolby’s ethnographic work in a Durban school emphasises such spaces. The end of apartheid has forced people to reinterpret and redefine their identities, including race. For Dolby, race and racial identities are *“no longer tied to apartheid-driven cultural absolutes, but instead rotates around the axes of political and social change in South Africa”*.⁷⁷ In the school, students of all races struggle to define their identities, *“into a world in upheaval: one in which the racial divides of apartheid are both absent and fiercely present”*.⁷⁸

⁷³ Sarah Nuttall and Cheryl-Ann Michael, "Introduction: Imagining the Present," in *Senses of Culture: South African Culture Studies*, ed. Sarah Nuttall and Cheryl-Ann Michael (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), Helen Strauss, "Living the Pain of Creolisation: Shifting Contexts of Subject Formation in K. Sello Duiker's *Thirteen Cents* and Lueen Conning's *a Coloured Place*," in *Under Construction: 'Race' and Identity in South Africa Today*, ed. Natasha Distiller and Melissa Steyn (Sandton: Heinemann South Africa, 2004).

⁷⁴ Nuttall and Michael, "Introduction: Imagining the Present," 6.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Sarah Nuttall, "Review: Jacobs on Nuttall - Senses of Culture: A Reply " H-Net: Humanities and Social Sciences Online(2002), <http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=h-safrica&month=0211&week=d&msg=JnQ23orh9yr8s7a1YExKuw&user=&pw>.

⁷⁷ Dolby, *Constructing Race: Youth, Identity, and Popular Culture in South Africa*, 63.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 61.

Race remains salient within the non-racial, post-apartheid state. The school is a melting pot where boundary crossing between different racial groups occurs, but this happens unevenly throughout the different years. For example, Dolby observes coloured and black girls in grade twelve, who are in the minority, socialising and bonding over a shared taste in R&B music, yet this socialisation does not occur in grade eight because, as she surmises, they are in the majority and thus had no need to form 'outside' associations.⁷⁹ In the absence of apartheid-enforced borders, these students define and redefine borders between the self and the other; "*the contours and textures of the borders are open for change and reconfiguration*".⁸⁰ Dolby utilises Bourdieu's concept of taste, an expression of the identity of the individual but bound up in the context, where structure and agency intertwine. Furthermore, taste is not simply a product of identification but part of the process. Yet, as she recognises, taste is "*simultaneously flimsy and unstable*".⁸¹ Cultural objects are recoded by students to fit their identity. Dolby draws attention to techno music, which, despite its African-American roots, is perceived as 'white music'.⁸² In a similar vein, therefore, soccer in South Africa must be questioned. Despite its colonial roots, discussed in the previous chapter, the black fans at the start of this chapter coded domestic soccer as 'theirs'.

Focusing on the creole opens identity construction up to a global connectivity rather than exceptionalising it and treating South Africa as a unique case. Nuttall argues that using creolisation as a theoretical standpoint from which to approach South Africa "*re-reads South Africa's relationship to other spaces, aiming to open South Africa's readings of itself to new boundaries*".⁸³ The history of South Africa, she argues is constituted from processes of "*mobility and dislocation*",⁸⁴ including colonialism and labour migrancy from southern Africa. South Africa, therefore, has been subject to continual process of cultural mixing. The previous chapter referred to the work of

⁷⁹ Ibid. Chapter Six

⁸⁰ Ibid., 109-10.

⁸¹ Ibid., 67.

⁸² Ibid., 75.

⁸³ Nuttall, "Review: Jacobs on Nuttall - Senses of Culture: A Reply".

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Coplan and Hannerz, both of whom emphasised the reinterpretation of aspects of American popular culture as part of their identity. These global commodities, as Dolby contends, “take on specific, racialized meanings within their lives: that the global intimately shapes students’ play with the local, lived reality of race”.⁸⁵ As with Dolby highlighting techno music, Battersby analogously emphasises the use of South African hip-hop music by coloured youth to connect to an African-Americanisation of coloured identity. Globally, hip-hop communicates a sense of ‘blackness’, but as Battersby identifies, such blackness is “not bound by race, but on conditions of exclusion and oppression”;⁸⁶ a global ghettoization. However, creolisation is uneven and thus people are subjected to and participate in differently. Dolby utilises Appadurai’s ‘scapes’ of global flows to address the variability in access to these flows. With regards to the pupils at the school, she argues that on the whole they exist on the periphery of these flows. Especially those who are poor or working class, “they lack the economic resources that would allow them to materially exist in the centre”.⁸⁷

Utilising creolisation as a theoretical basis to progress beyond race/ class binaries brings new problems, which need to be addressed. Wasserman and Jacobs critique the use of creolisation, as they argue it fails to acknowledge the structural impact of the legacy of apartheid. Creolisation is not the only process of identity formation at work in post-apartheid South Africa as, they continue to reason, “exclusionary notions of identity based on race and ethnicity, are still operative among certain sectors of post-apartheid South African society”.⁸⁸ Wasserman and Jacobs are concerned that a creolisation approach over emphasises human agency within the process, diminishing the impact of structural forces; essentially, creolisation “is not a

⁸⁵ Dolby, *Constructing Race: Youth, Identity, and Popular Culture in South Africa*, 11.

⁸⁶ Jane Battersby, “‘Sometimes It Feels Like I’m Not Black Enough’: Recast(E)ing Coloured Identity through South African Hip-Hop as a Postcolonial Text,” in *Shifting Selves: Post-Apartheid Essays on Mass Media, Culture and Identity*, ed. Herman Wasserman and Sean Jacobs (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2003), 119.

⁸⁷ Dolby, *Constructing Race: Youth, Identity, and Popular Culture in South Africa*, 13.

⁸⁸ Herman Wasserman and Sean Jacobs, “Introduction,” in *Shifting Selves: Post-Apartheid Essays on Mass Media, Culture and Identity*, ed. Herman Wasserman and Sean Jacobs (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2003), 3.

free-for-all".⁸⁹ Elsewhere, Jacobs argues that although this desire to move beyond racial difference and segregation is necessary, it is difficult to escape from the realities of everyday life within South African society, which "still largely reflects economic inequalities that coincide with the racial divides of the past".⁹⁰ Wasserman illustrates this with reference to the 'digital divide' in South Africa, contending that "virtual South Africa still largely reflects actual South Africa".⁹¹ Despite attempting to move away from race and class as primary modes of understanding South Africa, such approaches are still bound by the salience of race and class in post-apartheid South Africa. This, then, reiterates the concerns of Seekings and Nattrass earlier in this chapter, that class is still a fundamental consideration. Nuttall does respond to these concerns and critiques. For her, creolisation not only acknowledges the legacy of apartheid, it can be itself a violent process bound by the inequalities and violence fostered by apartheid and perpetuated in the post-apartheid era. Creolisation is *not a happy process*".⁹²

Within this instability of identity then, South Africans of different backgrounds are faced with having to redefine their identities after the official end of apartheid. Such a process of redefinition and reinterpretation emerging from a space encompassing the interplay of agency and structural forces in which creolisation occurs, has spawned a multiplicity of narratives in an attempt to relocate themselves in the new South Africa. For instance, Steyn identifies multiple, generalised narratives of white South Africans struggling to locate themselves. These range from a continued hardliner belief in a master narrative of white superiority, feelings of marginalisation and besiegement, a denial of racial identity to a heightened self-

⁸⁹ Ibid., 4.

⁹⁰ Sean Jacobs, "Review: Senses of Culture: South African Culture Studies," H-Net: Humanities and Social Sciences Online(2002), <http://h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=6731>.

⁹¹ Herman Wasserman, "Dial-up Identity: South African Languages in Cyberspace," in *Shifting Selves: Post-Apartheid Essays on Mass Media, Culture and Identity*, ed. Herman Wasserman and Sean Jacobs (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2003), 87.

⁹² Nuttall, "Review: Jacobs on Nuttall - Senses of Culture: A Reply".

awareness of how their 'whiteness' has impacted on the country.⁹³ Steyn argues that these narratives are attempts to both reconstruct and deconstruct the white self in the face of change and upheaval. These narratives speak to themes of loss, displacement and "*the subjective experience of dispossession*".⁹⁴ What Steyn emphasises from this is that constructions of 'whiteness' and white identity in post-apartheid South Africa are not homogenous but *polycentric* and *polyvocal*.⁹⁵ This polycentricism in turn opens up space for the deconstruction of plural identities of white South Africans. As Manzo highlights, being white was a constituent identity, the suppression of differences between English-speaker and Afrikaner necessitated a commonly perceived threat; *swart gevaar*.⁹⁶ For Salusbury and Foster, white English-speaking South Africans (whom they terms WESSAs) are a disparate group of people who suffer from a lack of self-definition, instead preferring to tap into ideas of individualism in a wider global Western community. By tapping into this global community, Salusbury and Foster argue that WESSAs are claiming 'culturelessness' and 'normalcy'. Consequently, they "*may claim a far more powerful social position than would otherwise be possible by asserting their distinctive group minority identity*".⁹⁷ Furthermore, maintaining such associations outside of South Africa are entwined with "*discourses of Eurocentric diffusionism that set European and American norms above African or South African standards*";⁹⁸ it is seen to be better elsewhere. In contrast to WESSAs, Steyn asserts that the dominant characteristic of Afrikaner 'whiteness' is a *resistant 'whiteness'*.⁹⁹ Unlike WESSAs, who can draw on global connections, especially with the West, Steyn argues that Afrikaners are unable to do the same, thus developing strategies to resist change. As before, she offers a multiple of

⁹³ Melissa Steyn, "Whiteness Just Isn't What It Used to Be": White Identity in a Changing South Africa (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001).

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 162.

⁹⁶ Kathryn Manzo, *Creating Boundaries: The Politics of Race and Nation* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1996), 72.

⁹⁷ Tess Salusbury and Don Foster, "Rewriting Wessa Identity," in *Under Construction: 'Race' and Identity in South Africa Today*, ed. Natasha Distiller and Melissa Steyn (Sandton: Heinemann South Africa, 2004), 98.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁹⁹ Melissa Steyn, "Rehybridising the Creole: New South African Afrikaners," in *Under Construction: 'Race' and Identity in South Africa Today*, ed. Natasha Distiller and Melissa Steyn (Sandton: Heinemann South Africa, 2004), 70.

common narratives including emigration, strengthening a cultural identity and expanding Afrikanerdom to incorporate non-white Afrikaans speakers (*Afrikaanses*).¹⁰⁰ Significantly, this focus on resistance reiterates Wasserman and Jacobs' concerns about creolisation as a theoretical approach to understanding South Africa. What Steyn's narratives reveal is the continuing impact of difference, conflict and segregation, which creolisation cannot ignore.

Framing the research

After discussing the various approaches to studying identity in South Africa, it becomes necessary to revisit the events of the 2008 Vodacom Challenge, which began both this chapter and the thesis. Although creolisation as a theoretical perspective is problematic, it asks new questions about what is taking place. The black/ white binary that both the Chiefs supporters after the game and the subsequent press coverage engaged in cannot be understood as fixed, immobile and incontrovertible categories, which the liberal perspective tacitly reinforced. On the visible level alone, to understand the supporters in the stadium as black Chiefs fans and white United fans would be to completely omit those who did not conform to this duality. Furthermore, there was little, if any, mention of a significant number of Indian and coloured fans at the game, most of whom appeared to be in the colours of United. The apparent homogeneity of these groups through such an approach would severely limit the scope of enquiry to little more than description of groups of soccer fans, thus reflecting Johnstone's earlier critique of the liberal perspective. Employing the Marxist critique does open up the stadium to a new interpretation, offering a wider scope. Recorded in my research diary, it appeared that the United fans generally had a greater disposable income through the wearing of United replica shirts (which were more expensive than domestic jerseys), the public display of expensive cellphones and the choice of transport to and from the game. I had

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 72-80.

observed that the vast majority of those who were travelling by minibus taxi were Kaizer Chiefs fans; United fans were conspicuous by their absence in these taxis. Further observation at both Chiefs v United fixtures revealed a more complex class stratification in both sets of supporters but most noticeable with Chiefs. There were some who could be identified as part of an emerging black middle class through conspicuous consumption, yet many did or could not do the same. On appearance then, it could be argued that race-based divisions argued in the newspapers were obscuring class identities and divisions; supporting United signified upward mobility, supporting Chiefs (and Pirates) were more representative of a working class identity.

However, as discussed earlier, such an approach would treat these fans as empty units, devoid of agency. Reflecting on the social historical approach, focusing on the individual fans as the subject of inquiry would undoubtedly bring to light a wealth of personal narratives. This, in turn, would record the variety of reasons why the fans chose to go to the game and why they chose to support the teams that they do. Furthermore, it has the potential to ground these stories in the fans' wider experiences in everyday life. Race and class both impact on the choices of the soccer fans but, similar to Bozzoli's consideration of gender as an alternative factor, further preliminary observations of fans on match day brought to light a gender dynamic. For instance, in addition to travelling to both Chiefs versus United fixtures with a predominantly male group, the stadium was a primarily male-dominated arena. This in turn opened up questions of how gender impacted on the choice of and how they supported their team. Yet, mindful of the criticism that social history was unable to inform broader social theory and that it gave too much emphasis on the self-agency of the fans, the wealth of narrative that a stadium full of soccer fans could produce could be textually thick and rich but could become problematic when attempting to draw out more than loose generalisations.

What Nuttall's creolisation approach does then, despite its acknowledged flaws, is continue to open up space to uncover new meanings of established identities. It is not enough to restrict investigation to the divisions between Chiefs and United, black and white or middle class and working class soccer fans. Such a focus relegates the interactions between these groups, the flows of people engaging in everyday social interaction. As a case in point, the small pockets of white Kaizer Chiefs fans would most likely have been responded to with bemusement (see chapters four and six for an expanded discussion on my experiences and impact on the predominantly black Kaizer Chiefs supporters as a white man). If South African domestic soccer and the support of a domestic soccer team signalled a sense of 'blackness', these white fans could potentially be engaging in a number of processes including consciously displaying signs of integration and 'sameness' with the predominantly black Chiefs fans, tentatively exploring a new social space into which they have rarely ventured before. Interaction between different groupings in the stadium would not simply be predicated on difference and conflict but also assimilation and integration. The matches featuring Manchester United became a site in which soccer fans of a variety of racial and class backgrounds encountered a variety of others in a way that was unusual in both the Johannesburg soccer landscape and everyday life in the city. Jacobs and Wasserman's critique of the creolisation approach serves as a reminder that the fans at these matches were not just engaged in creating new identities but were still influenced by the inequalities fostered and maintained by both apartheid and the post-apartheid era. The accusations made by some Chiefs and Pirates fans in *The Star* during the Vodacom Challenge that United fans believed that "*whatever is done by Europeans is better*",¹⁰¹ was symptomatic of a widely-held assumption that these (predominantly white) United fans looked towards Europe rather South Africa. The stadium became a space in which both creolisation and continuing importance of race and class in everyday life were simultaneously reproduced. As Walker notes, the "*instability of racial identities* means that *space opens out for tracking change, even while acknowledging the*

¹⁰¹ 'One on One'. *The Star* (Shoot supplement), July 25, 2008.

'enormous power' race holds in South Africa still."¹⁰² Whereas Dolby emphasises the school as a space in which these tensions in everyday South Africa are played out, this thesis emphasises the soccer match in a similar light. The advantage of this is that the scope of inquiry is not limited to youth culture but incorporates a myriad of South Africans. Yet, these tensions do not exist in a vacuum. Bozzoli emphasises the context of physical space in identity formation. She asserts, *"a system that defines itself in terms of 'separateness' – segregation, apartness – is bound to have a spatial dimension"*.¹⁰³ In the context of South Africa, she continues by arguing that *"physical separation seems so overdetermined as to appear to render quite obvious its social effects"*.¹⁰⁴ As such, this issue needs to be addressed. In the mid-1990s, Robinson argued that while political power had been lost by whites, *"some aspects of this order may well persist"* because of the *"spatial dimensions of race, privilege and wealth"*.¹⁰⁵ What the next section of this chapter does is to not only provide the context in which this research is set but also to highlight the tensions between a continued apartheid legacy and the dynamics of creolisation in post-apartheid Johannesburg.

Race and space in Johannesburg

During apartheid, Johannesburg was characterised by a multiplicity of racial spaces. Central Johannesburg was demarcated as a white residential and business area: *"a cosmopolitan, European city in Africa, but only for a small segment of its population"*.¹⁰⁶ Shops, restaurants and theatres supplied European food, film and culture while big business dominated the central business district (CBD). Such a European cosmopolitanism had the effect of creating a *"cosseted, often pleasant and surreal*

¹⁰² Melanie Walker, "Race Is Nowhere and Race Is Everywhere: Narratives from Black and White South African University Students in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 26, no. 1 (2005): 43.

¹⁰³ Belinda Bozzoli, *Theatres of Struggle and the End of Apartheid* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 10.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Jennifer Robinson, *The Power of Apartheid: State, Power and Space in South African Cities* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1996), 219.

¹⁰⁶ AbdouMaliq Simone, "People as Infrastructure," in *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis*, ed. Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe (London: Duke University Press, 2008), 72.

version of the industrial inner city".¹⁰⁷ Through the importing and imitation of European culture, whites were removed from their surrounding world.¹⁰⁸ Conversely, apart from Alexandra township in the north of the city, most blacks had to live in the outlying townships, noticeably Soweto. Life here was a world away from the luxuries of white Johannesburg. By the beginning of 1976, only 20% of houses in Soweto had electricity and consequently, the use of wood and coal for the stoves meant that during the mornings and evening, "*the whole expanse of the townships would be covered in a thick, dark-grey blanket of acrid smoke*".¹⁰⁹ Black wages were, on average, 30-40% that of whites while infant mortality in the township was much higher.¹¹⁰ Yet Johannesburg was never truly segregated. As Mather highlights, some black domestic workers were housed in spartan living quarters on the roofs of Hillbrow flats.¹¹¹ Approximately 10km northwest of the CBD, the district of Sophiatown was a mixed-race area until forced relocation began in 1955. Sophiatown was one of the few areas in Johannesburg that blacks and coloureds could own houses and land after the implementation of the 1923 Urban Areas Act. According to Hannerz, Sophiatown was an area where not only races but "*classes and lifestyles mingled*";¹¹² it was not uncommon to see township shacks alongside neat houses and cottages as it was a highly sought-after area for a small black middle class as well as a larger working class. Similarly, Coplan highlights the communal toilet facilities as a place where people of different races and classes would interact.¹¹³ Furthermore, the contradiction of apartheid meant that while the

¹⁰⁷ Peter Stewart, *Segregation and Singularity: Politics and Its Context among White, Middle-Class English Speakers in Late-Apartheid Johannesburg* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2004), 53.

¹⁰⁸ Achille Mbembe, "Aesthetics of Superfluity," in *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis*, ed. Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall (London: Duke University Press, 2008), 39.

¹⁰⁹ Keith Beavon, *Johannesburg: The Making and Shaping of the City* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2004), 144.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Charles Mather, "Residential Segregation and Johannesburg's 'Locations in the Sky'," *South African Geographical Journal* 69 (1985).

¹¹² Ulf Hannerz, "Sofiatown: The View from Afar," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 20, no. 2 (1994): 185.

¹¹³ Coplan, *In Township Tonight!*, 152.

city was designed to separate races, the reliance on black labour meant that black workers were temporary visitors to these areas; segregation “was a fiction”.¹¹⁴

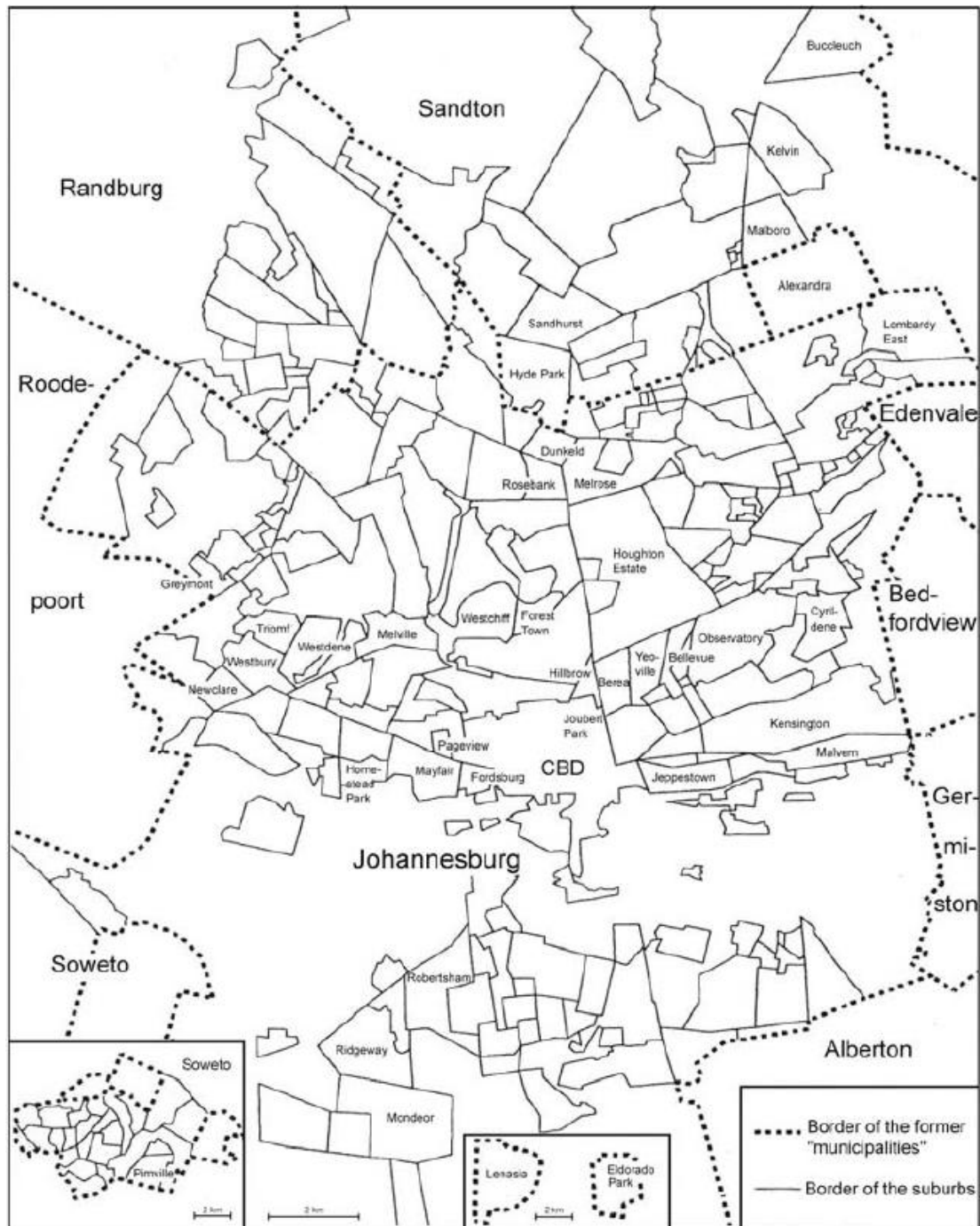


Figure 1 - Map of suburb boundaries in Johannesburg¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Stewart, Segregation and Singularity: Politics and Its Context among White, Middle-Class English Speakers in Late-Apartheid Johannesburg, 54.

¹¹⁵ Map in Jürgen Bähr and Ulrich Jürgens, "Johannesburg: Life after Apartheid," GeoJournal Library 83, no. 4 (2006): 178.

The dynamics of the white city changed when big business began moving out of the centre in the 1970s. Initially because of a lack of space and access created by the narrow streets of the CBD¹¹⁶, cheaper rents also made the suburbs a more attractive proposition. Although big projects such as the 202 metre-high Carlton Centre still continued in the CBD, Beavon notes that by 1982, the explosion of shopping malls in the suburbs meant that *“most of the big-spending shoppers [were] lost to the CBD”*.¹¹⁷ In the late seventies, a lack of centrally-located housing for those classified as coloured or Indian combined with a surplus of housing in white central residential areas such as Hillbrow, Berea and Joubert Park led to a *“‘greying’ of Johannesburg”*.¹¹⁸ Middle class Indians and coloureds became illegal tenants in supposedly white areas. Although illegal, they were ideal tenants as the landlords could charge higher rents as the tenants had no legal recourse. At this point, Morris observed that the movement of blacks into these areas *“was so limited that it never received a mention in the media or in Parliament”*.¹¹⁹ This was due to a continued apprehension of contravening the 1950 Group Areas Act¹²⁰ and fear of reprisals from white residents. However, against the background of a national state of emergency in 1986, the mixed marriage and influx laws were repealed, which saw a new wave of people enter these areas; the black working class. A combination of the refusal of many whites to live in multi-racial areas, fear of crime and the increase in urban decay due to less private money and tax revenue that could be invested in urban renewal led to many white residents relocate to the suburbs.¹²¹ Morris argues that by 1987, the ruling National Party had *“more or less surrendered over implementing the*

¹¹⁶ Beavon, *Johannesburg: The Making and Shaping of the City*, 177.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 205.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 213.

¹¹⁹ Alan Morris, *Bleakness and Light: Inner-City Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1999), 20.

¹²⁰ This act created enshrined racially segregated residential areas. Text available from http://www.disa.ukzn.ac.za/index.php?option=com_displaydc&recordID=leg19500707.028.020.041

¹²¹ André Czeglédy, "Villas of the Highveld: A Cultural Perspective on Johannesburg and Its 'Northern Suburbs'," in *Emerging Johannesburg: Perspectives on the Postapartheid City*, ed. Richard Tomlinson, et al. (London: Routledge, 2003), 27.

*Group Areas Act in Johannesburg*¹²² due to the sheer numbers of new black residents. Consequently, 'white flight' had left landlords dependent on these new tenants. This movement of people has served to reinforce Johannesburg as a racially divided city.

The divided city is encapsulated by the financial centre of Sandton in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg juxtaposed alongside the township of Alexandra, a constant reminder of the inequality that is "*part of people's daily existence*".¹²³ On a national scale, white South Africans have a much higher employment rate than other racial groups (61.4% White, 49.2% Indian/ Asian, 46.1% Coloured and 27.8% Black African).¹²⁴ Of those in employment, whites still hold many white-collar jobs, even though they only make up 7.9% of the population.¹²⁵ While HIV/ AIDS soared from 1% of the adult population in 1990 to 20% in 2000, the townships are more affected than the city suburbs. Within the townships, the informal settlements are most affected.¹²⁶ Black inhabitants make up approximately 85% of the population in the south of the greater Johannesburg area.¹²⁷ New low-income housing projects are frequently built on cheap land on the outskirts of the townships, meaning that these residents have to travel further to work, even if they can ill-afford to do so. This reflects Harrison's argument that despite the diversity of people in the post-apartheid inner city, the "*racial and special distortions associated with apartheid planning overwhelmingly remain in place*".¹²⁸ As such, Morris asserts that such a legacy "*with its*

¹²² Morris, *Bleakness and Light: Inner-City Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg*, 58.

¹²³ Philip Bonner and Noor Nieftagodien, *Alexandra: A History* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2008), 417.

¹²⁴ "Census 2001: Census in Brief," (Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2003), 52.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹²⁶ Frédéric le Marcis, "The Suffering Body of the City," in *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis*, ed. Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe (London: Duke University Press, 2008), 170.

¹²⁷ This includes the townships of Soweto and Orange Farm

¹²⁸ Kirsten Harrison, "Less May Not Be More, but It Still Counts: The State of Social Capital in Yeoville, Johannesburg," *Urban Forum* 13, no. 1 (2002): 71.

enormous emphasis on boundary maintenance has also impacted on people's ability to be tolerant of difference".¹²⁹ The white flight to the suburbs would seem to support this.

Presently, much of the centre of Johannesburg suffers from urban decay. In the examples of Berea and Hillbrow, Jürgens and Bähr observe that this trend post-apartheid has been "*immense*", including residential overcrowding, "*increasing structural decay and wearing out of infrastructure*".¹³⁰ These central areas are often characterised by problems of crime and violence. Noord Street Taxi Rank in the CBD has a particularly notorious reputation, reinforced by the rape of Nwabise Ngcukana by taxi drivers in February 2008.¹³¹ The 'de-gentrification' of the centre has fuelled the characterisation of the area as a place rife with "*inner city crime, drug dealing and sex work*".¹³² Along with the white inhabitants of these central areas leaving *en masse*, Morris identifies a second demographic shift; the arrival of immigrants from other African countries, notably from Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Many immigrants have been tarred with the label "*Makwerekwere*", an offensive term referring to foreign Africans. As Landau and Freemantle have observed, these West African immigrants, and especially Nigerians, have become synonymous with crime and criminality, although they subsequently note that Zimbabweans are becoming the focus of "*the blame for Johannesburg's crime and other social ills*".¹³³ The repeal of the influx laws had made places such as Hillbrow and Berea attractive to an emerging, non-white middle class but by the end of the 1990s this was rapidly disappearing. Morris summarises this,

¹²⁹ Alan Morris, "Our Fellow Africans Make Our Lives Hell': The Lives of Congolese and Nigerians Living in Johannesburg," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, no. 6 (1998): 1125.

¹³⁰ Ulrich Jürgens, Martin Gnad, and Jürgen Bähr, "Residential Dynamics in Yeoville, Johannesburg in the 1990s after the End of Apartheid," in *Transforming South Africa*, ed. Armin Osmanovic (Hamburg: GIGA, 2002), 190.

¹³¹ Hassim records: "Other taxi drivers joined in continuing the assault, stripping her naked and pouring alcohol over her in full view of a cheering public", Shireen Hassim, "After Apartheid: Consensus, Contention, and Gender in South Africa's Public Sphere," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 22, no. 4 (2009): 458.

¹³² Jonathan Stadler and Sinead Delany, "The 'Healthy Brothel': The Context of Clinical Services for Sex Workers in Hillbrow, South Africa," *Culture, Health and Sexuality* 8, no. 5 (2006): 452.

¹³³ Loren B. Landau and Iriann Freemantle, "Tactical Cosmopolitanism and Idioms of Belonging: Insertion and Self-Exclusion in Johannesburg," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36, no. 3 (2010): 378.

writing, *"responses to the decline of Hillbrow are not colour specific"*, thus suggesting that *"the class location of individuals is perhaps as significant a portent of their residential desires"*.¹³⁴

In contrast, most white inhabitants of Johannesburg prefer to work and socialise in the more secure environment of the suburban shopping mall or office complex¹³⁵, often treating the CBD as a *"virtual 'no-go' zone"*.¹³⁶ Such malls are a fusion of a non-descript Western shopping experience and *faux* European architecture¹³⁷ inside which the *"gritty city that surrounds it"* temporarily ceases to exist.¹³⁸ As of 2009, Johannesburg had 80 shopping malls, two of which (Eastgate and Sandton City) Rogerson describes as 'regional centres', spanning 40,000 sq km each.¹³⁹ The increased fear of crime predominantly among whites led to a trend for houses in the northern suburbs to become 'fortified' through the application of alarms, panic buttons, electric fences and high walls, while many properties are adorned with the signs of 24-hour private armed security patrols. Whatever the individual reasons that people have for the fencing-off of existing residential areas and the creation of gated communities, the spatial consequence of this has been to *"produce a divided city, at odds with the post-apartheid ideals of unity and equality"*.¹⁴⁰

This has the effect of creating what Ballard terms, *"comfort zones"*, spaces in which *"around one's sense of oneself are matched and managed"*.¹⁴¹ Keim's observation

¹³⁴ Morris, Bleakness and Light: Inner-City Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg, 305.

¹³⁵ Richard Tomlinson and Pauline Larsen, "The Race, Class and Space of Shopping," in *Emerging Johannesburg: Perspectives on the Postapartheid City*, ed. Richard Tomlinson and Robert A Beauregard (London: Routledge, 2003), 48.

¹³⁶ Czeglédy, "Villas of the Highveld: A Cultural Perspective on Johannesburg and Its 'Northern Suburbs'," 28.

¹³⁷ Mbembe, "Aesthetics of Superfluity," 63.

¹³⁸ Lindsay Bremner, *Johannesburg: One City, Colliding Worlds* (Johannesburg: STE, 2004), 54.

¹³⁹ Christian Rogerson, "Urban Tourism and Regional Tourists: Shopping in Johannesburg, South Africa," *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie* 102, no. 3 (2011): 325.

¹⁴⁰ Charlotte Lemanski, Karina Landman, and Matthew Durlington, "Divergent and Similar Experiences of 'Gating' in South Africa: Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town," *Urban Forum* 19, no. 2 (2008): 155.

¹⁴¹ Richard Ballard, "Assimilation, Emigration, Semigration and Integration: 'White' Peoples Strategies for Finding a Comfort Zone in Post-Apartheid South Africa," in *Under*

regarding limited social mixing, noted in the previous chapter, can be seen as “a cultural fence”,¹⁴² restricting the social interaction between self and stranger. Bauman suggests that such a process pushes the stranger “outside the realm of the ordinary”¹⁴³ but the architecture of security and fear creates a literal fence between self and other. Such responses to the fear of crime have in fact facilitated the segregation of people and thus creating, as Lemanski argues, “a ‘new apartheid’ that bears frightening similarities to old apartheid structures”.¹⁴⁴ Those who ‘have’ can afford to live in the affluent suburbs, behind the various security features and shop in the air-conditioned malls. Lemanski further argues that the fear of crime discourse veils a wider fear of the other, often with racial undertones. She contends that “whites have long used fear of crime as a euphemism for blacks”.¹⁴⁵ Through this understanding, criminals are regularly ‘othered’ as poor and black. The discourses of crime and fear are not limited to white, middle class South Africans. In the more central areas, security provisions are still visible but barbed wire, broken glass mounted on the tops of walls and padlocked gates replaced the more costly variants. Black African immigrants become constructed as the criminal force. In both cases, the process of excluding other groups in a spatial context reinforces “the social construct of the ‘other’ as dangerous, providing further exclusionary justification as well as further fear”.¹⁴⁶

It can be difficult to understand Johannesburg as anything other than languishing under the spectre of apartheid. By the end of the 1990s, Morris wrote of Hillbrow:

“it is apparent that unless innovative and meaningful government intervention intensifies, the increasing racial exclusivity in Hillbrow and adjacent inner-city

Construction: ‘Race’ and Identity in South Africa Today, ed. Natasha Distiller and Melissa Steyn (Sandton: Heinemann South Africa, 2004), 51, 54.

¹⁴² Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991), 66.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Charlotte Lemanski, “A New Apartheid? The Spatial Implications of Fear of Crime in Cape Town, South Africa,” *Environment and Urbanization* 16, no. 2 (2004): 101.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 109.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

neighbourhoods will be accompanied by ever increasing social and physical decline".¹⁴⁷

Morris is not alone in his bleak outlook for the future of the city. Regarding inequality, Bremner bemoans that maybe Johannesburg is "*just a mining town after all. Where most of the people live out-of-sight lives in appalling conditions so that some of the people can get rich quick*".¹⁴⁸ As a vignette, I experienced the extent to which the city could be viewed as divided and segregated during the xenophobic riots in Johannesburg in May 2008. Images of violence saturated newspapers and television news. However, this violence, which was aimed at foreign African immigrants occurred in townships surrounding the city, notably Alexandra. Even when it spread into the city, it was primarily limited to central areas. Consequently, it was apparent that such violence was notable by its absence in the predominantly white, middle class suburbs; life appeared to proceed as usual. It did not feel that these events were happening only a few kilometres away.

However, there are alternative logics of the city that emphasise spaces of optimism, hope and success. AbdouMaliq Simone acknowledges the immeasurable hardships of much of the black population in Johannesburg but argues that to view them purely as marginalised victims of urban life is to obscure the myriad of interactions and co-operation within and transcending various ethnic and national groupings striving to escape the margins.¹⁴⁹ Bremner similarly emphasises that the Johannesburg CBD is not merely a marginalised and undesirable place to live. She highlights a small but growing number of "*irregular income workers*", including taxi drivers and hairdressers who live in refurbished buildings in the centre. The positive attitudes of these people towards the CBD "*has challenged the perception of the inner city as a Wild West shootout between intransigent landlords and rabid tenant committees*".¹⁵⁰ Rogerson highlights the collection of micro-enterprises in the

¹⁴⁷ Morris, Bleakness and Light: Inner-City Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg, 338.

¹⁴⁸ Bremner, Johannesburg: One City, Colliding Worlds, 135.

¹⁴⁹ Simone, "People as Infrastructure," 68.

¹⁵⁰ Bremner, Johannesburg: One City, Colliding Worlds, 68.

Johannesburg fashion district in the CBD as an example of renewed government investment in the area.¹⁵¹

Not all of Ballard's white respondents fitted into simply binary categories. As he writes, "*some did not read the city as 'First World'/'Third World' but rather as a cosmopolitan space within which they felt comfortable to move around*".¹⁵² As such, the no-go zone of the city's CBD is not perceived by all white, middle class South Africans as dangerous. The CBD has been the beneficiary of investment in new public transport. The Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transit network (BRT) connects the inner city with Ellis Park and Soweto while the Gautrain network has now reconnected the CBD with the financial centre of Sandton, OR Tambo International Airport and Pretoria. The CBD is no longer simply a marginalised area of the city. The creation of business improvement districts has cleaned up and modernised some downtown areas. Furthermore, the suburban shopping mall is no longer 'the playground for the wealthy white'.¹⁵³ Especially in the city's middle class youth, social class is becoming more prominent as a key marker of identity.¹⁵⁴ At one level, Johannesburg appears to be suffering from a continued apartheid legacy, but as Mbembe muses, 'the fabric of the racial city is in the process of being destroyed'.¹⁵⁵ Johannesburg is a vibrant city but this does not hide the harsh realities of life for many.

Conclusion - Rainbowism

This chapter emphasises not only the continued importance of race and racial identities in post-apartheid South Africa but highlights creolisation, taste and global flows as ways to progress in academic understanding of these identities. In

¹⁵¹ Christian Rogerson, "Pro-Poor Local Economic Development in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *International Development Planning Review* 26, no. 4 (2004): 423.

¹⁵² Ballard, "Assimilation, Emigration, Semigration and Integration: 'White' Peoples Strategies for Finding a Comfort Zone in Post-Apartheid South Africa," 64.

¹⁵³ Fred de Vries, "Megamalls, Generic City," in *Johannesburg: The Elusive Metropolis*, ed. Sarah Nuttall and Achille Mbembe (London: Duke University Press, 2008), 300.

¹⁵⁴ Nuttall, "Stylizing the Self," 110.

¹⁵⁵ Mbembe, "Aesthetics of Superfluity," 63.

concluding, it is necessary to consider how this affects the nation-building pronouncements made by South African political and sporting elites, covered in the introduction of this thesis. The previous chapter established sport, and especially soccer, in South Africa as a paradox, simultaneously challenging and reinforcing racial identities, boundaries and difference. Race and difference continues to be relevant in everyday life in South Africa, although race is concurrently no longer the primary marker of identity for some. Set against the backdrop of a city simultaneously scarred by a continued apartheid-esque spatial legacy and moving beyond it, these calls for nation-building through sport are questionable.

The challenge facing the nation-building project in post-apartheid South Africa has been identifying, as Chipkin summarises:

*"What did someone living in Soweto share with someone in Sandton that they did not have in common with someone born in, say, Bulawayo?... They did not speak any particular language, nor did they follow any one faith. They had neither a common culture, nor race. Despite this, the first democratic election proceeded as if they had".*¹⁵⁶

The 1995 Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act set out that *"the Constitution states that the pursuit of national unity, the well-being of all South African citizens and peace require reconciliation between the people of South Africa and the reconstruction of society"*.¹⁵⁷ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which emerged from this act was the mechanism from which national reconciliation was to materialise. As Posel and Simpson argue, one of the key tenets of the TRC was that the *"production of a shared national identity and of public memories in respect of landmark historical events and struggles was understood to be an integral part of the new nation-building project"*.¹⁵⁸ However, the success of the TRC has been viewed with mixed

¹⁵⁶ Ivor Chipkin, *Do South Africans Exist? Nationalism, Democracy and the Identity of 'the People'* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2007), 174.

¹⁵⁷ "Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act 34 of 1995," (South African Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 1995).

¹⁵⁸ Deborah Posel and Graeme Simpson, "The Power of Truth: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Context," in *Commissioning the Past: Understanding South*

reactions. For instance, although Daniel, Cherry and Fullard contend that the nationwide televised testimonies of victims communicated *"images of pain, grief and regret... to a public that generally remained spellbound by what it was witnessing"*,¹⁵⁹ van der Merwe argues that the national reconciliation project did *"not automatically produce reconciliation at other levels in the society"*,¹⁶⁰ thus questioning how deep this nation-building permeated society. This challenge is still ongoing and is enshrined in the ANC constitution. Rule 2.5 states, *"Build a South African nation with a common patriotism and loyalty in which the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the people is recognised"*.¹⁶¹ Clearly then, the challenge is still very much a work in progress.

South African national identity has often been framed in the discourse of 'Rainbowism'; a nation composed of various, distinctive races. However, such a process has had the consequence reinforcing racial difference rather than moving beyond it; a paradox considering the non-racial terms that Rainbowism is couched in. Rainbowism has not emerged as a consequence of the country coming to terms with its apartheid past but instead glosses over them. What this creates, as Gqola argues, is a lack of debate: *"the antithesis of the prevalent silences around race articulation in the new South Africa. These silences are made possible by the overwhelming definition of South Africans as the rainbow nation"*.¹⁶² Referring back to Steyn's analysis of a variety of discourses of whiteness, the concept of the Rainbow nation allows some to avoid confronting the advantages that being white has afforded them, instead claiming a broader, national identity. Denying race is because, *"such is the fear of being perceived to be aligned with what is morally reproachable that even to talk about*

Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, ed. Deborah Posel and Graeme Simpson (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2002), 2.

¹⁵⁹ Janet Cherry, John Daniel, and Madeline Fullard, "Researching the 'Truth': A View from inside the Truth and Reconciliation Commission," in *Commissioning the Past: Understanding South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, ed. Deborah Posel and Graeme Simpson (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2002), 35.

¹⁶⁰ Hugo van der Merwe, "National Narrative Versus Local Truths: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Engagement with Duduza," in *Commissioning the Past: Understanding South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, ed. Deborah Posel and Graeme Simpson (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2002), 217.

¹⁶¹ ANC, "African National Congress Constitution," <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=207>.

¹⁶² Gqola, "Defining People: Analysing Power, Language and Representation in Metaphors of the New South Africa," 99.

"race" could implicate one in racism".¹⁶³ In essence, the rainbow nation is "a spectacular visual illusion"; it is a "fantasy".¹⁶⁴

In the beginning of this thesis, I included statements made by Nelson Mandela and Danny Jordaan about the World Cup and South African nation building. It was not so much nation building but a sticking plaster to disguise the multiple cracks in a heavily divided nation. Jordaan's assertion that soccer would unify the country becomes heavily contentious in the light of this. The flag waving that regularly accompanies global sporting events, as discussed in the previous chapter, is often a superficial, intense yet brief phenomenon. Researching soccer supporters during the World Cup alone would provide a skewed understanding of how the sport in South Africa can inculcate a national identity. What this thesis does is place this within the wider, fragmented context of soccer fandom in everyday life in South Africa, specifically Johannesburg. It is the silences in the national narrative that Gqola refers to that requires exploration. The racial fractures emphasised in fandom and in wider society during the 2008 Vodacom Challenge both echoed and actively reproduced wider racial divisions. Yet these divisions too are unstable, ambiguous and open to reinterpretation. While acknowledging the continued importance of division and difference in South Africa, it is too simplistic to view the Vodacom Challenge purely in terms of racial difference.

¹⁶³ Steyn, "Whiteness Just Isn't What It Used to Be": White Identity in a Changing South Africa, 105.

¹⁶⁴ Gqola, "Defining People: Analysing Power, Language and Representation in Metaphors of the New South Africa," 99.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY: FIFTEEN HOURS IN A MINIBUS TAXI AND BACK AGAIN

As in the previous chapters, this chapter begins with questions surrounding the 2008 Vodacom Challenge. The preceding chapters identified sport and popular culture as a potential vehicle to understanding identity in everyday life and subsequently South Africa as a site of contested identities. In investigating the racial binaries that emanated from the Chiefs supporters that I had travelled with and the following newspaper articles, identifying whom to research became problematic. Engaging in a bottom-up approach to social science research had created the issue of isolating the 'ordinary fan'. In practical terms, to consider the personal stories of each soccer fan in Newlands Stadium in Cape Town during the first Kaizer Chiefs v Manchester United match would be too laborious and unworkable for a single researcher. Theoretically, it is extremely difficult to identify who the everyday fan is. It raises a plethora of questions; who they are, what socio-economic, ethnic and racial backgrounds are they from, and how does the researcher find them? Is it the football hooligan that Armstrong identifies or the man in the pub that Weed describes?¹ In a South African context, it could potentially be a black working class supporter of Kaizer Chiefs or, conversely, a white middle class Manchester United supporter who is disinterested in the domestic game. Essentially, the 'ordinary fan' is a concept, not a reality. To circumvent this conundrum, I identified branches of soccer supporter clubs as distinct social groupings easily delineated. Yet, as this chapter will reveal, this approach created its own set of problems. Furthermore, this chapter explains why Johannesburg was chosen as the research site, rather than one of South Africa's other urban areas.

¹ Armstrong, *Football Hooligans: Knowing the Score*, Mike Weed, "The Story of an Ethnography: The Experience of Watching the 2002 World Cup in the Pub," *Soccer and Society* 7, no. 1 (2006).

This research answers the call from Vidacs to engage with African sport and fandom through an ethnographic methodology designed to place sport in the wider everyday life of fans. As chapter two stated, there is currently little ethnographic research on sport in the African context. While Vidacs and Baller provide a valuable resource for the African sports ethnographer, the relative wealth of work in the European context supplies potential methodological frameworks. Hughson highlights the 'new ethnographies' of Giulianotti and Armstrong as respectively workable examples of this. He argues that, unlike previous UK sports ethnographies that were more interested in "*revealing the social causes of football hooliganism*", Giulianotti and Armstrong set out to explore "*questions of social identity*".² From this basis, the chapter highlights how the research plan evolved to incorporate strands of autoethnography and visual ethnography, adapting to the situations that I found myself in. Similarly, the assortment of research methods used for the three case studies (the Greater Johannesburg branch of the Kaizer Chiefs supporters' club, the Bidvest Wits supporters' club and the Johannesburg branch of the Manchester United supporters' club of South Africa) had to be adapted to meet the varied dynamics of each site.

Case studies

With the concept of the 'ordinary fan' problematic, Giulianotti offers a solution to identifying the sample. In research on the Scottish diaspora in the US, Giulianotti and Robertson focused on official supporters' clubs and their networks.³ These groups are often well-organised and information about them easily accessible. However, using this approach can be problematic. Members of such organisations will have a stronger relationship with the team than someone who would

² John Hughson, "Among the Thugs: The 'New Ethnographies' of Football Supporting Subcultures," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 33, no. 1 (1998): 45.

³ Richard Giulianotti and Roland Robertson, "Forms of Glocalization: Globalization and the Migration Strategies of Scottish Football Fans in North America," *Sociology* 41, no. 1 (2007): 136.

occasionally watch football on the television or attend games without being a member of an official supporters' club. Giulianotti's own taxonomy of spectator identities, many of these supporters would come under the category of "*traditional/hot spectators*" in which supporting the team "*is considered to be obligatory*".⁴ These are 'atypical' cases, yet, as Flyvbjerg argues, it is not always the best course of action to choose a 'typical' case because "*the typical or average case is often not the richest in information*".⁵

Another issue was whether to restrict the research to one locale or to use a multiple case-study approach. Flyvbjerg asserts that the researcher does not necessarily need multiple cases to extract useful generalisations. He identifies a process of 'falsification', where "*if just one observation does not fit with the proposition, it is not considered valid and must therefore be either revised or rejected*".⁶ Generalisations made through this process maintain validity. Nonetheless, Stake argues that conducting research in multiple locations in a "*collective case study*",⁷ the logic is that multiple cases "*will lead to better understanding*"⁸ of the phenomena in question and assure increased validity in the data collection. With this in mind, this research focused on the respective Johannesburg branches of the Kaizer Chiefs, Bidvest Wits and Manchester United supporters organisations. Although the 2008 Vodacom Challenge had been the catalyst for the original research question, the Manchester United and Kaizer Chiefs studies were not automatic choices. This research could have been conducted with the official supporters' clubs of other major English club sides in the city, including Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea. However, unlike these clubs, United had connections in South Africa. The choice of the Kaizer Chiefs case study was a more fraught decision. The first two PSL games that I attended as a

⁴ Giulianotti, "Supporters, Followers, Fans, and Flaneurs: A Taxonomy of Spectator Identities in Football," 33.

⁵ Bent Flyvbjerg, "Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research," *Qualitative Inquiry* 12, no. 2 (2006): 229.

⁶ *Ibid.*: 228.

⁷ Robert Stake, "Case Studies," in *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*, ed. Norman K Denzin and Yvonna S Lincoln (London: Sage, 1998), 89.

⁸ *Ibid.*

tentative attempt to enter the sphere of domestic soccer were Bidvest Wits matches played within the confines of Wits University, where I was based throughout the fieldwork. Deciding that I needed to branch out from these sparsely attended games, the fixture list had conspired to have Chiefs play outside of Johannesburg while Orlando Pirates were playing at Johannesburg Stadium in the centre of the city. Naively, in an attempt to 'blend in', I purchased a Pirates shirt before the game. However, on arrival at the stadium, I realised that I was one of only two white spectators in the crowd. This proved to be advantageous as fans would constantly approach me, often wondering what a white man wearing a Pirates shirt was doing at a soccer match in central Johannesburg. Having capitalised on this, by the third Pirates match that I attended, I had been introduced to the group of 'hardcore' supporters who inhabited the south stand of Johannesburg Stadium at every game. Visually, this group resembled the ultras seen in European football; Testa describes ultras in Italy as "*generically all hardcore Italian football fans that manifest behaviours that at times exceed that considered the 'norm' in linguistics, bodily comportment and ultimately violent practices*".⁹ However, unlike the Italian ultras, these supporters were non-violent and were not linked to far-right political ideologies. At the same time, I had made contact with the Malvern branch of the Kaizer Chiefs supporters' club, later to become the Greater Johannesburg branch. This had been fortuitous as it was a spelling mistake in *Soccer Laduma*, which had caught my attention. The weekly soccer newspaper had printed details for 'Melville branch', which had surprised me as I had not expected the middle class, bohemian suburb to be home to enough domestic soccer supporters to constitute a supporters' club. After travelling with these Chiefs supporters to Rustenburg and Pretoria for two games, it became clear that I would be unable to conduct research with both Chiefs and Pirates supporters. The chairman of Malvern branch was insisting that I become a card-carrying member of the supporters' club. There was no explicit threat that I could not continue researching them if I did not join but I sensed that it would make access to

⁹ Alberto Testa, "The Ultras: An Emerging Social Movement?," *Review of European Studies* 1, no. 2 (2009): 55.

the supporters very difficult. Consequently, being a member of the Chiefs club would have made it virtually impossible to continue with the Pirates supporters; it would have been as if Armstrong had attempted to infiltrate the hardcore elements of both Sheffield United and Sheffield Wednesday. The choice to remain with the Chiefs supporters rather than continue with the Pirates supporters was a practical decision. Reflecting on my options at the end of the 2007/8 soccer season, I came to the conclusion that I had embedded myself with more success into the Chiefs organisation. The third case study, the Bidvest Wits supporters' club, was initially conceived as a control case, to see if the dynamics observed and recorded would be present here. The small size of the crowds (usually between 500 and 2,000) precluded this but the process of attending Wits games during my pre-fieldwork language training period had revealed the symbolic significance of the club as the oldest former whites-only team in the PSL and therefore an alternative landscape of Johannesburg soccer support. These three studies offer different approaches to understanding identity construction in South Africa. To understand the dynamics of the respective case studies, it is useful to consider the history of the clubs involved.

Case One - Kaizer Chiefs

Kaizer Chiefs emerged from a split with their now arch-rivals Orlando Pirates in 1969. On returning from the USA after playing for Atlanta Chiefs in the North American Soccer League (NASL) Kaizer Motaung formed an invitational XI from players that had been expelled by Pirates. Originating in Phefeni, Soweto, this showcase team became a permanent fixture on the South African soccer landscape, changing their name to Kaizer Chiefs and entering the black-run National Professional Soccer League in 1971. During the fieldwork, Kaizer Chiefs were homeless due to the programme of stadia upgrades for 2010. Consequently, they often played home games at Loftus Versfeld in nearby Pretoria but also hundreds of kilometres away in Durban, Rustenburg and Mafikeng. Since the World Cup, Chiefs have returned to Soweto, playing the majority of their fixtures at Soccer City, on the

outskirts of the township. Yet, regardless of venue, wherever Chiefs play their Soweto-based rivals Orlando Pirates and Moroka Swallows, it is still referred to a Soweto Derby. The club claims to have fourteen million fans, which would mean that there is approximately one Chiefs fan for every 3.5 South Africans. Chiefs have been an extremely successful club, winning numerous league and cup titles in the 1980s and 1990s, including the African Cup Winners' Cup in the 2001/02 season, although recent domestic cup success has not hidden the failure of the club to win the league since the 2004/5 season. Chiefs are the most popular club in South Africa and a commercial juggernaut. It is commonplace for Chiefs jerseys to be worn on the streets (more so in the predominantly black areas), and many taxis and cars are adorned with Chiefs stickers. Along with a vast array of merchandise including replica shirts, jackets and flags, joining the supporters' club entitles the member to funeral cover and retail discounts. The aim of the club is to become a 'global football brand' like Manchester United.

The nationwide supporters' club is administered from the club's offices in Naturena, Soweto. There are five tiers of membership; kids (under 12), youth (12-17), classic, silver and gold. The latter three annually cost R100, R250 and R550 (approximately £8, £20 and £44) respectively. The existence of the gold membership tier is evidence of the club's grand ambitions and the small middle class proportion of its fanbase. As of July 2009, there were 187 branches of the supporters' club. However, only forty-five of these branches had a membership above 100, the level that the club set before the branches received official branch flags, while thirty-eight branches were barely operational with less than ten members. The club expects the branches to elect a committee to oversee its duties, notably transport to the games, the organisation of meetings and social events and the enrolment of new members. At the beginning of the fieldwork, the network of branches in Johannesburg was fragmented, reputedly because of in-fighting. However, in March 2009, the club put pressure on these branches to remerge into a Greater Johannesburg branch so as to consolidate the presence of its 'home' supporters. Malvern Branch, with whom the

research began, numbered only “+/- twenty members”¹⁰ by the end of the 2007/8 season; the initial merger into Greater Johannesburg saw numbers rise to forty-nine in July 2009, while they broke the 100-member ceiling by the World Cup in 2010. The influx of new members because of the merger created challenges in data collection, which will be considered later in this chapter.

Case Two - Manchester United in South Africa

Described by Nauright and Ramfjord as possibly “*the jewel in the crown*”¹¹ of world sport due to being one of the most recognisable global football brands, Manchester United in South Africa have a predominantly white, English-speaking fan base. The exposure of United in South Africa has not been purely limited to television, newspapers and other media. United and Tottenham Hotspur played each other in an exhibition match in Mbabane, Swaziland in 1983. South African supporters of United were able to see their team in the flesh for the first time (including one of the United respondents). United returned ten years later along with Arsenal in 1993, while United have participated in the 2006 and 2008 editions of the Vodacom Challenge. Noteworthy South Africans that have played for United include the former Chiefs and Wits goalkeeper Gary Bailey (1978–87) and Quinton Fortune (1999–2006), whose Fortune FC team in South Africa became a feeder club for Manchester United. During apartheid, Manchester United legends Bobby Charlton and George Best signed short-term contracts with all-white Arcadia Shepherds (1976) and Jewish Guild (1974) respectively. Eddie Lewis, one of the Busby Babes in the 1950s, went on to coach both Wits and Chiefs, among other South African teams. While Manchester United do not have official ties to any South African clubs (unlike Ajax Amsterdam/ Ajax Cape Town and Sporting Lisbon/ Bloemfontein Celtic), they have run occasional soccer clinics in black townships. Furthermore, the South

¹⁰ Author conversation with ‘Nelson’, recorded in research diary, 19/07/2008.

¹¹ John Nauright and John Ramfjord, “Who Owns England’s Game: American Professional Sporting Influences and Foreign Ownership in the Premier League,” *Soccer and Society* 11, no. 4 (2010): 432.

African leg of the Manchester United Premier Cup, a youth tournament to find new young talent, is hosted at the SAFA Development Centre in Pimville, Soweto. United merchandise is a common sight on the streets of Johannesburg. Sports shops in malls stock United jerseys alongside local shirts, sometimes overshadowing them. Yet United shirts and other products can be seen in the townships, although there are also many fakes due to the exclusionary cost of the official goods.

The United supporters' club in South Africa was formed in 1990. It was the official club until 2000, when United sold the rights to a sports marketing company, thus stripping the existing organisation of its status. However, the company withdrew from the supporters' club, leaving it back in the control of the previous committee. The Manchester United Supporters' Club of South Africa (MUSCSA) have had branches in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Pietermaritzburg, although only the first two are currently operational. As with the Chiefs' supporters' club, membership is just a minute proportion of the team's followers in the country. As of February 2009, there were 338 registered members of the organisation nationwide. With regards to the Johannesburg branch, the branch meets monthly during the soccer season to discuss the team. Approximately 40-60 members attend these gatherings. The supporters' club runs an online forum for supporters to discuss and argue about the news from the club on a daily basis. Finally, they organise an annual tour to Old Trafford for the last home match of the season; in past seasons they have been able to privately watch United train.

Case Three - Bidvest Wits

Formed in 1921, Wits was the all-white student-only football team (until 1974) of the University of the Witwatersrand. Wits are part of a long history of white football in Johannesburg, the pinnacle of which was reached in the 1960s when clubs like Germiston Callies, Southern Suburbs, Johannesburg Rangers and Highlands Park played in the professional National Football League (NFL). While crowds were

generally small, Alegi notes that the 1959 Rangers v Callies and 1960 Durban City v Johannesburg Ramblers Castle Cup finals attracted crowds of 16,238 and 22,524 respectively.¹² Falling attendances in the 1970s and 1980s forced these clubs to disband or be sold. For example, Highlands Park in the 1960s drew about 13,000 fans per game. Yet, by the early 1980s, crowds averaged 3,000 people.¹³ Jomo Sono, a black South African football legend, bought Highlands Park in 1983, renaming it Jomo Cosmos. Like Motaung, the name was influenced by Sono's time in the USA with the New York Cosmos. In the mid-1970s Wits competed against Highlands Park in the white professional NFL and then became the first white team to join the black-run NPSL after the NFL disbanded in 1977. Wits are thus the only historically white professional top-flight team still in existence.

The 2002 sponsorship deal with national business conglomerate Bidvest impacted heavily on the club. Not only did the name of the club change from Wits University FC to Bidvest Wits, but the financial backing of the sponsor has meant that the club is no longer reliant on gate receipts and can heavily subsidise tickets for members of the supporters' club and Bidvest employees. For example, during the 2008/9 season, membership cost R300 (£25), which included a replica shirt and entry to all home fixtures. Unlike Chiefs, Wits has a far smaller fan base, and as such operates a single branch supporters' club. The club draws the majority of the fans from the student population and as of November 2008, approximately 800 students had signed up as members.¹⁴ Furthermore, with the size of the supporters' club, there was no centralised branch/ committee structure aside from an annual general meeting.

As the next chapter will show, given the diverse social geography of Chiefs, Wits and United support, the research provides three different insights into South

¹² Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, 118.

¹³ Peter Raath, *Soccer through the Years, 1862-2002* (Cape Town: Peter Raath, 2002), 212.

¹⁴ Author interview with Bidvest Wits CEO, 17/11/2008.

African fandom but acknowledges that these do not encapsulate the Johannesburg soccer landscape in its entirety.

Choosing Johannesburg

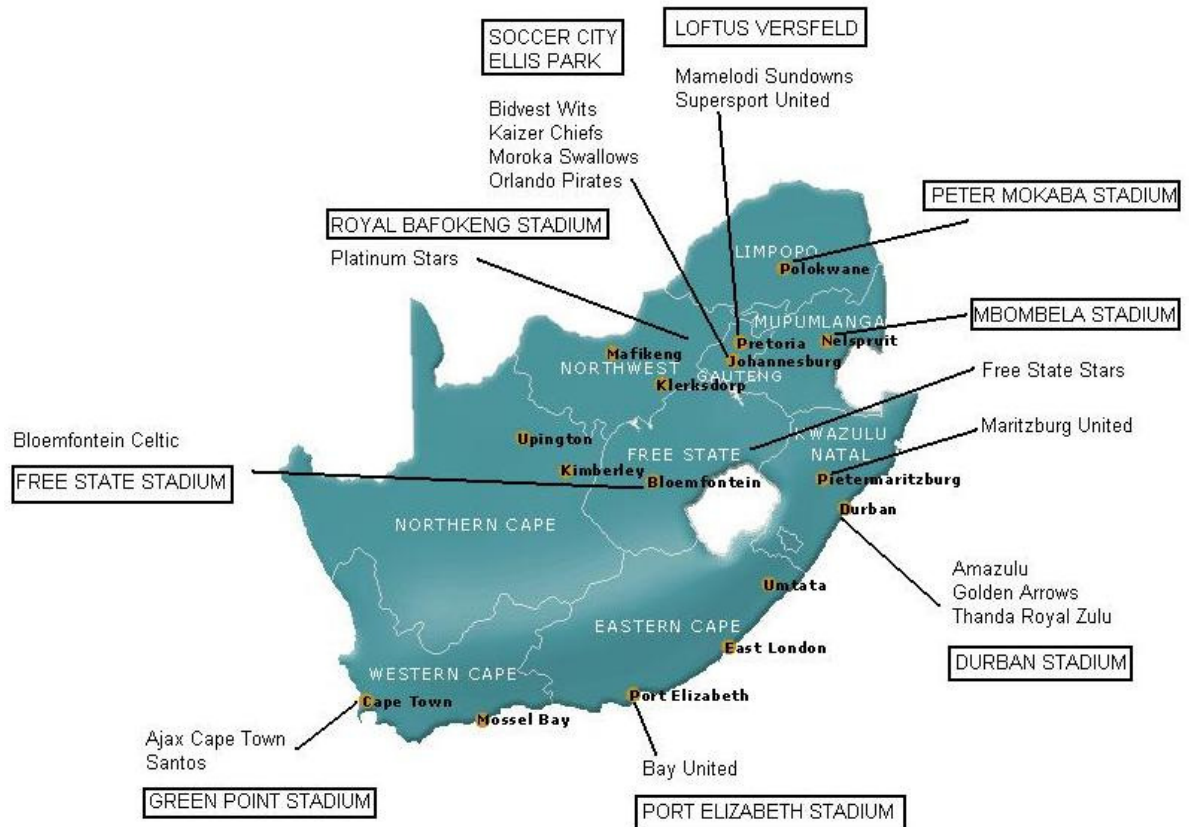


Figure 2 - Map of 2008/9 PSL teams and 2010 FIFA World Cup venues.¹⁵

Hammersley argues that *“the setting does not have to be typical: indeed, its relevance may derive from its atypicality”*.¹⁶ As can be seen from the map below, the province of Gauteng and particularly Johannesburg is host to numerous PSL clubs, including the two glamour clubs of South African football (Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates) and the oldest PSL club (Bidvest Wits, formed 1921). It is also the administrative centre for football in the country with both the PSL and the South

¹⁵ Team and stadium information from www.psl.co.za and www.fifa.com.

¹⁶ Martyn Hammersley, *What's Wrong with Ethnography?: Methodological Explorations* (London: Routledge, 1992), 86.

African Football Association (SAFA) head offices in the city. Furthermore, it is the only city in the country to have two 2010 World Cup venues (see figure two).

In the previous chapter, it was argued that the social geography of the city both reflects and impacts on constructions of identity in the post-apartheid city. However, it has to be considered if focusing the research on Johannesburg limits the ability to develop generalisations for a wider South African context. In terms of population size, the City of Johannesburg Municipality (3,888,180) is similar to that of Durban/ eThekweni (3,468,086) and Cape Town (3,497,097).¹⁷ However this masks key demographic differences between these areas and the provinces in which they are located. 71.6% of all Indian/ Asian South Africans live KwaZulu-Natal; 61.1% of all coloured South Africans live in the Western Cape and twice the number of black South Africans in the province; 41.0% of all white South Africans live in Gauteng. These figures are the legacy of multiple factors. For instance, in the Western Cape, Lemanski notes that this was due in part to the apartheid Coloured Labour Preference policy restricting jobs for black labourers and thus excluding most black Africans from the area.¹⁸ Furthermore, the significant Indian population in KwaZulu-Natal stems from the immigration of Indian indentured labourers in the mid to late nineteenth century to solve labour shortages on white farms.¹⁹

In addressing this issue, I returned to Flyvbjerg's falsification concept as the basis for a solution. Being a single researcher embedded for the long term within supporters' clubs allowed little time for checking the validity of the Johannesburg-based data in other locations. Where possible, I took the opportunity to experience soccer outside of Johannesburg. With regards to the Manchester United supporters this process happened in two ways; via the web forum of the supporters' club and a

¹⁷ "Community Survey 2007," (Statistics South Africa, 2007).

¹⁸ Charlotte Lemanski, "Moving up the Ladder or Stuck on the Bottom Rung? Homeownership as a Solution to Poverty in Urban South Africa," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, no. 1 (2011): 59.

¹⁹ Heather Hughes, "'The Coolies Will Elbow Us out of the Country': African Reactions to Indian Immigration in the Colony of Natal, South Africa," *Labour History Review* 72, no. 2 (2007): 156-7.

subsequent opening to meet the various members of the Cape Town branch in early May 2009. I utilised aspects of my methodology (which will be discussed later in this chapter), namely participant observation, to discuss concepts of racial division and difference and in the process uncovering divisions there (see chapter five). With the Chiefs study, travelling with Malvern Branch to games facilitated contact with other branches, firstly within Johannesburg but also from other provinces. For instance, for the Vodacom Challenge match in Cape Town in 2008, Malvern Branch could not muster enough members to make the trip so the chairman arranged for the Pretoria Central branch to pick me up on the way to the Western Cape. Being confined to a minibus taxi for fifteen hours, there and back again, was a valuable opportunity to engage with other Chiefs supporters. Throughout the fieldwork, I travelled with Malvern, and later Greater Johannesburg, to games in Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Rustenburg and Mafikeng, facilitating contact with other branches, both within and outside of Johannesburg, of the Kaizer Chiefs supporters' club. I attended a total twenty-one Chiefs matches between 2008 and 2009 and a further two in 2010. In contrast, I went to eight Wits games during the main body of fieldwork along with the 2010 Nedbank Cup Final. Although the Manchester United supporters could not often watch their team live at the stadium, I watched a total of thirteen games with supporters, either at their regular bar or in their homes. Outside of the case studies, I went to seven games featuring Bafana Bafana. I also took the opportunity to attend seven other domestic soccer matches in Johannesburg and Cape Town, notably Ajax Cape Town v Orlando Pirates²⁰ and Moroka Swallows v Maritzburg United²¹ to gather observational data for the falsification process. Admittedly, while these occasions created the opportunities to expand beyond Johannesburg and to foster wider generalisations, this research remains primarily grounded in the urban landscape of Johannesburg.

²⁰ This game was held at Newlands Stadium, Cape Town, 06 May 2009.

²¹ This game was held at Germiston Stadium, Johannesburg, 12 April 2009.

Ethnography and Autoethnography

In constructing a viable methodological approach, it is important to draw on previous social research that explores how football (and sport in general) has impacted on identity construction, especially in an African context. As stated in chapter two, Vidacs employs an ethnographic methodology to research how Cameroonians constructed their relationships with the French and the West in a neo-colonial context. She argues that studies of sport in Africa needs to progress *“beyond obvious and facile generalisations”*.²² While her research provides a valuable methodological resource from which the research can draw from, it is a rare example of sports ethnography in an African context. Therefore it is necessary to explore other social science sports ethnography outside of Africanist circles. To this end, this research appropriates methods and techniques from the *“new methodologies”*²³ of Giulianotti and Armstrong, although they are no longer new. To understand why their work provides a working methodology for this project, it is useful to place the new methodologies in the context of the development of an ethnographic methodology in British social science research on football. In the late 1970s came early instances of an ‘ethnographic’ methodology used to research football hooliganism in Oxford, which were used to create a ‘comprehensive’ depiction of what was happening at the ground.²⁴ However, this approach was over-simplified due to a number of reasons. As Sugden and Tomlinson write, *“Any valid critique of what is really going on must go beyond passive observation and embrace the investigative”*;²⁵ this approach maintained the researcher as a passive observer and as such limited the ability to investigate the motives of the supporters in the ground. It leaves too many questions unanswered; overlooking what happens in other parts of the ground, what happens outside of the ground and also what happens outside of

²² Vidacs, "Through the Prism of Sports: Why Should Africanists Study Sport?," 334.

²³ Hughson, "Among the Thugs: The 'New Ethnographies' of Football Supporting Subcultures," 43.

²⁴ P. Marsh. (1978), cited in Ibid.: 44.

²⁵ John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, "Digging the Dirt and Staying Clean: Retrieving the Investigative Tradition for a Critical Sociology of Sport," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 34, no. 4 (1999): 389.

match days. For example, if Marsh had varied his location within the ground, he would have been surrounded by different strata of people, sometimes the 'hardcore' element but then on a different occasion, he could be with families or middle class spectators, each with different reasons for supporting and attending Oxford United matches. Changing this would have created a multi-layered perspective. Developing from early ethnography on sport, the 'Leicester School' emerged, in which ethnography "*is only one of several methodologies*".²⁶ However, this approach is also problematic. Armstrong claims that the Leicester school have been guilty of "*butterfly collecting*";²⁷ gleaning information from journalistic sources that fit with their theories. He continues by arguing that the ethnographic aspect to this approach is very limited as the researchers from this school "*have had comparatively restricted contacts with the individual actors; indeed, some had none at all*".²⁸ Also, as Hughson highlights, the aims and objective of the Leicester school are markedly different from those of the 'new methodologies', and subsequently this research project as the Leicester school are more interested in "*revealing the social causes of football hooliganism*" rather than "*questions of social identity*".²⁹ Unlike the Leicester school, Giulianotti and Armstrong spent extended periods of time with Aberdeen and Sheffield United hooligan organisations respectively. More importantly, both Armstrong and Giulianotti sign up to a "*neo-Weberian perspective of Verstehende sociology*",³⁰ trying to place the researcher in the respondent's position to understand how they construct and negotiate their identities. Spending more time with the same respondents meant that both authors built up a bigger picture than would have been possible with a few short visits to the field as per the Leicester school. It is this level of immersion acquire targetted by Armstrong and Giulianotti that I strived to achieve in the field with the aim of exploring identity construction rather than make just superficial observations. However, it is questionable whether such

²⁶ Hughson, "Among the Thugs: The 'New Ethnographies' of Football Supporting Subcultures," 44-5.

²⁷ Armstrong, "Like That Desmond Morris?," 8.

²⁸ Ibid., 7.

²⁹ Hughson, "Among the Thugs: The 'New Ethnographies' of Football Supporting Subcultures," 45.

³⁰ Armstrong, "Like That Desmond Morris?," 5.

immersion can truly be achieved when the researcher has to negotiate numerous barriers such as class, race, culture and language.

Language was problematic from the outset. Unlike Giulianotti and Armstrong, whose respondents spoke English as a first language, conducting soccer ethnography in South Africa posed a greater challenge. Although English was the first language for the vast majority of the Manchester United supporters and was fluently spoken by those for whom it was not, interviewing the Chiefs supporters was more taxing. In this case the primary language in common, everyday usage was isiZulu; the level of English in this group varied significantly. To counter this, the six months of language training in isiZulu at the University of the Witwatersrand gave me a basic grounding in the language. However, although this helped, I was still unable to conduct interviews in isiZulu. Yet only in one instance did the language barrier pose significant difficulties. This happened towards the beginning of the series of interviews with Thabo, whose first language was Tshivenda and whose isiZulu was not fluent (although far better than mine). Despite repeating questions in English first and then in broken isiZulu, answers were restricted to yes/no and single sentences. This also created issues in the informal environment as, unlike Giulianotti and Armstrong, I could not simply pick up conversations and participate. For example, when travelling with the Chiefs supporters to Cape Town for the Vodacom Challenge match, I found that I had to keep asking people to translate, especially as the primary language on this journey was isiNdebele. I had to either keep asking people to translate, thus disrupting the conversation while the person translating could not join in freely, or attempt to pick up what was being said on my own. Throughout the fieldwork, even when the conversation was being held in isiZulu, it at times proved problematic to participate in them. However, my attempts to converse in isiZulu, in an admittedly anglicised accent and despite the basic level of my ability proved to be an icebreaker, which at times caused laughter. Along with my skin colour, language difficulties set me apart from the group; I was with these supporters but unable to place myself 'in their shoes'.

In the case of Armstrong, he was “*already well known to other fans as a genuine supporter of Sheffield United, the club studied; he had even been to school with some of them*”.³¹ Unlike Armstrong, I was unlikely to have enough similar life experiences to the supporters to put myself in their position. Although I could ‘talk soccer’ with the supporters, drawing on my own experiences of the game, it would have been presumptuous to believe that I could authentically share the perspectives of soccer supporters from a country where I had not been before. Growing up in a white, middle class family in southwest England was far removed from life in Johannesburg, even when I felt that some of these barriers were not there. However, my differences to the respondents opened up new avenues of inquiry that Armstrong and Giulianotti would not have had.

Both Vidacs, and Sugden and Tomlinson’s calls for continued ethnographic investigation into sport are rooted in different epistemologies.³² Vidacs’ work on football and national identity in Cameroon takes a postcolonial approach, narrating the voices of supporters of the national team and their perceptions of post/ neo-colonial relations with France.³³ Sugden and Tomlinson are sceptical of postcolonialism, asserting that “*the metalanguage of social science*”³⁴ is needed to mediate these voices. Such epistemological tensions shaped my approach to the research. A key aim was to identify and represent the voices of the soccer supporters lost in the newspaper coverage of the 2008 Vodacom Challenge, supporters who have been largely marginalised or forgotten by academic inquiry. I followed the lead of sociologist Ben Carrington, keeping two research diaries; ‘value-free’ thick descriptive observations and personal accounts from the field.³⁵

³¹ Gary Armstrong and Rosemary Harris, "Football Hooligans: Theory and Evidence," *The Sociological Review* 39, no. 3 (1991): 431.

³² Vidacs, "Through the Prism of Sports: Why Should Africanists Study Sport?," 332, John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, "Theory and Method for a Critical Sociology of Sport," in *Power Games: A Critical Sociology of Sport*, ed. John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson (London: Routledge, 2002), 9-10.

³³ Vidacs, "Through the Prism of Sports: Why Should Africanists Study Sport?."

³⁴ Sugden and Tomlinson, "Theory and Method for a Critical Sociology of Sport," 17.

³⁵ Ben Carrington, "'What's the Footballer Doing Here?': Racialized Performativity, Reflexivity, and Identity," *Critical Methodologies* 8 (2008): 432.

Like Carrington, it became increasingly difficult to separate the two diaries. Entries in the value-free journal were initially in the third-person, recording data such as who was there and what happened. In contrast, I kept a personal diary to record my thoughts and feelings as I struggled to adapt to life in Johannesburg and my reaction to a different soccer culture to what I had previously been used to. A couple of months after I began the journal, I started to record my feelings to the supporters' reactions to my presence as a white man in an environment dominated by black South African males:

"I felt that I was a bit of a freak show at the game. I could not see any other white supporters around... a man in his early 20s came up to me, stared at me and then got his camera out to take a photo of me. Then two of his friends came over and had their photo taken with me. All this was done without conversation but a shake of the hands at the end".³⁶

At this moment, I did not make the link that as a researcher, I was a part of what I was studying. I endeavoured to keep personal emotion out of my 'objective' records but this became unachievable after travelling with a branch of the Kaizer Chiefs supporters' club for the first time, focusing on their surprise on having a white man join them.³⁷ As I became increasingly aware of my impact on the group, I questioned the traditional position of the ethnographer in the field as "*a hidden and yet seemingly omniscient presence*".³⁸ The "*fragmentary and chaotic currents*"³⁹ of postmodernism broke free from the narrow confines of a 'value-free' approach. Martyn Hammersley argues that postmodern qualitative inquiry is, "*quite literally, indefensible*",⁴⁰ but Denzin, Lincoln and Giardina note that drawing from a postmodern discourse does not mean a descent into romanticism, arguing that most

³⁶ Entry in personal diary, 01/03/2008.

³⁷ Entry in research diary, 06/04/2008.

³⁸ Leon Anderson, "Analytic Autoethnography," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 35, no. 4 (2006): 383.

³⁹ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989; reprint, 1990), 44.

⁴⁰ Martyn Hammersley, *Questioning Qualitative Inquiry* (London: Sage, 2008), 11.

qualitative researchers are “*extremely attentive to method and methodology*”.⁴¹ In breaking from the authoritative position of the ‘impartial’ ethnographer, autoethnography makes the researcher visible. Anderson contends that by being a complete member “*confers the most compelling kind of ‘being there’ on the ethnographer*”.⁴² Hammersley and Atkinson contend that over-familiarisation with respondents can limit the capacity for analysis⁴³ but Wheaton argues that the ‘critical distance’ between ethnographer and respondents is created through the writing of the ethnography.⁴⁴ At times, I was aware of my emotional reactions towards both Kaizer Chiefs and Manchester United. Whether it was catching myself leaping out of my seat as United pulled a goal back against Arsenal⁴⁵ or jumping around wildly as Chiefs equalised against Orlando Pirates,⁴⁶ the intoxication of such events could be overpowering. While claims were made by some members in both cases that I was ‘one of them’,⁴⁷ the process of doing ethnography simultaneously set me apart. Focusing on the self opens up the autoethnographer to accusations of “*narcissistic self-absorption*”.⁴⁸ I embarked on the research to uncover the identities of these supporters, not myself. Anderson’s argument for an analytic autoethnography offers a bulwark against such introspection, calling for the autoethnographer to engage in dialogue with informants “*beyond the self*”.⁴⁹ As such, a series of semi-structured interviews with respondents from both cases allowed for a certain level of control, which will be discussed later in this chapter. What a combined ethnographic and autoethnographic approach acknowledges is that as social science

⁴¹ Norman K Denzin, Yvonna S Lincoln, and Michael D Giardina, "Disciplining Qualitative Research," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 19, no. 6 (2006): 775.

⁴² Anderson, "Analytic Autoethnography," 379.

⁴³ Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principle in Practice* (London: Tavistock, 1983), 98.

⁴⁴ Belinda Wheaton, "Babes on the Beach, Women in the Surf: Researching Gender, Power and Difference in the Windsurfing Culture," in *Power Games: A Critical Sociology of Sport*, ed. John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson (London: Routledge, 2002), 262.

⁴⁵ Entry in research diary, 11/11/2008.

⁴⁶ Entry in research diary, 02/05/2009.

⁴⁷ Entry in research diary, 18/07/2009.

⁴⁸ Carrington, "'What's the Footballer Doing Here?': Racialized Performativity, Reflexivity, and Identity," 433.

⁴⁹ Anderson, "Analytic Autoethnography," 386.

researchers, *"we are part of the social world we study"*.⁵⁰ In his most recent treatise on ethnography, Hammersley and Atkinson contend that through a process of reflexivity and understanding the role of the researcher within the context of the research, the ethnographer can *"produce accounts of the social world and justify them without placing reliance on futile appeals to empiricism"*.⁵¹ In this thesis, I acknowledge the impact of my presence in each case study. While I place myself within the research in chapter five, the following chapter provides a detailed reflexive and autoethnographic interpretation of the data collected.

Such a reflexive endeavour considering the impact of the researcher on those whom he or she is researching also considers the role and positioning of the researcher. Bechhofer and Paterson draw attention to Gold's continuum of four researcher roles; the *"participant"*, *"participant as observer"*, *"observer as participant"* and *"observer"*.⁵² The participant and observer roles are at opposing ends of the spectrum; the observer just observes, the participant is actively involved in the everyday social life of what the researcher is studying. At the outset of the fieldwork, I had identified the participant as observer role as the most suitable as it engages with everyday life but the crucial difference is that the subject or subjects know that they are being studied. As Bechhofer and Paterson note, an advantage of this is that it allows the researcher to ask questions of clarification whereas a full participant cannot as it would give away the researchers' cover.⁵³ From the beginning, I stated the background of the research, its aims and objectives and the methods to be used. With the United supporters, this was done through the initial contact with the supporters' club secretary in October 2008. In the following month, I was given the opportunity to stand in front of the members during their monthly meeting to further explain my presence there. Straight away, I created a distance

⁵⁰ Martyn Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, Third ed. (London: Routledge, 2007), 18.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Frank Bechhofer and Lindsay Paterson, *Principles of Research Design in the Social Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2000), 92-3.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

between myself and the supporters when I admitted that I was not a United fan or supporter. This “got a few light-hearted boos but was in good jest”.⁵⁴ My subsequent explanation that I was a Tiverton Town supporter was met with a few bemused looks, but as long as I was not a Liverpool, Chelsea or Arsenal fan, I would be welcome.⁵⁵ The success of opening up to the United supporters was noticeable as my brief talk turned into an informal focus group as members began discussing their perceptions of the 2008 Vodacom Challenge. Furthermore, after the meeting, supporters came up to me to introduce themselves and to offer ideas of what I should be focusing on. During my introduction when I claimed that I did not support an English Premier League team, the secretary jokingly waved a membership form in front of me. I became aware that at some point in the fieldwork, they might ask that I join the supporters’ club if I wanted to continue researching them. However, this never progressed beyond joking terms. Conversely, early on with the Malvern Branch of the Chiefs supporters’ club, membership became an issue. I was asked to become a fully paid-up member of the supporters’ club. While this was not compulsory, I felt that by refusing, I would remain purely on the outside looking in, while insulting the branch committee. As a compromise, rather than pay for ‘Gold’ membership, which included funeral cover and accidental death insurance amongst other things, I reasoned that as I already had travel insurance, I would get the standard ‘Classic’ membership. Membership subsequently gave me access to many branches of the supporters’ club in the city.

The theory of entering the field as a participant observer did not always run smoothly in practice. As the researcher, I fluctuated within the spectrum between observer and participant. For example, within the same game, I could be taking pure observational notes about the game at one moment and the next celebrating and chanting with supporters as a participant. As a soccer supporter myself, there were periodic reflections on my positionality. One instance of this was during the

⁵⁴ Entry in research diary, 04/11/2008.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

2008 Vodacom Challenge final in Pretoria between Kaizer Chiefs and Manchester United. After Chiefs had comprehensively lost 4-0, I wrote the following extract in my research diary:

“Unlike the last match, Chiefs got thumped. It is interesting to mention that at the end of the game, I was the one who was depressed about the result, not the others. I had become a member to further my research, not to support the club, yet I found myself bitter at the defeat. It is probably a good job that I am going home as maybe I am becoming too attached to the club. The Chiefs fans that I was with seemed to take it in their stride, maybe more rationally as Man Utd were always going to be the better side”.⁵⁶

Despite wanting to stay in the field to gather data, I realised that I needed to withdraw from the field occasionally to reflect on what data I had, be it going for a short break in another part of South Africa or even return home to the UK to spend time with my family. At other points during the fieldwork, I became conscious that I was at times a participant. Playing soccer games on various games consoles, competing in fantasy football leagues or simply debating the finer points of the offside rule were ways in which I could build a rapport with respondents, yet they were also ways in which I began to develop friendships. However, through a regular process of reflexivity, I utilised various methods to retain my identity as a researcher. In the monthly meetings of the United supporters, the presence of my notepad and pen served as a gentle reminder that I was not simply another supporter. The semi-structured interviews were another method to reinforce my researcher identity. One notable instance of this was when I interviewed Darren, a Manchester United supporter. Before the interview started, he remarked that he found the situation ‘weird’ as he considered us to be friends.⁵⁷ However, this ‘weirdness’ dissipated soon into the interview.

Although chapter six actively reflects in-depth on the impact I had on the case studies and the subsequent data that this produced, it is important to state that

⁵⁶ Entry in research diary, 26/07/2008.

⁵⁷ Entry in research diary, 25/06/2009.

researcher impact had been considered before entering the field. For example, the researcher's physical characteristics can have a bearing on the research. Richardson identifies "*Race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religion*"⁵⁸ as such characteristics that should be considered. For instance, in pubs, Hobbs needed to be "*regarded as 'one of the chaps'*".⁵⁹ A female researcher would not be able to gain the same level of access to information in a male-dominated environment as a male researcher. Fortunately, I did not have this problem. However, one potential problem that I had considered to some extent was respondent racialised perceptions of me. With regards to Scotland, Giulianotti argues that "*difficulties would be encountered by non-Caucasian researchers studying hooligan formations that were predominantly white*",⁶⁰ yet for this project, the problem could potentially be reversed. In spite of this, the colour of my skin along with my nationality has provided significant impact when at games, as few white people go to such games, especially white Englishmen.

Deciding to become a member of the Chiefs supporters' club in order to continue conducting research had another knock-on effect, which I had not initially considered, which affected the Bidvest Wits case study. When I attended the Wits v Chiefs fixture in February 2008, there were no issues around being a member of either case study as I had not made contact with either. As mentioned in the next chapter, I observed that numerous Wits fans were also Chiefs fans as well; when Chiefs scored, they celebrated. This happened in subsequent Wits matches that I attended. On the basis of this, it appeared acceptable to be a fan of both Wits and another club simultaneously. As I reflected that February, drawing the fanbase predominantly from the student population of Wits University meant that the majority of fans would already have a team that they supported, something that the

⁵⁸ Laurel Richardson, "Trash on the Corner: Ethics and Technography," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 21, no. 1 (1992): 110.

⁵⁹ Dick Hobbs, *Doing the Business: Entrepreneurship, the Working Class, and Detectives in the East End of London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 6.

⁶⁰ Giulianotti, "Participant Observation and Research into Football Hooliganism: Reflections on the Problems of Entree and Everyday Risks," 13.

CEO of the club later admitted.⁶¹ As with Chiefs, and initially Pirates, I sat with various groups of supporters and struck up conversations. Yet with a membership of over 800, there was no centralised structure, no branch and committee that I could identify and approach. I rarely spoke to the same group of supporters from match to match. To get around this, I identified the supporters' club annual general meeting (AGM) as an avenue to meet the regular supporters. This meant signing up for student membership. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the AGM in March 2008 as I had been injured in a football match in Mayfair, west of Johannesburg CBD.⁶² Nevertheless, I still continued to attend Wits matches when they did not clash with Chiefs games in an attempt to develop a rapport with the supporters.

However, this became increasingly untenable by November 2008. With Wits hosting Chiefs on the 22nd, it had left me in a quandary. The Chiefs supporters were at this stage increasingly claiming me as one of theirs, yet I was still trying to make connections with the Wits supporters. After watching the Bafana Bafana v Cameroon match on television with committee members of Malvern Branch, I decided to broach the issue with one of the supporters. If I wore my Chiefs shirt, I wouldn't be able to sit with the Wits supporters and vice versa. I could choose not to wear the shirt or colours of either team but the Chiefs supporters that I knew would then question why I was not with them. They knew that I was based at Wits as they would drop me off at the university to pick up my car after Chiefs matches. Linda responded by telling me that the Chiefs supporters would not be offended as they knew that I worked there and that Chiefs were my primary team.⁶³ What I did was something counter-intuitive to myself as an English soccer supporter and probably many supporters around the world; I chose to wear my Wits shirt to the game along with a Chiefs baseball cap. If I was to draw a parallel, it would be like attending a

⁶¹ Author interview with Bidvest Wits CEO, 17/11/2008.

⁶² One of the security guards at Wits University invited me to play for his team; I was the guest goalkeeper. In the second game of the day, I rushed out to pounce on a loose ball before the oncoming striker could reach it. Despite being first to the ball, the striker still followed through with his kick, which landed squarely on my nose.

⁶³ Entry in research diary, 19/11/2008.

Glasgow Rangers match wearing an Aberdeen hat, something that fans would not countenance. However, as my earlier experiences at Wits matches suggested, I would not be the only one. Yet, as I later recorded in my research diary, *“there was no core of student support that is often at the ground during term time so there were few people to talk to. Those that were there come in little groups of people and remain insular”*.⁶⁴ Become frustrated with remaining on the margins of the Wits fans, I spent the second half with the Chiefs supporters, including members of Malvern Branch. Although some asked me why I was wearing a Wits shirt, they *“readily accepted my reasoning that I was working at Wits so I had to support them”*.⁶⁵ This match was a significant moment in the fieldwork. Having failed to make many contacts within the Wits supporters’ club, in contrast to the Chiefs study that was gathering pace, I made the decision to concentrate on the Chiefs study. This was a difficult decision to make as Bidvest Wits holds cultural and social significance in both the Johannesburg soccer landscape and wider South African soccer fandom. However, by doing so allowed more time to be spent with the Chiefs supporters, to collect more in-depth data and not have to worry about fixture clashes. I did not drop the Wits study completely. Attending the Wits v Platinum Stars match in February 2009 after the students had returned to the university, I had considered that this *“would be the kickstart for the Wits case study”*⁶⁶ but the same challenges of moving beyond a purely observational position proved challenging. Fieldnotes from subsequent Wits games were recorded from this standpoint. In the following section on research methods and challenges, the absence of the Wits case study is due to the decision to primarily focus on Kaizer Chiefs and Manchester United supporters.

The Challenges of Data Collection

Conducting research in informal environments such as the sports stadium or the bar can *“make it possible to acquire information denied to researchers relying on formal*

⁶⁴ Entry in research diary, 22/11/2008.

⁶⁵ Entry in research diary, 22/11/2008.

⁶⁶ Entry in research diary, 07/02/2009.

questionnaires and official figures".⁶⁷ However, it raises questions of data collection. These informal situations do not allow for voice recordings and extensive research notes during data collection as would a more formal, semi-structured interview. Using a voice recorder to record conversations in the taxis on the way to Kaizer Chiefs games or at the stadium would have often been futile due to the loud volume levels coming from the taxi's speakers or from the crowd. Even during the rare occasion in which music was not pumping out from the stereo, the sound of the engine was often loud enough to mask most voices. Furthermore, the use of such a tool was conspicuous. I felt that using a voice recorder would disrupt the flow of informal conversation in all case studies. Armstrong offered an alternative to this, using his "*research tools*" comprising of a small notepad and pen.⁶⁸ This proved a practical solution for the Manchester United case study during their monthly branch meetings. Sitting towards the back of the hall, I would make notes on how many members and who were in attendance, how members interacted and what was said. However, this form of note taking was often problematic with the Kaizer Chiefs case study. Suffering from motion sickness when I read in the car or bus restricted my ability to make notes and scribbling in a notebook while at a soccer match would look bizarrely out of place. In all of the case studies, I became concerned that the notepad would disrupt the 'natural' flow of conversations while simultaneously prompting the supporters to edit what they were saying in front of me. In his work on conducting sports-based ethnographic research in pubs and bars, Weed offered another strategy for note taking, suggesting that the researcher could make brief notes on cigarette packets, beer mats "*and on newspapers when pretending to do the crossword*".⁶⁹ Although I do not smoke and doing the crossword in the taxi with Chiefs supporters, at soccer matches or even in the bar with the Manchester United supporters would look out of place, this created an awareness of other modes of making notes. What proved to be most effective was storing notes on my mobile

⁶⁷ Janet MacGaffey, *Entrepreneurs and Parasites: The Struggle for Indigenous Capitalism in Zaire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 5.

⁶⁸ Armstrong, "Like That Desmond Morris?," 28.

⁶⁹ Weed, "The Story of an Ethnography: The Experience of Watching the 2002 World Cup in the Pub," 80.

phone. In all three case studies, mobile phone usage was highly visible; many seemed glued to their handset sending a constant stream of text messages. The commonplace nature of this practice was emphasised by hawkers selling phone top-up credit during soccer matches so spectators could continue to send messages. I soon realised that I could make brief notes on a regular basis by appearing to write text messages and saving them as draft messages. As it did not look out of place, my note taking went unquestioned. The choice of handset became important as a result of this. As with the presence of my compact digital camera, which will be discussed later in this chapter, I became attuned to how my display of technology could impact how the supporters in all case studies perceived me. Most in the Chiefs supporters' club owned basic handsets and as such, I decided to choose a cheap phone so as not to draw more attention to myself. Conversely, with the Manchester United supporters, there were times that my phone was laughed at because it was simple.

Such data collection was further complicated due to issues surrounding the consumption of alcohol. In a variety of sports-based ethnographies, the ethnographer's consumption of alcohol has been something that researcher has had to contend with. Armstrong reminisces that he was *"more than once the worse for drink"*.⁷⁰ Similarly, Hognestad writes, *"this was Scotland, and since a participant-observation method was applied, the ethnographer's liver was tested in new and demanding ways"*.⁷¹ Weed argues that this is not as much of an obstacle as might be imagined as it is *"surprising how much, and in how much detail, he could remember, even when he had been drinking"*.⁷² Amusing as this may be, this is a dubious argument as alcohol can cloud judgement. The problem that I encountered was that drinking is commonplace in both the taxis on the way to Kaizer Chiefs games and obviously in

⁷⁰ Armstrong, "Like That Desmond Morris?," 19.

⁷¹ Hans Hognestad, "The Jambo Experience: An Anthropological Study of Hearts Fans," in *Entering the Field: New Perspectives on World Football*, ed. Gary Armstrong and Richard Giulianotti (Oxford: Berg, 1997), 193.

⁷² Weed, "The Story of an Ethnography: The Experience of Watching the 2002 World Cup in the Pub," 80.

bars when the supporters are watching soccer there. At the beginning of the fieldwork with the Chiefs supporters, there was little pressure from the supporters to participate in the pre-match beers. A few matches in, it became apparent that they had assumed that I did not drink, an image that I broke when walking into the bottle shop with some of the supporters prior to the Sundowns v Chiefs fixture in April 2008. This action inadvertently created a new problem for me. Within Malvern branch, and later Greater Johannesburg branch, there was a small group of supporters with a reputation for heavy drinking. I now had to negotiate a balance between accepting invitations to drink beer to be sociable and refusing so as to keep a clear head but running the risk of offending them. Politely refusing drinks from some supporters in the Kaizer Chiefs taxis occasionally met with disgruntled reactions (usually from those already under the influence). Although I tried to explain that I had to drive home on returning to the Johannesburg CBD, the supporters did not see anything wrong with this concept, something that was reinforced by the several times I witness the taxi driver drinking at the wheel. My defence seemed like a 'weak' excuse to some, with one Chiefs supporter telling me that "*it's OK. It's only light beer*".⁷³ Similarly with the United supporters in the bar during matches, there were instances when I felt awkward in refusing drinks so as to keep a clear head for data collection and for the drive home; this often occurred after United had won a crucial game. Unfortunately, the lack of regular public transport in Johannesburg made it difficult to travel to research sites without my car. Fortunately, most supporters in the case studies began to accept my position on drinking.

This method of data collection has not been without its problems. In such informal environments, I have had to rely on memory aided by the brief notes made as Weed suggests and write them up as soon as I can. Agar points out that "*the ratio of recording time to participant observation is six to one!*"⁷⁴ I was concerned that the brief

⁷³ Entry in research diary, 26/07/2008.

⁷⁴ Michael Agar, *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*, Second ed. (London: Academic Press, 1996), 161.

notes that I could make in my notepad or on my phone would not be enough to expand on when updating my research diary. At the beginning of the fieldwork, I found that I would be on my phone on a constant basis, noting snippets of numerous conversations in the hope that at least some of this may prove useful in the future. However, this had the converse effect of not being able to participate in conversations and ask as many questions. As Hammersley and Atkinson state, "*fieldwork notes are selective; it is not possible to capture everything*".⁷⁵ Acknowledging the subjectivity of my note taking and how I prioritised what was 'significant' and what was not, I slowly began to filter data. For instance, after merging both the personal and objective journals, I would be sensitive to how Kaizer Chiefs supporters responded to me as a white Englishman but a conversation about whether Chiefs could win the league would not be as relevant.

These notes combined with my memory served as the basis for my research diary but, as Hammersley and Atkinson note, "*finding time to write up fieldnotes poses particularly severe problems*", but time "*must always be set aside*".⁷⁶ This posed few problems when matches, interviews and other meetings occurred during the daytime as I would update the diary when I returned home. However, this became far more difficult when such events were at night or long-distance. As Chiefs played their home games at Loftus Versfeld in Pretoria or the Super Stadium in neighbouring Atteridgville during the 2008/9 season, evening kick-offs usually meant that I would not return home until past midnight. Travelling in the taxi back from the stadium, I was often the last person to be dropped off as I lived in a different part of the city from the vast majority of the Chiefs supporters. Similarly, when the time difference between the UK and South Africa was two hours, watching midweek Champions League matches with the Manchester United supporters in Edenvale also meant returning home after midnight. Conscious of recording as much poignant data and ideas as soon as I could, I had to discipline

⁷⁵ Hammersley and Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, 142.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 144.

myself to spend time writing the latest entry in my research diary in the early hours of the morning. Waiting until the next day could mean further gaps in my memory, therefore “*whole episodes can be forgotten or irreparably muddled*”.⁷⁷ Agar argues that this can distort the data “*in a direction away from the details of the specific event and towards the more general stereotypical conceptualization of that event*”.⁷⁸ Admittedly, there was the occasional time when I felt the need to sleep too tempting to resist, thus leaving the writing up of the day’s events until the following morning. This was a particular challenge during periods of intense soccer fixtures, especially during the 2009 Confederations Cup and the subsequent World Cup. Spending fifteen hours travelling back from Cape Town with minimal sleep after the Vodacom Challenge match in 2008 proved too much for me and so the journal entry was admittedly written after a few hours of necessary sleep. However, these were occasional instances; the research journal usually updated at the earliest opportunity. On returning to South Africa in 2010, between May and August, the research diary was supplemented by a blog. This was set up in connection with the Guardian newspaper in the UK as part of their ‘fans network’ during the World Cup. The content of the blog differed from the research diary. The blog was World Cup-specific, focusing on themes of national identity, the transformation of the city and the general atmosphere surrounding the tournament, whereas the diary continued to focus on data specific to the case studies. While this doubled my workload, the blog was a complimentary method of focusing my ideas and fieldnotes. Chapter seven, which recounts the events of the World Cup, uses the blog as an important research source.

While the ‘new methodologies’ utilise participant observation, there is little mention of other data collection methods. Grasseni argues that “*cinematographic observation*” is an effective “*tool for refining the ethnographer’s attention, for monitoring*

⁷⁷ ———, *Ethnography: Principle in Practice*, 146.

⁷⁸ Agar, *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*, 162.

and aiding the training of the eye".⁷⁹ While notes can be made after observation, much can be lost or confused in the researcher's memory. Having such data allows the researcher to have access to the event long after that event has finished. Video documentation of events provides sensory data that research notes alone cannot achieve. In the case of football matches, video footage can capture a sense of atmosphere and euphoria that would be difficult to measure and describe in text format alone. Video clips and photographs were taken on my compact digital camera, although as with the fieldnotes, the choice of what to capture and what to discount was governed by the subjective decisions of myself as the ethnographer. Another similarity to the recording of fieldnotes was the quantity of clips taken during the early stages of the fieldwork. I became fixated with capturing a panoramic view of the crowd within the stadium during a game. This was designed to serve as a visual record and reminder of the general crowd demographics. However, as time progressed, I had amassed a large collection of clips that were very alike without seemingly offering much new information. Likewise, although taking video clips of crowds cheering when their team scored or won captured a snapshot of the matchday atmosphere, I realised that these too offered little benefit to the research. Furthermore, concentrating on taking video became distracting from engaging with the supporters.

While video recording appeared to be of limited use, the taking of photographs proved far more fruitful. Grasseni suggests that by recording field notes, it can serve "*the purpose of making my role of observer more transparent*",⁸⁰ openly displaying motives and the research process allowing respondents to understand where they fit in and to facilitate trust between respondent and researcher. In the case of the Kaizer Chiefs supporters' club, this had a dual role. Firstly, it helped to reinforce my position as a researcher; taking numerous photos served as a reminder

⁷⁹ Cristina Grasseni, "Video and Ethnographic Knowledge: Skilled Vision in the Practice of Breeding," in *Working Images: Visual Research and Representation in Ethnography*, ed. Sarah Pink, László Kürti, and Ana Isabel Afonso (London: Routledge, 2004), 15-6.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

to the supporters that I was there to conduct research. This also played out with the United supporters, both in the bar and at monthly meetings. Secondly, I became the unofficial photographer of Malvern branch, and later Greater Johannesburg. At matches, there would be hawkers with digital cameras connected to portable photo printers selling photos for R15-20 per picture but supporters began asking me for copies of my photos. Wary of being taken advantage, I gave the branch a hard copy and digital copy of the photos that I took when with them so that they had a visible record of my time with them. Furthermore, Armstrong reveals his concern with giving something back to the community in which he has taken; *"it is hoped that the end-product will in some sense be my gift"*.⁸¹ For me, these photos provided more than just a record but became a gift. While photographs can only provide a visual 'snapshot' of time as opposed the recreation of atmosphere through video, photographs can also provide valuable data and, as Canal argues, *"interviewing with photographs can produce much richer materials and responses than simply asking questions"*.⁸² Although I did not interview with photographs as a prompt, they did act as an icebreaker with supporters and as an excuse to meet with the supporters outside of the soccer context when I dropped photographs off with them.

Another gap in the approach of the 'new methodologies' is that these research sites and methods of data collection are interested in only the matches themselves and the immediate time encompassing them. The fieldwork/ethnographic approach can be seen as more *"natural"*⁸³ whereas *"the research interview is seen to be highly artificial"*.⁸⁴ However, as mentioned previously, conducting interviews helped act as a bulwark against introspective navel gazing that an autoethnographic methodology could foster. Therefore, by conducting interviews, the researcher *"can get close to the social actors' meanings and*

⁸¹ Armstrong, "Like That Desmond Morris?," 25.

⁸² Gemma Canal, "Photography in the Field: Word and Image in Ethnographic Research," in *Working Images: Visual Research and Representation in Ethnography*, ed. Sarah Pink, László Kürti, and Ana Isabel Afonso (London: Routledge, 2004), 38-9.

⁸³ Bechhofer and Paterson, *Principles of Research Design in the Social Sciences*, 95.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 68.

interpretations".⁸⁵ Bechhofer and Paterson add that "*interviews offer a reasonable chance that we can achieve some control along with meaningful comparisons*".⁸⁶ The informal nature of the research sites utilised in the ethnographical approach offered limited options for questioning; watching matches at the stadium or in the bar was not suitable for a formal interview. Therefore interviews created another opportunity to meet with respondents outside of the soccer environment. All but one of the interviews with the Chiefs supporters were conducted at their home. On every occasion after the interview had ended, I was invited to remain and chat with them, often over food as it would have been rude to refuse their hospitality. In some instances, the post-interview discussions would take longer than the interviews meaning that I would have to rush home to write down the salient details before I forgot them. Interviews with Manchester United supporters took place in more varied locations. Aside from respondents' homes, offices/ places of work were popular with the United supporters as places to be interviewed, as were shopping mall coffee shops. As with the Chiefs supporters, interviews at the homes of the United supporters were usually followed by informal conversations, often containing information that they had forgotten during the interview. At times, it was noticeable that some respondents relaxed in the informality of these post-interview conversations, thus more forthcoming. Interviews took place in between January and July 2009 with both the Manchester United and Kaizer Chiefs supporters. Legard, Keegan and Ward argue that "*an in-depth interview is based around the ability of the interviewer to establish a good rapport with the participant*".⁸⁷ Delaying the interview process until January allowed myself to develop a rapport with respondents and gain a level of trust to facilitate openness from the respondent. Both participant observation and the conducting of interviews were mutually reinforcing. Having spent three months with both groups and collecting

⁸⁵ Norman Blaikie, *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 234.

⁸⁶ Bechhofer and Paterson, *Principles of Research Design in the Social Sciences*, 96.

⁸⁷ Robin Legard, Jill Keegan, and Kit Ward, "In-Depth Interviews," in *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, ed. Jane Ritchie and Jane Lewis (London: Sage, 2003), 143.

conversational data helped to focus the questions in the interview, interview responses guided what I was looking out for when engaging in participant observation.

The interviews followed an in-depth, semi-structured format allowing myself the flexibility to adapt to the information that the respondent was giving, while at the same time getting to the core of “*accounts of the social interaction in which they have been involved*”.⁸⁸ The interview comprised of three sections. The first asked general questions about why they supported the teams that they did, about growing up with supporting these teams (unless they were newer supporters). For both Chiefs and United supporters, this was initially designed to encourage the respondent to begin talking about something that they were passionate about and thus feel comfortable in the interview situation. At times this proved too successful as it was difficult to steer some respondents away from reminiscing about past glories and defeats, as the following quote suggests:

“Those were the days then, okay we came straight back up again the next season and they were absolutely brilliant. They played some fantastic football, which was then the old second division. Absolutely brilliant to watch. Really fantastic. I was living in England at the time so I used to go to a few games. I used to go to more away games than home games because we were playing people like Oxford for instance. We lost one nil at bloody Oxford! That was one of the few games we lost all season”.⁸⁹

Yet this section of the interview schedule also produced fascinating oral histories such as growing up in white Johannesburg, following the exploits of United via the cinema and imported magazines or growing up in the rural areas listening to Chiefs playing on the radio. Afterwards, I would ask them how they supported their team in the present day, whether they went to the stadium for matches, watched their team on television and how they kept informed of club news. The second section differed between both groups. With regards to the United

⁸⁸ Blaikie, *Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation*, 234.

⁸⁹ Author interview with ‘George’ (United), 06/03/2009.

supporters, the interview moved to their attitudes towards domestic soccer, specifically in the light of the 2008 Vodacom Challenge. With most seemingly unwilling to attend domestic games (unless United were involved), the questions moved to whether they perceived a racial divide in South African soccer. At this juncture, it became clear that some respondents became uneasy talking about this subject. I was aware that many respondents were deliberating over their words carefully, in contrast to the more free-flowing responses from the first section. As the next chapter highlights, talking about racial divisions in South African soccer fandom elicited worried responses about appearing racist. With the Chiefs supporters, the second section encompassed whether they supported or followed a European club side and their opinions and attitudes towards perceived racial divisions in domestic fandom. Unlike the more cagey responses from the Manchester United supporters, the Chiefs supporters appeared to relish the opportunity to 'tell me like it is'. For example, Gerald quickly challenged my question asking why there were few coloured soccer supporters at matches, swiftly responding, "*When it comes to coloureds, I would say no, there are coloureds at soccer*".⁹⁰ The final section focused on attitudes of both groups of supporters towards the South African national sports teams, specifically Bafana Bafana and attitudes towards the national teams of other countries.

In both the Manchester United and Kaizer Chiefs case studies, I sought permission from the club secretary (United) and branch chairman (Chiefs) before I asked supporters if I could interview them. Although I had started interviewing Chiefs supporters in January 2009, it was proving difficult to get supporters to agree to be interviewed. The chairman gave me the opportunity to speak to the branch in March 2009 during a branch meeting so I could explain the interview process to them and to ask for interviewees. With the United supporters, I had similarly issued a call for interviewees at the monthly meeting in March. This was supplemented by a written request that was sent with the monthly emails sent by the organisation to

⁹⁰ Author interview with 'Gerald' (Chiefs), 26/07/2009.

its members and sanctioned by the secretary. In both instances, they acted as a catalyst to encourage interviewees, yet I still had to overcome difficulties. There was an 'impostor' discourse from the Chiefs supporters questioning why they would be important enough to be interviewed. For instance, as one of my key gatekeepers, the chairman of the branch said that he would help me find ex-players to interview despite having told him on several occasions that it was the supporters that were my focus and not the clubs or players. This impostor syndrome did not materialise with the United supporters. As one member told me after the interview, the supporters' club had had prior experience of being interviewed, this time by journalists. In one instance, this supporter felt that the journalist had misrepresented what they had said. The interview consent form used helped to counter this distrust while clearly distancing myself from journalistic endeavour.

Although participant observation and semi-structured interviews were the key methods of data collection, they met with differing levels of success in the case studies. Opportunities for regular participant observation with the Manchester United supporters were more restricted than with the Chiefs supporters. There were no opportunities to travel to matches with them seeing as their team were thousands of miles away. Although I would spend time with the supporters who went their regular bar in Edenvale to watch United together, they would subsequently disperse individually back to their homes. There were times when I would be invited to supporters' homes, to watch games on television, to play soccer games on a games console or for a beer for example, yet these were sporadic events. As the researcher, there would be numerous encounters with the United supporters but these were often little more than the ninety minutes of the game. The interviews became more significant as a method of data collection with the United supporters as it created openings to allow questions to be asked. With the 'impostor syndrome' that I frequently encountered with the Chiefs supporters restricting the number of interviews that I conducted with them, participant observation became more critical as a method to collect data. Fortunately, the location of this case study meant that I

could utilise Giulianotti and Armstrong's ethnographic methodologies more closely as I was able to travel and attend matches with them.

Finally, the Chiefs study threw up an unexpected hurdle in March 2009. Branches of the Chiefs supporters' club in Johannesburg had been informed by Kaizer Chiefs that they required the branches to merge into one 'Greater Johannesburg' branch. The chairman of Malvern branch explained to me that Kaizer Chiefs wanted to consolidate support in its home city. However, this had failed to take into consideration reasons why the branch system in the city was fragmented. Both Malvern and Northern Suburbs⁹¹ branches had split from the Johannesburg Central branch due to disagreements over how the branch was run. During the Chiefs v Orlando Pirates fixture in November 2008, a member of Central branch approached me, claiming that Malvern branch was rightly part of Central. At this moment, Jimmy pulled me away, telling me that I didn't "*want to be listening to him*".⁹² On news of the proposed merger, I became concerned that although I was a researcher, my choice and membership of Malvern branch would alienate me from the non-Malvern members of the new branch. Furthermore, I had spent many months developing a rapport with Malvern branch, which I would not have with the new members. Fortunately, my fears were largely unfounded. While some supporters chose not to be members of the new branch, I did not experience any hostility from those who did. Moreover, it created the opportunity to engage with a wider set of Chiefs supporters, examining whether ideas formulated during my time with Malvern branch were valid in a larger group.

Research Ethics

Within the research design, ethical considerations were addressed. The Economic and Social Research Council's *Framework for Research Ethics* states that research

⁹¹ Despite the name, this branch was not based in the middle class northern suburbs of Johannesburg but drew from similar areas to JHB Central and Malvern Branches.

⁹² Entry in research diary, 15/11/2008.

should be *“designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency”*.⁹³ In fulfilling the criteria set out by the framework, I undertook Edinburgh University’s School of Social and Political Studies level one ethical review. Meeting the requirements of the review meant that the research design had an *“absence of reasonably foreseeable ethical risks”*.⁹⁴ To ensure the integrity, I stated the purpose of the research in the initial contact with the case studies. With both the Chiefs and United supporters, I explained the aims of the research to the branch chairman and club secretary respectively. This was subsequently followed by clarifying the objectives to members at branch meetings. With the Wits study, the research was explained to the CEO of the club. Despite a lack of anticipated ethical risks, I extended the courtesy of anonymity to the research respondents. Before interviews, I provided a consent form to gain written consent from the interviewees; both interviewer and interviewee retained a copy. The consent process allowed me to explain the research again and answer individual queries that may not have been asked in a group situation. Finally, although individual anonymity was given, I decided that the names of the soccer teams and the specific branches should remain to retain the specific historical and spatial context that they hold.

Conclusion

In identifying a methodological approach to tackle researching the identities of South African soccer supporters, the respective ethnographic methodologies of Armstrong and Giulianotti provided a foundation from which to develop. Although both considered the positionality of the ethnographer, incorporating various aspects of the researcher’s identity and how respondent might perceive them, it became apparent that in researching these supporters’ clubs, I had become a part of what I was studying. As the following chapters will show, who I was impacted on not only

⁹³ ESRC, "Framework for Research Ethics (FRE)," (Economic and Social Research Council, 2010), 3.

⁹⁴ University of Edinburgh School of Social and Political Studies, "Research Ethics Policy and Procedures," (2011).

what information they gave me but challenged and created new understandings of soccer support in Johannesburg. What this research does is to take these methodological foundations and incorporates aspects of autoethnography to draw out the voice of the researcher alongside those being researched. Acknowledging the impact of the researcher in the field created a new set of difficulties, especially maintaining a critical distance and engaging with the respondents 'beyond the self'. Key to the maintenance of this was a constant reflexive process to prevent the research being consumed by the self.

CHAPTER FIVE

“WHAT DO THEY KNOW ABOUT OUR SOCCER?”: JOHANNESBURG’S DIVIDED SOCCER LANDSCAPE

Walking back to the taxi with Chiefs supporters after watching Chiefs play out a credible 1-1 draw with Manchester United in Cape Town, the complaints from these supporters that white football fans only attended domestic soccer matches when European teams visited South Africa articulated a simple racial dichotomy between the ‘black’ domestic game and the ‘white’ European game. Simplistic as this perception was, it resonated with my initial observations during the game. It was clearly visible that most of the large white minority in the stadium were wearing United shirts and scarves and waving United flags whereas the Chiefs supporters were primarily black. This pattern continued during the Orlando Pirates v United game and the subsequent final between Chiefs and United. Conversely, during the one all-South African affair between Chiefs and Pirates, such a contingent of white fans was notably absent. These fans were similarly absent from most Premier Soccer League (PSL) matches in Johannesburg that I had attended. Such construction of the domestic game as a ‘black’ cultural space has precedent. For example, in the context of growing up in a coloured township in Cape Town, Sean Jacobs describes the National Soccer League (NSL)¹ as “*their game*”.² On reflection however, such a cursory glance at the crowd inside the stadium belied a different dynamic. Granted, the majority of the Chiefs supporters were black but there were small pockets of white, coloured and Indian spectators visibly supporting Chiefs and numerous black spectators supporting United. Similarly, at some PSL matches, it was noteworthy to see such pockets of fans, especially at the high profile games. Numerically, they were too small to be significant in relation to the population

¹ The forerunner of the PSL.

² Jacobs, “It Wasn’t That I Did Not Like South African Football: Media, History, and Biography,” 96.

numbers but they were symbolic of the small but noticeable transformation of local soccer fans in post-apartheid South Africa. As the CEO of one PSL club asserted, *“you start to see more and more white people going to watch football now and even the big derby games, you can spot the odd white in the crowd... the natural transformation is taking place now”*.³

Wasserman and Jacobs critique of the creolisation approach to identity in South Africa holds much resonance here. Despite attempts to move beyond the race versus class debate, the Johannesburg soccer landscape is still scarred by the legacy of apartheid. This chapter charts themes of division and difference, emphasising the boundaries that separate the supporters, both physically and mentally. The Chiefs and United supporters' clubs are physically removed from each other, inhabiting different areas of the city, while incorporating different styles of support. The response from the Chiefs supporters to my presence in their group signified the oddity of a white soccer supporter at the domestic game, while the majority of the United supporters viewed local soccer with indifference. The small number of white players in the league fostered the idea that domestic football did not represent them. Furthermore, the local game was often perceived as a dangerous, crime-ridden space that many did not wish to enter, echoing Steyn's whiteness narratives of fear and marginalisation.

On further investigation and in response to Seekings and Nattrass' earlier concerns that class is falling under the radar of scholarly enquiry in South Africa, the racial divides in the Johannesburg soccer fandom obscures class barriers. Members of the United supporters' club had higher levels of disposable income, evidenced by the purchase of expensive replica shirts and trips to Old Trafford. Those members who were not white would fit into Steyn and Foster's *“good blacks”* framework;⁴ members of the emerging black middle class in the country who were

³ Author interview with Bidvest Wits CEO, 17/11/2008.

⁴ Melissa Steyn and Don Foster, "Repertoires for Talking White: Resistant Whiteness in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 1 (2007): 34.

seen to be not challenging white economic privilege. As such, this would fit with Posel's assertion that the "*close coupling of race and class is being dislodged*".⁵ Although the majority of Chiefs supporters also claimed to follow a European team, usually Manchester United, their access to the team was limited as most could not afford satellite television subscriptions or home internet connections. Still, through following/ supporting European teams, both sets of supporters were tapping into Appadurai's 'global flows' of identity, although unevenly. Additionally, few Chiefs supporters could afford to own cars, reinforcing the physical distance between the supporters' clubs.

However, in examining these divisions, challenges to these boundaries slowly emerge around the fringes of these groups. Anzaldúa conceptualises 'borderlands', which can be physical or psychological spaces "*where two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy*".⁶ It is in these borderlands that Nuttall's 'entanglements' in the creolisation process and Dolby's reconfigured 'contours and textures' begin to come into view. There were exceptions to the divided landscape of fandom. For instance, a small number of United supporters viewed the domestic game in a more optimistic light and had attended some matches. Within the Chiefs supporters' club, it became apparent that a small number could afford to buy authentic replica shirts and travel across the country to follow their team; their experiences of the city were more optimistic than those who struggled to afford the cost of a match ticket. Finally, the Bidvest Wits case offers another alternative to the racial dichotomisation of soccer fandom in the city as one of the few teams in the PSL that attracts a multi-racial support base.

⁵ Posel, "What's in a Name? Racial Categorisations under Apartheid and Their Afterlife," 77.

⁶ Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1999), 19.

A distanced and removed fandom?

On the eve of apartheid, the novelist Alan Paton summed up the distance and dislocation between racial groups:

*“One can see, as I saw when I was a boy, the reserves of the Bantu people and see nothing of what was happening there at all. One can hear, as I heard when I was a boy, that there are more Afrikaners than English-speaking people in South Africa, and yet know nothing, see nothing, of them all”.*⁷

Such ideas resonated with Johannesburg soccer fandom, especially between the Manchester United and Kaizer Chiefs supporters respectively. While there was only one national branch of the Wits supporters’ club, both the Chiefs and United supporters’ clubs branches in the research claimed to represent Johannesburg but inhabited different areas of the city. The meeting point for transport to Chiefs games, which was organised by the branch, was in the Joubert Park area, just east of Johannesburg CBD. The vast majority of members lived in the central areas of the city although significantly, one member lived in the northern, middle class suburb of Darrenwood. In contrast, the venue for the monthly meetings of the United supporters’ club was in the northern suburb of Athol. The Grand Slam bar where some of the United supporters regularly watched their team play was further removed from the city centre, located in the northern suburb of Dowerglen. This suburb was sufficiently distant from central Johannesburg that it was officially in the neighbouring municipality of Ekurhuleni rather than Johannesburg itself. The majority of members lived in the northern, middle class suburbs, such as Sandton but there were two notable exceptions. Wayne would make the drive from Diepkloof in Soweto to Athol and Dowerglen on a regular basis while Les had remained living in Berea in central Johannesburg despite the white flight from these areas as discussed in chapter three. The unique position of Wits, drawing its support base from the student population rather than from a locale meant that its

⁷ Paton, Cry, the Beloved Country, 150.

small support came from across the city and from a variety of racial and class backgrounds.

Manchester United and middle class suburbs

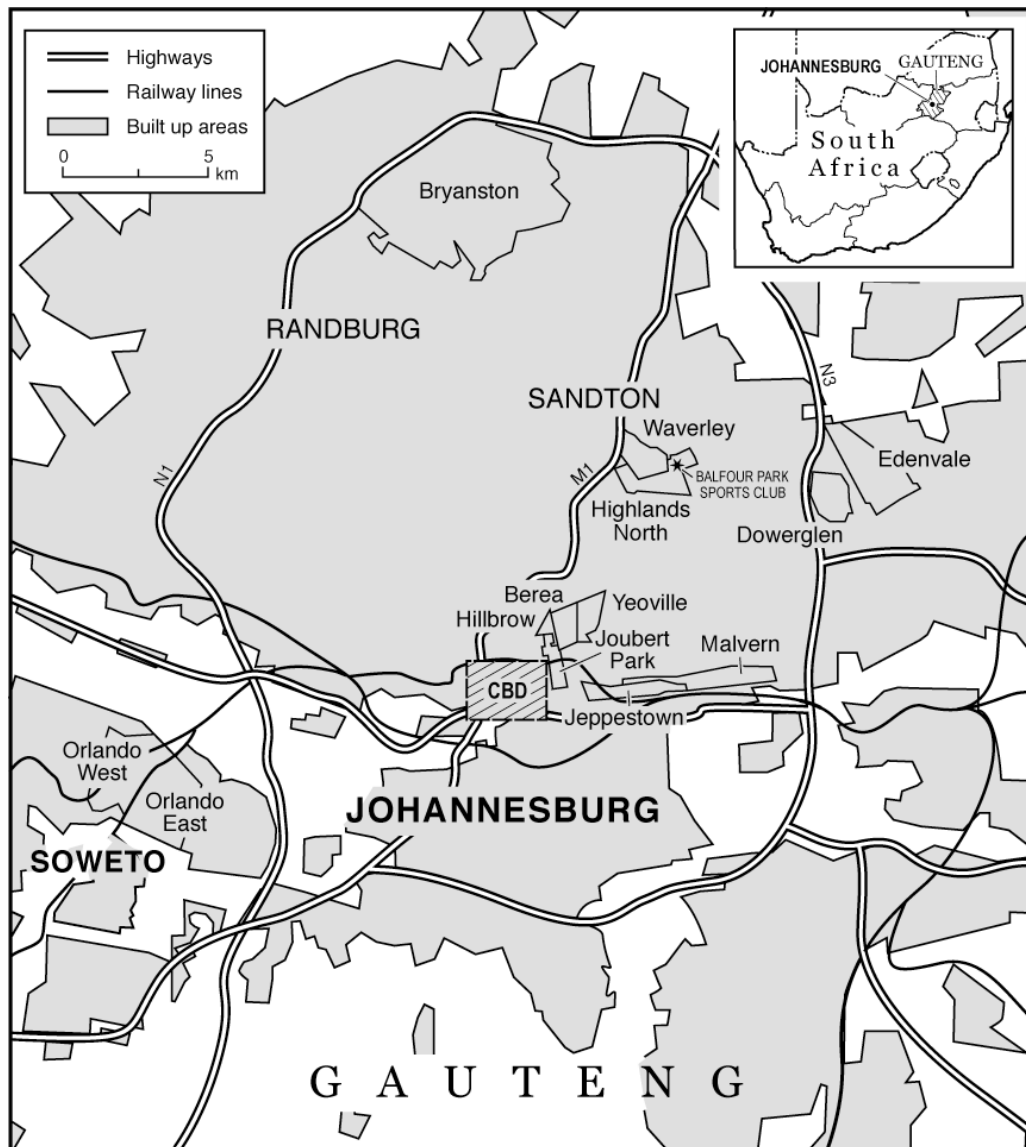


Figure 3 - Areas of Johannesburg encompassed by the supporters' clubs.⁸

Inhabiting different areas of the city provided evidence that reinforced the concept of a racially divided fandom in the city. Located in a predominantly white,

⁸ Map courtesy of Wendy Job, Department of Geography, Environmental Management & Energy Studies, University of Johannesburg.

middle class suburb meant that that vast majority of the clientele were white and on a regular basis, there was a notable racial divide in the bar between the virtually all white patrons and the largely black bar staff. Such a divide was brought to the fore during the United v Everton game in January 2009. Recorded in my research diary, there was a juxtaposition of local and global soccer fandom with the United game being shown on the main screen while the Orlando Pirates v Bay United match simultaneously displayed on smaller screens to the side of the bar. While the almost exclusively white clientele were staring at the big screen, the black bar staff were staring in the opposite direction at the local match. The bar staff occasionally glanced at the United match in curiosity but the PSL game held no interest for the United supporters. European soccer matches, including Italian and Spanish games would have priority over domestic matches on the big screen. When they were occasionally shown on the big screen, few would pay attention to them. Furthermore, mounted on the walls of the bar were numerous European soccer shirts and scarves, including Juventus, Manchester United and Leeds United; South African club soccer paraphernalia was conspicuously absent. On entering, the bar became further distant from the city it was in. Outside, the high walls and electric fences of the gated housing complexes served as reminders of the affluence of the area along with the widespread fear of crime. Such security measures shut the residents away from the everyday happenings outside those walls. Inside the bar, the crime and grime of the city centre became temporarily forgotten. The United supporters replicated the chants that would be heard in the Stretford End⁹ in Old Trafford, invoking fierce club rivalries that exist in England, such as:

"Build a bonfire, build a bonfire, put the Scousers on the top, put the City in the middle and lets burn the f***ing lot!"¹⁰

With the United supporters wearing their replica shirts, waving their scarves and chanting in support of their team, the atmosphere was similar to that of a bar in

⁹ The Stretford End is the west stand at Old Trafford where the most vociferous United supporters regularly sing from.

¹⁰ Entry in research diary, 11/11/2008.

England on a weekend; supporting United in the bar had provided a connection to a location thousands of miles away while concurrently disconnecting the supporters from the city they were in. However, it would be erroneous to assert that the match day environment in the bar had become a 'little England'. Being linked to such an imagined community did not strip the United supporters of their geographical identity. The United supporters regularly displayed their South African flag with "SA Reds" written across it. When talking about international rugby and cricket games, they became patriotic, especially in relation to myself and other British expatriates, happily reminding me who South Africa beat in the 2007 Rugby World Cup final. The bar was not just a white, middle class space, but more specifically an Anglophone one. There were few Afrikaners in attendance at the bar during English soccer games and no Afrikaans members of the supporters' club who would attend monthly meetings regularly. This absence of Afrikaners was clearly illustrated when I contacted the branch secretary to enquire about Afrikaans members. Her response was, "*We must have some on the register. We've got a Van Zyl, a Marthinus, two Louws, a Du Preez, and a DeLange*",¹¹ but in a nationwide membership roll of over three hundred, this was a tiny proportion. In the bar, the predominant language spoken was English, while few Afrikaans soccer fans would attend. One notable exception was during a United v Arsenal fixture when in conversation with who turned out to be an Afrikaans, card-carrying member of the Arsenal supporters' club. He prided himself on being a rarity; "*you don't find many like me*".¹² Tensions between English-speaking whites and Afrikaners were recurrently articulated, especially when the rugby season and rugby internationals clashed with United fixtures as these matches often took priority on the big screen over United games, forcing supporters to watch the game elsewhere, often at home. Derogatory references referring to Afrikaners as 'Dutchmen' were occasionally made on the supporters' club web forum and at meetings when discussing where to watch the games when the Grand Slam was unfeasible. As discussed in chapter two, rugby in South Africa has

¹¹ Author correspondence with MUSCSA secretary, 11/11/2008.

¹² Entry in research diary, 04/02/2009.

historically been heavily connected with Afrikaner masculinity but this did not mean that the United supporters were disinterested in rugby. The national rugby team remained popular with the majority of United supporters while some also declared a club allegiance. However, United still remained the most important sporting club focus.

The majority of the United supporters chose not to regularly watch the games at the bar for a variety of reasons. Some did not like not being able to hear the match commentary, some complained about the distance they would have to travel from home while others were weary of potential aggravation that watching the game with rival supporters might bring. Regardless of these reasons, watching games with some supporters at their homes and subsequent interviews further reinforced the notion of a predominantly white, middle class, European club fandom. Every United supporter interviewed had the full Dstv satellite television subscription, primarily for sport and in most cases, for United.¹³ In some cases, this would be accompanied by large televisions as well. Michael, an insurance broker, had converted a room in his house to hold approximately fifty seats, a bar, projection screen and projector so he could watch United and display numerous signed and framed United shirts and other memorabilia on the walls.¹⁴ Norman had a second plasma-screen television so his wife did not have to watch United play.¹⁵ A group of younger (18-30) members had Xbox 360s and would play the latest incarnation of the FIFA simulation, invariably choosing to play as United. Darren had one television so he could watch sport while another was plugged into the Xbox so he could play as United and watch United simultaneously. Not all United supporters could so easily afford such a lifestyle. For instance, both Eric and Tom admitted that it had been a struggle in the past to afford Dstv although they still had

¹³ Such a subscription would cost R529 (approximately £50) monthly.

¹⁴ Entry in research diary, 18/05/2009.

¹⁵ Author interview with 'Norman' (United), 18/05/2009.

sufficient income to buy it.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the mass subscription of satellite television within the United supporters' club was a signifier of a middle class grouping.

If the bar on match day was disconnected from its surrounds, the branch monthly meetings were another way in which the United supporters distanced themselves from the city. Balfour Park, the venue for the branch's monthly meetings was in the north of the city although well within the city boundaries. There was an historical significance of holding the meetings here as Balfour was the home of the now defunct Highland Park FC, which participated in the white-run National Football League (NFL) in the 1960s and 1970s. As with the Grand Slam, access to the club house was guarded. Inside, between forty and sixty members would attend on a regular basis, engaging in a 'formalised pub talk', discussing the results and tactics of past matches. Regular attendance at meetings meant entry into the draw to win a place on the supporters' club annual tour to the last home game of the season at Old Trafford. The meetings also served as another conduit to tap into a wider imagined community of global Manchester United supporters. For example, towards the beginning of the meeting in February 2009, there was a one minute silence to commemorate the 51st anniversary of the Munich air disaster, an event that is integral to the history and mythology of the club. Furthermore, the members maintained a connection to the club through match reports from members who had travelled to England to watch the game live while match souvenirs brought back from such games were raffled off, allowing those who were unable to travel to have a small piece of the match day experience. In both the Grand Slam and Balfour Park, the domestic game was markedly absent.

¹⁶ Author interview with 'Eric' (United), 17/04/ 2009; Author interview with 'Tom' (United), 12/06/2009.

Kaizer Chiefs, urban decay and vuvuzelas

The meeting point for match days was in the Joubert Park/ Hillbrow area of the city, near the CBD. As discussed in chapter three, these areas were characterised by urban decay as a new wave of inhabitants moved from the mid-1980s; the black working class, with a combination of a lack of investment and the rise of 'slumlords'. Unlike the quiet, leafy, sanitised suburbs where the United supporters were located, Hillbrow and Joubert Park were bustling areas during the day. Informal street traders lined the pavements, the roads were busy and noisy while the numerous large blocks of flats in the area appeared coated with a film of grime and in a general state of disrepair. My presence as a white man waiting on the corner of Smit and Twist with a group of Kaizer Chiefs supporters was an oddity in this environment. Transport arrangements made by the branch for games were communicated through the supporters' noticeboard in the back pages of *Soccer Laduma*, a newspaper largely focusing on domestic soccer. As such, the vast majority of United supporters did not read this publication. Games featuring the glamour teams (Chiefs, Pirates and Sundowns) were all-ticket events¹⁷ but with most members of the branch not owning cars, many found it difficult to travel to the various ticketing centres in the city to get tickets meaning those with money and transport were relied on to bring the tickets. Invariably, the meeting time advertised was never adhered to; the branch would rarely leave before ninety minutes afterwards. Whenever the taxi was late to arrive or depart, I was often told that it was "*African time*", that "*we blacks cannot organise ourselves*".¹⁸ If they stereotyped themselves as disorganised, my whiteness pigeonholed me as organised and efficient. At the outset, I would turn up to the meeting point at the designated time and would make sure that I had my match ticket bought in advance. Trivial actions such as my choice of fast food chicken outlet as opposed to theirs while travelling to

¹⁷ Tickets were not sold at the gate on match day.

¹⁸ Entry in research diary, 15/11/2008.

matches became a source of amusement. The act of walking into Nando's instead of KFC was seen by some as evidence of my whiteness while listening to 'white music' such as mainstream British and American pop and rock and my awkward attempts at dancing at the games marked me out as white. Such responses to my presence and actions reinforced the concept of a racially divided fandom. Some supporters attempted to explain my presence by claiming that while I physically appeared white, I was 'acting' like a black person by supporting Chiefs and travelling with the branch, culminating with one supporter claiming that "*today you are not a white man, you are a black man*".¹⁹ However, he had been drinking so I was sceptical of such a claim.

Travelling to and from the games became signifiers of a 'black' cultural space. The transport co-ordinator of the branch would organise a taxi to meet the branch. These were not private cabs but old minivans with rows of seats crammed into the back. Notoriously ill-maintained and erratically driven, it was rare to see a white face use this form of public transport. Many United supporters showed disdain when they found out that I was using the taxi system. Moreover, the *kwaito* and Afro-pop music pulsating from the over-powered speakers in the taxi were similar signifiers. Sung in a number of the official African languages in the country, *kwaito* is usually linked to black youth in the post-apartheid era. As Steingo argues, this music represents this youth across class divisions; both the urban poor and the emerging black middle class,²⁰ although, as both Steingo and Coplan admit, the genre has an increasingly multi-racial following. The absence of English and Afrikaans in both the songs and in general conversations reflected the absence of white, coloured and Indian football fans. English was only usually spoken for my benefit due to my insufficient knowledge of isiZulu.

¹⁹ Entry in research diary, 13/04/2008.

²⁰ Gavin Steingo, "South African Music after Apartheid: Kwaito, the 'Party Politic' and the Appropriation of Gold as a Sign of Success," *Popular Music and Society* 28, no. 3 (2005): 333.

While the United supporters replicated the chants sung in Old Trafford, the match atmosphere of Chiefs matches was markedly different. At some venues, entry to the games became chaotic and haphazard; informal car guards would argue and occasionally fight over who had the right to find a parking space for the vehicle while crowds would attempt to push through insufficient entry gates into the stadium. The style of support differed greatly from watching English soccer. Unlike the more aggressive and confrontational songs sung by the United supporters, Chiefs matches were carnival-esque. Especially at the high profile games such as Pirates v Chiefs, supporters wore a variety of ingenious garments and head gear to show support for their team. Especially for those who could not afford to buy replica shirts, a variety of gowns and overalls were painted and decorated in the club's logo and sponsors' badges while *makarapas*, hard hats with shapes cut out and painted in club colours and logos were also commonplace. Occasionally, there would be supporters with large items of food such as cabbages, loaves of bread and cakes, which would be eaten throughout the game to symbolise how Chiefs would devour the opposition. Scores of supporters would bunch together to sing and dance, often synchronised. A major characteristic of the domestic game was the use of *vuuzelas* by large numbers of fans. Despite the ambiguity in the origins of the plastic trumpet-like horn, the *vuuzela* has been appropriated by many supporters of the domestic game. It is significant because of its absence at domestic rugby and cricket matches. Before the build-up to the World Cup, the instrument was commonly associated with South African domestic soccer, having been embedded as part of domestic soccer culture. Surrounded by such a raucous atmosphere, regular observations of crowd demographics recorded in the research diary emphasised racial divisions. It was rare to see more than a handful of white fans in the crowd and on some occasions I was the lone white person. Especially towards the beginning of the fieldwork, the novelty of my presence at these games was reiterated by repeated requests from fans to have their photo taken with me. On several occasions, I was told that they wanted a record of a white man at a Chiefs match to show friends. My being there as an abnormality was underlined when I

got accidentally caught up in crowd trouble at the Sundowns v Chiefs fixture at Johannesburg Stadium in January 2009. Reporting my stolen camera to a nearby policeman, the reply was, “*Why didn’t you stay at home and watch it on TV or get VIP tickets?*”²¹ White soccer fans were generally not expected to attend domestic soccer matches.

Branch meetings were held outdoors in the park at Joubert Park, usually on Sunday mornings. Surrounded by a host of other meetings held by a variety of funeral and church groups, a white man in a Kaizer Chiefs shirt (wearing an item of Chiefs clothing was considered the requisite uniform at meetings) regularly caused surprise from those in the other meetings. However, as with talking about the United supporters’ club as a ‘white’ cultural space omitted its English-speaking dimension, attending Chiefs supporters meetings revealed the interplay of ethnic identities within the group. At the initial meeting of the Greater Johannesburg branch, it was discussed at length what language future meetings would be conducted in. Although every member could speak English to a certain extent, I was the only member for whom English was a first language. It was decided that subsequent meetings would be conducted in a mixture of Sesotho, isiZulu and English. However, some Zulu members complained aside to me when meetings slipped into Sesotho as they could not understand everything that was being discussed. Such identities came to the fore in the build-up to the national election in April 2009. While the vast majority of the members were ANC supporters, Zulu members on the whole identified with ANC president Jacob Zuma as being one of them. One member described his decision to vote ANC purely on the basis of Zuma being his ‘homeboy’,²² a view subsequently confirmed by other Zulu members. Ethnic stereotyping was commonplace in the taxi, although I had initially missed out on this. Those considered to be Venda, from the north east of the country, were often the target of jokes. Travelling to the last game of the 08/09 season against

²¹ Entry in research diary, 11/01/2009.

²² Author conversation with ‘Jacob’ (Chiefs), recorded in research diary, 19/04/2009.

Platinum Stars in Potchefstroom, the supporters realised that the taxi driver was lost. The Zulu and Sotho members in the taxi began laughing that the Venda driver and navigator did not have a clue how to get to the stadium, joking that the Venda were a simple people. While I could not escape racial identification in soccer fandom, it was not the only way to understand fandom.

Although the Chiefs and United supporters had different match day experiences, the concept that the supporters' clubs represented different experiences of the city were emphasised through the interview process. Having conducted the vast majority of interviews with United supporters in their offices and homes in middle class suburbs, interviewing Chiefs supporters took me into a different side of the city. For instance, interviewing Enoch on the doorstep of his small, dilapidated building in which whole families shared a single room in cramped and basic living conditions brought into stark contrast the lives of some of the Chiefs supporters compared to the United supporters. This was further reinforced when I visited Alfred, who lived in an informal settlement in Primrose in the south east of the city, to watch him make *makarapas* for a living. The squalid conditions of shack dwelling became juxtaposed against the leafy northern suburbs as I interviewed Duncan, a United supporting civil engineer at his home an hour later. These are some of the more extreme examples within the Chiefs supporters. Many rented their own flats and lived in better conditions. However, the class distinction between the Chiefs and United supporters remained significant.

Crossing boundaries

From the above description, it would seem apparent that race still holds vast significance in the everyday lives of these soccer supporters. The spatial boundaries of the city that Harrison identifies and referred to in chapter three are visible in the city's soccer fandom. However, these boundaries were not fixed but permeable. The United supporters' club had a small number of non-white members who would

regularly attend meetings; black, coloured and Indian. Wayne, a real estate agent, lived in Diepkloof in Soweto, but made the journey from the township across the city for the meetings and occasionally to the bar to watch the high profile matches. In some aspects a similar experience to mine as a white researcher with Kaizer Chiefs supporters, he recalled his initial outings to the supporters' club:

"I used to be the only black for years. Only now you see some black people, maybe one or two but I used to be the only black. The reason is that I didn't want to be a part of a crowd. I always do things with passion like when I went to the Manchester United supporters for the first time, they were surprised to see me. 'Who's this guy?'"²³

While he felt that his presence at the supporters' club had made an impact, he believed that he was quickly accepted into the group, to the point that his skin colour mattered little in his social interaction with the other members:

"And they accepted me. I didn't even feel intimidated and when there were speeches, I used to stand in front of them and talk... I never felt intimidated by being surrounded by white people".²⁴

Such sentiments were echoed by Peter, a black member who had joined after Wayne. He claimed that he had never felt intimidated being part of a small minority within the group. Resonating with the quote at the beginning of this chapter about a slow, natural transformation in the support base of domestic soccer, Peter believed that a similar process was occurring within the United supporters' club, that while he was initially one of only two black members of the branch, there had been a slow snowballing effect through word of mouth that meant that "*you'll find that there's more and more black guys every year*".²⁵ Although the branch had a small number of non-white supporters who occasionally attended monthly branch meetings, this transforming process appeared to be in its infancy.

²³ Author interview with 'Wayne' (United), 31/01/2009.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Author interview with 'Peter' (United), 27/07/2009.

However, while the presence of these members in the United supporters' club may have partially challenged this seeming duality of Johannesburg soccer fandom, both Peter and Wayne represented a specific section of society; the emerging black middle class. Both could afford to and had made the 'pilgrimage' to Old Trafford to watch their team play while they had Dstv in their homes along with large televisions so they could watch United on a regular basis. Peter resided in the city's northern suburbs and although Wayne remained in the township, he admitted that he preferred to socialise in the suburbs as opposed to township taverns:

"I've always liked to go into the suburbs to have a pint and I never got intimidated, the only black guy in the white suburb because I enjoy the atmosphere".²⁶

While they both identified themselves as black, their lifestyles corresponded little with the black Kaizer Chiefs supporter. Even those Chiefs supporters who had a greater social mobility than the majority did not have such material possessions and no-one was able to afford to travel to the UK to watch a soccer game.

Outside of soccer supporting, this chapter has asserted that the Chiefs and United supporters inhabit separate areas of the city; the decaying inner city and the middle class outer suburbs respectively. While Wayne travelled from the township to the suburb, a small number of the white United supporters also challenged such a divide in the city's soccer fandom. A lifelong supporter of United since the 1950s, Les had remained living in Berea, a central area next to Hillbrow and Joubert Park, suffering from a similar level of urban decay. Having moved there when the suburb was reserved for white inhabitants only, he had decided to remain there while the majority of the white populace had moved outwards to outlying suburbs in the 1980s and 1990s. In terms of employment, Darren was one of the few who would travel from the northern suburbs into central Johannesburg, working in Braamfontein, adjacent to the CBD. While their understandings of the city and their

²⁶ Author interview with 'Wayne' (United), 31/01/2009.

reasons for living and working in the areas more synonymous with the Chiefs supporters will be explored later in this chapter, these two supporters signified that a divided soccer fandom in the city was simplistic.

To say that the domestic game was a 'black game' would be to ignore those non-black soccer fans who would attend. Admittedly small in number, I periodically observed small pockets of white supporters at domestic matches. For instance, three white, English-speaking youths sat behind me during Chiefs – Supersport United in Pretoria in March 2009. Talking to them at half time, they explained that they would occasionally go to the stadium to watch the soccer, although they were not 'hardcore' supporters of Supersport but had a passing following.²⁷ Similarly, a white family had brought their newborn baby with them to the Chiefs – Pirates fixture in November 2008. Non-black fans were a more common occurrence when Chiefs played a team that had its history rooted in white-run football under apartheid. The Nedbank Cup fixture between Chiefs and the University of Pretoria in February 2009 was played at the Super Stadium in Atteridgeville, a former township outside of Pretoria. At a glance, the university had brought approximately two hundred supporters to cheer on their highly unfancied team.²⁸ This was a tiny number compared to the thousands of Chiefs supporters but within the group there were a large minority of white and Indian fans. Arthur, the Chiefs supporter who I was walking with, pointed these fans out to me in surprise.²⁹ Such a reaction highlighted the atypicality of non-black fans at domestic soccer games. Equally, a small number of the Chiefs supporters went to watch the Nedbank Cup final between the University of Pretoria and Moroka Swallows at Rand Stadium in the southern suburb of Turffontein. After the match, Gilbert, one of the supporters who had been to the game showed me a photo of himself with white Pretoria fans to prove that *"you are not the only white man at*

²⁷ Entry in research diary, 08/02/2009.

²⁸ University of Pretoria played in the National First Division, the division immediately below the PSL.

²⁹ Entry in research diary, 21/03/2009.

soccer".³⁰ Within the Chiefs supporters' club, there were few occasions that non-black Chiefs fans would travel with the branch. Those who did were usually a consequence of my membership with the branch, which will be examined in the next chapter, but there was one occasion that warrants consideration. For the Chiefs – Bay United fixture played in Rustenburg, the branch had a fan travelling with them of whom they were not sure whether he was coloured or Indian. This was not apparent to me during the match day but a subsequent impromptu meeting of the branch's executive committee at the chairman's house revealed that he had caused a stir. Kaizer Chiefs had requested demographic information from all supporters' club branches. The committee took pride in filling the form declaring that they not only had one white member but someone else who was not black.³¹ In reality, this person never became a member and did not subsequently travel with the branch.

However, to characterise Johannesburg soccer fandom simply as racially divided with a small number of supporters on the fringes crossing boundaries, would also be misleading. The third case, Wits, offers a space where soccer fans from across racial and class divides engage with the other outside of these divisions. Based within the grounds of the University of the Witwatersrand, itself located in Braamfontein, it is a poignant location considering its multi-racial support base. Braamfontein is on the periphery of the encroaching urban decay emanating from the centre, a bridge between the grime of the CBD and tree-lined suburbs such as Parktown and Melville. Drawing its support from the diverse student population allows a different perspective on fandom. While a tourist could attend most PSL games and see few white fans there, the same tourist would instantly notice the large minority of white fans at Wits matches. Certainly, the club often only gets 500 – 2,000 in attendance (unless the opposition is one of the big three glamour clubs of Chiefs, Pirates or Sundowns), which make these fans unrepresentative of wider attitudes in fandom but Wits retains a level of symbolic importance that needs to be

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Entry in research diary, 15/10/2008.

explored. In contrast to the more imposing structures of the country's major sporting stadia, Bidvest Stadium is a compact ground with a capacity of approximately 5,000 people. There is only one grandstand on the west side while the small east stand has no roof to obscure the close view of the CBD skyline. The proximity and visibility of the CBD serves as a reminder of Bidvest Wits as a fusion of different aspects of Johannesburg soccer fandom. The stadium is unusual in that it creates a culturally fused space for supporters. This phenomenon is quite different from both the Africanised space of the minibus taxi of the Chiefs supporters with its *kwaito* and Afro-pop blaring and the Anglophile space carved out by United fans singing Old Trafford chants at suburban pubs. Informal traders sell the ubiquitous pap and steak at Bidvest Stadium, widely sold by vendors at virtually all PSL matches. However, the official Wits snack bar sells *boerewors* rolls (akin to hotdogs), food more readily associated with the white-dominated arenas of rugby and cricket spectatorship rather than football. Only at Cape Town's Newlands Stadium had I encountered numerous vendors selling *boerewors* at Ajax Cape Town³² and Bafana international fixtures, indicative of the different dynamics of soccer fandom exhibited in Cape Town. Aspects of the Chiefs match day experience are also present, especially the singing and dancing by the somewhat small but no less vociferous hardcore group of supporters. The combination of *boerewors* and *vuvuzelas* provide the culturally fused backdrop for some white fans to appropriate elements of domestic soccer culture through attempting to blow a *vuvuzela*. However, many do fail as it takes practice. Notably, one white fan in particular adapted the *vuvuzela*, claiming that "*there's more ideas in the pipeline*"³³ for 2010.

While some white, coloured and Indian fans are there simply to "try it out", equally there are those who regularly attend games and show an active knowledge

³² Ajax Cape Town is the amalgamation of two teams: Seven Stars and Cape Town Spurs. Although Spurs had black players and played in the non-racial Federation Professional League, the side was based in the white suburbs of the city. This background may explain the selling of *boerewors* alongside pap and steak, absent from Chiefs and Pirates matches that I attended.

³³ Entry in research diary, 23/11/2008.

of the team. These mixed fans engage with each other, often in contrast to both the Chiefs and United supporters' clubs. Supporting or following Bidvest Wits creates an environment unlike other soccer clubs in Johannesburg. In the context of Wits, soccer is not simply a 'black' game. Through Dolby's understanding of taste, white fans are not 'becoming black' through choosing to attend a domestic soccer game; instead, Wits matches are recoded. It is not a case of fans and supporters crossing the boundaries of Johannesburg soccer fandom, for these boundaries are not present at Wits games; it is not a black game, nor is it a white game. It is these moments that create alternative understandings of the soccer landscape to that of a continuing racially divided soccer fandom. It recalls Simone's understanding of Johannesburg as a myriad of interactions and co-operation within and transcending various ethnic and national groupings. Wits fans and supporters are not bound by the divisions of soccer fandom in the city. It is in these interactions that Nuttall and Michael may see evidence of creolisation, of new identities being formed.

Yet, even if Wits matches are not conceptualised as part of black domestic soccer, they cannot escape the realities of race in South Africa. While Wits can be seen as an example of social integration in the sporting environment, closer examination reveals a slightly different reality. On match day, white, coloured and Indian fans fill the stands, but the majority sit in clusters of people from their own racial group. Tellingly, the VIP section of the grandstand is usually dominated by white spectators. The example of a black fan asking his white student friends at a Wits - Chiefs fixture "*what are you doing in a place like this?*"³⁴ highlights the extent to which the notion of the domestic game as a 'black' game still resonates, even in the racially mixed environment of Wits.

³⁴ Entry in research diary, 22/11/2008.

Reasons for support

Additionally to the case studies inhabiting different places in the city, the reasons for supporting the respective teams also reinforced divisions in fandom. Chiefs and United supporters tapped into wider imagined communities of supporters yet United supporters were often looking outwards towards Europe while the Chiefs supporters remained rooted in South Africa.

Manchester United supporters – looking outwards

The replication of Old Trafford chants in the suburban pub recreated an anglophile space in Johannesburg but this reflected a wider yearning and identification with England and English soccer. In the case of the British (and Irish) expatriates, this was unsurprising. As Morrell has highlighted, there is a rich history of English-speaking whites, especially in colonial Natal reaffirming their 'Englishness' through sport, in this case specifically rugby.³⁵ Duncan and George, Irish and Northern Irish respectively, had supported United long before they moved out to South Africa. The allure of United for these members was the Irish connection. For George, it was his compatriot George Best performing on the global sporting stage in the 1960s, arguing that he was "*the greatest player the world has ever seen*",³⁶ while Duncan recalled with fondness watching the 1963 FA Cup final on Irish television, especially because the captain of the United side was Irishman Noel Cantwell.³⁷ Originally a Lancastrian, another of the expatriate group of supporters, Jonathan, had grown up supporting United along with his family.³⁸ These three supporters had been several times to Old Trafford to watch United play live. George recalled his worst moment as a United supporter:

³⁵ Morrell, "Forging a Ruling Race: Rugby and White Masculinity in Colonial Natal C. 1870-1910," 93.

³⁶ Author interview with 'George' (United), 06/03/2009.

³⁷ Author interview with 'Duncan' (United), 11/01/2009.

³⁸ Author interview with 'Jonathan' (United), 17/05/2009.

"I was there in 74/75, the season they got relegated. I was at the [last] match [of the season], standing behind the goal when Denis Law backheeled the ball into the net. It was horrendous. I know you make jokes about it but there were grown men crying in the streets afterwards."³⁹

Having experienced United on a semi-regular basis, supporting the team after moving to South Africa was non-negotiable. Maintaining support for United was maintaining links with home. For many of the older members, the majority of whom were born and raised in South Africa, supporting United was also a means of asserting and claiming a sense of Englishness or Britishness. Despite coming from an Irish family, raised in Bulawayo in what is now Zimbabwe and moving to Johannesburg, Les, an accountant, reasoned that his passion for United and wider interest in English soccer was because of his English-style education and upbringing.⁴⁰ During the interview, Lee stressed the personal importance of his English heritage. It was because of a family trip to England that he became exposed to United as a young boy:

"In fact, the day we arrived, I remember seeing the headlines in the newspaper that United had beaten Liverpool 2-1. George Best had scored two goals and there was a photo of him carrying his one boot".⁴¹

Links to England and a wider English and/ or British identity through supporting United were reinforced through imported newsreels, newspapers and magazines reporting on English soccer. A number of United supporters reminisced about buying British soccer magazines such as *Charles Buchan's Football Monthly* or *Shoot*, in which they could see their heroes in picture and read stories about the team. With the introduction of television in South Africa not until 1976, cinemas would import Pathe newsreels, which would include highlights of English league matches and sometimes the BBC programme *Match of the Day*. The BBC provided further links through its World Service commentaries of English soccer. Lee recalled

³⁹ Author interview with 'George' (United), 06/03/2009.

⁴⁰ Author interview with 'Les' (United), 20/04/2009.

⁴¹ Author interview with 'Lee' (United), 25/03/2009.

how he and his friends would “*have to listen at quarter-to one in the morning to the BBC World Service for the sports results, but we were fanatical even then*”.⁴² Occasionally, entire games on 16mm film would be imported from England to be shown in cinemas, months after the event. In the case of Susan, her first complete United game that she watched was the 1968 European Cup final. This was all taking place in the central areas of Johannesburg reserved for whites only under apartheid, especially central Johannesburg, Hillbrow and Berea. As considered in chapter three, Mbembe writes about “*the temptation of mimicry*”⁴³ preventing early settlers of the city from “*having genuine ties with the world surrounding them*”,⁴⁴ but this is equally applicable here. Supporting United was a symptom of white, cosmopolitan Johannesburg detached from the context of its location. The white-run NFL in the 1960s was often an Anglophone space. For instance, as Raath points out, many of the NFL teams carried British-style names; i.e. Rangers, Rovers, United and City⁴⁵ as opposed to the more unusual names found in the NPSL, such as Pirates, Swallows, Arrows and Black Aces.⁴⁶ However, teams such as Lusitano (Johannesburg) and Hellenic (Cape Town) were formed by Portuguese and Greek South Africans respectively. Of the older members who would watch NFL soccer games, all but one interviewed supported Highlands Park. The team became an extension of supporting United as they played in similar kits. For Susan, “*It helped that Manchester United and Highlands Park wore the same kit; the red jerseys with the white collars and cuffs and so it was an easy marriage*”.⁴⁷ However, the link between supporting United and Highlands Park was by no means an outlet to reaffirm ties with the UK. More often than not, it was the colour of the kit alone that was the catalyst for supporting United. Carlos had no personal ties to the UK and had asserted his Portuguese heritage in the interview. To him, supporting United was simply because, “*Highlands Park [were] sponsored by Sharp. United were sponsored by*

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Mbembe, “Aesthetics of Superfluity,” 39.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Raath, *Soccer through the Years, 1862-2002*.

⁴⁶ Alegi, *Laduma! Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa*, 140.

⁴⁷ Author interview with ‘Susan’ (United), 07/03/2009.

Sharp. Colours red, white and black so that's where the affinity came from".⁴⁸ Supporting United conversely became a way of reaffirming a sense of being South African for a few members. Playing for United between 1978 and 1987, the South African goalkeeper Gary Bailey became the catalyst for a newer wave of supporters. While Ryan also had a distant personal connection with Bailey, both he and Tom had become interested in United because of the South African connection. For Tom, Bailey was a role model to look up to as he was also a goalkeeper.⁴⁹

The success of United in the 1990s combined with the burgeoning coverage of the English Premier League on satellite television and an increasing internet capacity brought a new type of United supporter. Wayne became enamoured with United when SABC broadcast United's 1990 FA Cup victory; *"when I first saw them on TV... I was convinced that it was the right team for me because it was the style of play they were playing"*.⁵⁰ United's 1999 treble winning season was the pinnacle of enticing, intoxicating success for these new supporters. In soccer terms, while they were still looking towards Europe rather than within South Africa, choosing to support United had nothing to do with reaffirming a belonging to England or South Africa. As Desai writes, *"The imagined community are the millions linked live by satellite television across the globe"*.⁵¹ Singing the chants of the terrace was devoid of geographical context. These songs would just as easily be heard in New York or Auckland, as Manchester. The Manchester derby between United and City held little special interest for the supporters. Susan informed me that the 'big' games were against the other clubs in the big four, Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea due to their ability to challenge for the title. City were *"not a threat. City are nothing"*.⁵² Admittedly, the City/ United rivalry has been quieter in Manchester over recent years due to City playing in the lower divisions until relatively recently. However, as Darren

⁴⁸ Author interview with 'Carlos' (United), 19/05/2009.

⁴⁹ Author interview with 'Tom' (United), 12/06/2009.

⁵⁰ Author interview with 'Wayne' (United), 31/01/2009.

⁵¹ Ashwin Desai, "Citizenship and Cosmopolitanism: Football in South Africa," in *Racial Redress and Citizenship in South Africa*, ed. Kristina Bentley and Adam Habib (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2008), 314.

⁵² Author interview with 'Susan' (United), 07/03/2009.

reasoned, the City rivalry was difficult to understand not being in Manchester.⁵³ The imagined community that Desai refers to is not completely removed from its locale. Asking who the supporters considered to be their biggest rival, the vast majority said Liverpool. While there is an intense rivalry between the clubs in the two cities that the supporters were aware of, the rivalry in Johannesburg was intensified by the close proximity of both South African supporters' clubs. The Grand Slam bar was also used by the Liverpool supporters' club as their official game watching venue. Liverpool v United matches were big events in the bar with supporters from both sides arriving at the bar six hours before kick off. During the matches when both sets of supporters were passionately singing taunts at the other, the rivalry became 'real', not because of a geographical connection to Manchester or Liverpool (aside from the small number of expatriates) but because of the rivalry between the two supporters' clubs.

If watching United games in suburban homes and bars was a way in which the supporters distanced themselves from the everyday life of the city, the act of supporting United often reaffirmed such a distance; for some an affirmation of belonging elsewhere, for others a sense of belonging to a wider community of United supporters across the globe although still partially rooted in the South African locale. In some respects, the reasons for support given by Chiefs supporters were similarly fuelled by the success of the club as a successful brand (at least in the South African context). However, especially with the older members, support for Chiefs was rooted in a much different experience of the city.

Kaizer Chiefs supporters – township soccer

The name 'Kaizer Chiefs' suggests that the team did not have fixed geographical roots but was Kaizer Motaung's personal team. This was not necessarily accurate as Chiefs fans would sing numerous songs claiming their belonging to Phefeni in

⁵³ Author interview with 'Darren' (United), 25/06/2009.

Soweto, where the club originated. However, as with the United supporters, most Chiefs supporters had little to do with Phefeni. They did not live there although for older supporters such as Nelson, living in other areas of Soweto meant that they were able to travel to watch Chiefs in action. Such was the apartheid policy of the Bantu homelands that for a number of the older Chiefs supporters, the team was little more than glimpses of pictures and match reports in the newspapers as they were brought up in the rural areas. Nelson recalled how he could not watch or listen to Chiefs play as his family did not have a television or a radio:

“When I started to see Chiefs, I saw Chiefs himself, Kaizer Motaung, Ace Ntsoelengoe on a soapbox and we used to cut that picture. We did not see him live; with that picture only. It made me crazy. We’d like to buy that soap, Lifebuoy, because you know you’re going to get that photo”.⁵⁴

Chiefs were not so much experienced as imagined. The allure of big names such as Motaung and Ntsoelengoe created the image of Chiefs as a glamour club; a team with attacking, skilful players was something to aspire to. Others did have access to radio in their villages, which allowed the supporters to hear the action but access to the team was still limited. Even for those younger members who grew up in rural areas, television ownership was rare. The decision to support Chiefs was often because of the glamorous mystique of the side rather than any sense of belonging. Growing up and moving to the city in search of work allowed these supporters to see their team perform in the flesh. The individualistic, skilful style of the Chiefs players in the seventies and eighties enticed and enthralled the supporters. On several occasions when waiting for the taxi to take the branch to the game, the older members would recall the exploits of former famous players. Nelson ‘Teenage’ Dladla was a common favourite with many of them for his close ball skills although Nelson had great admiration for Chiefs legend Jerry Sadike because, *“He can score wherever, he can pass, he can do everything”*.⁵⁵ However, underneath such lyrical descriptions of former players, lay a deeper meaning. The

⁵⁴ Author interview with ‘Nelson’ (Chiefs), 12/01/2009.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

entertainment and spectacle of match day was a rare opportunity for these supporters to temporarily forget their everyday lives under the apartheid system. It proved problematic to encourage Chiefs respondents to talk about their lives under apartheid as they would try and concentrate on soccer. However, there were conversations about life during the state of emergency in the 1980s and inter-ethnic violence but when supporting Chiefs, ethnic differences were temporarily forgotten.⁵⁶ Yet the supporters could not totally escape the harsh realities of everyday life when supporting Chiefs. Supporters recalled stories of riots and crowd violence that had broken out during and after games. It was described as warfare:

“At that time, soccer was like a war where Malvern plays against Jeppe so if you are staying in Jeppe, you must be in Jeppe and cheer your boys and you mustn’t mix. Once you jump in and [*fist punches hand*]. That time it was very bad”.⁵⁷

While supporting Chiefs was a partial escape from daily life for the older members, the younger members had tapped into a wider imagined community of Chiefs supporters across the country. Chiefs’ successes in the 1980s and 1990s, culminating in their 2001 African Cup Winners’ Cup triumph had attracted supporters who had not lived in Soweto. Similar to the newer United supporters, these supporters had tapped into the idea of the club as a successful brand.

The role of family in the decision of both the United and Chiefs supporters is integral to the reinforcement of divisions in Johannesburg soccer fandom. For instance, both Eric and Norman named their respective fathers as the overriding influence in choosing to support United. Having grown up with United-supporting families, they were exposed to United more than other soccer teams, domestic or otherwise. Similarly, numerous Chiefs supporters named their families as key influences on their decision to support Chiefs, if they even were free to make that decision. Gerald admitted that it was solely down to his uncle:

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

“He used to take me to soccer matches as a little boy. If he had, at that time, chosen to support Pirates, believe me I would have been an Orlando Pirates supporter... I didn't choose to be a Kaizer Chiefs supporter”.⁵⁸

Likewise, younger members such as Gilbert and Patrick had grown up with their fathers supporting Chiefs. In both clubs, members were actively raising/indoctrinating their children to support their respective teams. For example, Bryan recalled how he would buy his children Manchester United baby grows but this was not always successful. Susan despaired as her son chose not to support United; “*I turned my back on him for five minutes and he became a Liverpool supporter!*”⁵⁹ Equally, Nelson's stepdaughter was often dressed in Chiefs t-shirts and taken to the stadium to watch the team. The significance of this is that in an already divided fandom, family soccer loyalties continue to entrench such divisions.

Bidvest Wits – a second team

If supporting United was partially rooted in connections to England and the recreation of distance from the city while supporting Chiefs was grounded within a South African experience, supporting Wits had a different dynamic. It was problematic to find one supporter for whom Wits was their first team, even within the small hardcore group. Drawing the main body of support from the student population meant that most of those interested in watching Wits already supported a team. During a Wits – Chiefs fixture in February 2008, the bizarre sight of a large number of Wits fans in replica shirts and cheering for their team who suddenly cheered when Chiefs scored highlighted the superficiality of support for Wits. The fan in front of me exclaimed that he was supporting “*Kaizer Wits*”, 50% Chiefs and 50% Wits.⁶⁰ This had generated considerable resentment from the other Wits fans, but many of these people seemed more interested in checking the latest Orlando

⁵⁸ Author interview with ‘Gerald’ (Chiefs), 26/07/2009.

⁵⁹ Author interview with ‘Susan’ (United), 07/03/2009.

⁶⁰ Entry in research diary, 22/11/2008.

Pirates – Sundowns score than in the match they were at. This demonstrated the superficiality of Wits’ support and marks it out as unusual on the landscape of South African soccer fandom.

The club has recently been pursuing other avenues of support outside of the student population. The club invited former players and their families to watch games. As a former white-run club, these players and their families were usually white. Consequently, the VIP seats in the grandstand were often predominantly filled by white spectators.⁶¹ The club has approximately 1,500 players registered on a variety of teams, from the first team, through university teams to numerous youth teams, of which the membership is racially diverse. The club especially encourages the children to bring their parents along to games. Furthermore, the club is pursuing corporate hospitality as a means of boosting attendance.⁶² However, Bidvest Wits has few supporters using Giulianotti’s taxonomy of fandom. Wits’ support is transient.

Why not support the domestic game?

It is within the reasons for United supporters’ negative attitudes towards the domestic game and the Chiefs supporters’ restricted access to United that their wider experiences and attitudes of the city are revealed. Far from both sets of supporters being disinterested in the others’ league, approximately half of the United supporters interviewed claimed to ‘follow’ a South African club side. This was usually either Kaizer Chiefs or Orlando Pirates although Les alleged an affinity with Mamelodi Sundowns while Philip felt a loyalty to Ajax Cape Town because he originated from that city. The relationship between the United supporters and their chosen domestic club sides was abstract and distant. Few could name any players or where they were in the league table. Additionally, most had never been to watch

⁶¹ Author interview with Bidvest Wits CEO, 17/11/2008.

⁶² Ibid.

their South African team live and rarely watched a game on television. Conversely, all of the Chiefs supporters claimed that they supported an English Premier League team. As with the United supporters, the relationship was often one of passive following. However, while the vast majority of the United supporters chose to remain distant from their South African team, the majority of Chiefs supporters found that their access to English soccer was limited due to a lack of resources.

Crime and fear

While I do not wish to labour over the issue of crime in Johannesburg and further fuel the understanding of the city purely as a crime-ridden, dangerous place as reinforces the negative view of the city, crime and especially fear of crime was a key issue in why the United supporters were disconnected from the local game. For instance, Lee was worried that *"my motor vehicle won't be there when I come back and I'm worried that I'm going to get mugged on the way to the stadium"*.⁶³ Concern for belongings was amplified with fears for their personal safety should they attend such a game. I was told horror stories, which they had heard from friends. Bryan recounted a particularly gruesome tale:

"I work with a guy in the factory who's a Chiefs fan who went to Chiefs - Pirates with his two boys and his wife and some kids were throwing lines, fishing line with blades on the end. The blade went through his head here and today he's completely blind".⁶⁴

While I could not verify the accuracy of this event, such accounts that were passed on reaffirmed the widely-held view that the domestic soccer stadium was a dangerous space. Fear of crime often had racial undertones. Attending local matches as a white person was often viewed as hazardous, especially as a small minority in a crowd of thousands. For instance, Gary believed that, *"not to sound racist or anything*

⁶³ Author interview with 'Lee' (United), 25/03/2009.

⁶⁴ Author interview with 'Bryan' (United), 22/04/2009.

but being the only white person or one of very few would be intimidating if I had to go with a small group of friends".⁶⁵ It was widely felt that being white marked them out as targets. For the older members, such feelings of intimidation were entrenched in their experiences at the advent of multiracial football and when the white-run NFL collapsed forcing the teams to enter the black-run NPSL or the non-racial Federation Professional League. These supporters believed that their safety at the games was under threat from large crowds of black soccer fans. Carlos recounted witnessing a black fan run onto the pitch and attempt to stab a Highlands Park player with a screwdriver;⁶⁶ Susan felt she could no longer take her children to the games, frightened by groups of black soccer fans publicly urinating⁶⁷; Denis described these fans as "hooligans".⁶⁸ This fear of crime at local soccer matches was symptomatic of a wider fear of crime in the city. Interviewing these supporters in their homes and at their offices allowed the opportunity to witness the multiple security precautions that they lived with on a daily basis. Electric fences, panic buttons and burglar bars were common fixtures. Some had security gates in the house to separate the sleeping quarters from the rest of the house. I heard further horror stories of armed robberies and carjackings that they and their friends had suffered. Feelings of white, middle class besiegement in post-apartheid Johannesburg were aptly summarised by George, an insurance broker:

"Throw a frog into a pot of boiling water and it will immediately jump out and survive the experience. But put a frog in a pot of cold water and put the pot on the stove. The water will start getting warmer and the frog will stay there until it eventually gets boiled to death. We are the frogs in the cold water".⁶⁹

Again, talk of criminals often had a racial causality although this was not automatic. For example, Bryan denied such causality, arguing that, "*I'm not*

⁶⁵ Author interview with 'Gary' (United), 14/05/2009.

⁶⁶ Author interview with 'Carlos' (United), 19/05/2009.

⁶⁷ Author interview with 'Susan' (United), 07/03/2009.

⁶⁸ Author interview with 'Denis' (United), 19/05/2009.

⁶⁹ 'SWC Tabloid Sensationalism'. S.A. Reds: Manchester United Supporters' Club of South Africa – SA Reds Forum.
http://www.manutd.co.za/index.php?option=com_kunena&Itemid=100025&func=latest&page=2&sel=720.

frightened of going there because I'm white. I'm frightened of going there and being squashed".⁷⁰ This attitude was understandable in the light of the 1991 Orkney Stadium⁷¹ and 2001 Ellis Park stadium disasters.

While I observed little crowd violence throughout the fieldwork, the fears and concerns of the majority of the United supporters were not totally unfounded; the events of January 11 2009 revealed the concerns of the Chiefs supporters. They were furious with themselves because my camera had been stolen, believing that they had let me down. In subsequent matches, various members would escort me around the stadium to keep watch on me and make sure that I would not be a victim of crime again. For instance, during the Chiefs – Bloemfontein Celtic game in February 2009, Arthur and Thabo assumed the role of my bodyguards. Thabo instructed me to walk in front of him at all times so he could watch my pockets. Arthur repeatedly asked if I was ok and continually asked the stewards to *"protect me"*.⁷² While I found this frustrating and suffocating, it revealed that the Chiefs supporters believed that as a white man in match environment, I was a target. Subsequent interviews consolidated this concept:

"Black people target them [white people] when they are in soccer stadiums. They see them as sheep amongst the goats... at FNB [Soccer City], there is a gate where I know tsosis, they stand there and target people. Once they see a white man, it becomes mad".⁷³

Nevertheless, not all United supporters believed that domestic soccer matches were particularly dangerous. Bryan had attended Kaizer Chiefs games in the 1980s as the company he worked for was a sponsor. While there was some initial trepidation as a lone white man heading into Soweto, especially as he did not have a permit, he enjoyed the experience. Occasionally he would encounter crowd

⁷⁰ Author interview with 'Bryan' (United), 22/04/2009

⁷¹ In January 1991, 42 people were killed in a stampede at a Kaizer Chiefs versus Orlando Pirates pre-season friendly fixture in the town of Orkney.

⁷² Entry in research diary, 14/02/2009.

⁷³ Author interview with 'Nelson' (Chiefs), 12/01/2009.

problems but they did not affect him; *"They [the police] were sjamboking the fans and I just stood there as I just thought, "I'm the only white here", but they sort of just ignored me. Didn't put me off".*⁷⁴ Both Eric and Darren, two of the younger members of the supporters' club, believed that the fear of crime articulated by the vast majority of the group was over-inflated and clouded the reality of domestic soccer. Eric argued that this discourse of crime was *"the biggest block against white South Africans"*⁷⁵ participating in domestic soccer fandom. Darren had been to a Soweto derby in 1996 at FNB Stadium on the outskirts of Soweto. Far from feeling intimidated as he only *"saw one other white person the whole day",*⁷⁶ he was overwhelmed by the welcome he received, shaking *"over 200 peoples' hands there".*⁷⁷ Darren and Eric's optimistic outlook on domestic soccer was indicative of their wider, more positive attitudes towards the city. In contrast to the often repeated mantra that I heard in the bar that *"South Africa will be the next Zimbabwe",*⁷⁸ a reference to the political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe, Darren argued that the future of Johannesburg and the country as a whole was optimistic. Irritated by the pessimism displayed by many United supporters, he bemoaned that *"their sense of entitlement is overblown".*⁷⁹ However, this positive outlook was not shared by many. While the domestic game does continue to suffer from issues of crime, the fear of crime exhibited by the supporters was disproportionate to the reality and often follows a racial discourse. When faced with such fear, watching United play in the comforts of home or in a suburban bar became far more attractive.

Distance and dislocation

Issues of distance earlier in this chapter became crucial in understanding why the United supporters did not attend domestic soccer games. With the majority living

⁷⁴ Author interview with 'Bryan' (United), 22/04/2009.

⁷⁵ Author interview with 'Eric' (United), 17/04/2009.

⁷⁶ Author interview with 'Darren' (United), 25/06/2009.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Entry in research diary, 14/03/2009.

⁷⁹ Author interview with 'Darren' (United), 25/06/2009.

and working in the northern suburbs, the stadiums were distant. Bidvest Stadium was the furthest north but Braamfontein still neighboured the city centre. Similarly, Ellis Park in the central suburb of Doornfontein and Rand Stadium in the southern area of Turffontein reinforced the physical boundaries of Johannesburg soccer fandom, exacerbated by Soccer City and Orlando Stadium being located in Soweto. It was not just the distance that was a barrier but the perceptions of the actual locations, feeding back into discourse of crime and fear. I encountered a general unwillingness to travel to the township to watch a soccer match. For example, Lee said, "if you said to me, 'There's a Chiefs v Pirates game on at the FNB Stadium. Why don't you drive along and go and see it?' Not a chance".⁸⁰ The urban decay of the former whites-only residential area of Doornfontein similarly dissuaded some United supporters. Essentially, these stadiums were located in what they often perceived as no-go areas of the city.

The presence of the PSL in the city is often restricted to central and southern areas of the city. While Chiefs and Pirates shirts are a common sight on the streets of the townships and central areas, they are notably absent in the northern suburbs. While Chiefs and Pirates shirts are sold in suburban shopping malls, local soccer is otherwise absent from these areas. As such, many of the United supporters did not give much thought to the domestic game.

Marginalisation, disorganisation and corruption

The domestic game was often out of sight and therefore out of mind for the majority of the United supporters but for a small number, feelings of marginalisation emerged. Such a discourse was more widely articulated with regards to the national sporting teams yet some fully subscribed to the concept of the racially divided soccer fandom in the city. Tom boldly asserted that, "the football is shit, it's corrupt,

⁸⁰ Author interview with 'Lee' (United), 25/03/2009.

*it's a racist sport, it's not coached properly, it's dangerous to go, **it's not for white people**... if you're not black you don't play. Are you telling me that every single football team in this country is 90% black because they are the best footballer?"*⁸¹ For Tom, the small number of white players in the domestic game fostered the attitude that it was for black soccer supporters. This feeling of marginalisation fed into wider perceptions that they were marginalised in everyday life. Black economic empowerment (BEE) was a reoccurring topic that I encountered from the supporters in the bar and other patrons nearby. They complained that BEE unjustly discriminated against them as white people from finding jobs. George claimed that his daughter was emigrating to the UK because, *"She just wants to get out of South Africa. Fed up with it"*.⁸² Compounding these feeling of marginalisation, the domestic game became a channel through which the United supporters articulated common perceptions of the black majority ANC government as corrupt, especially during the build up to the 2009 national election. Bryan argued that the governing structures of domestic soccer were lining their pockets; *"They've put us off the game because there's just enrichment for the administration"*.⁸³ George recounted alleged instances of match fixing in the PSL.⁸⁴ I was unable to verify these but there were purported to be instances of corruption and match fixing that occurred during the fieldwork. For instance, a number of referees in Limpopo province had allegedly failed polygraph tests and were suspended. George's reaction was, *"It's not the fact that he failed a polygraph test. It's that he had to take the polygraph test in the first place. Unthinkable"*.⁸⁵ Talking about corruption in South African soccer usually opened up informal conversations about their attitudes towards government officials; a racial causality sometimes emerged here as well. The key topic was the now South African president, Jacob Zuma and his alleged role in the arms scandal that was regularly headline news throughout the fieldwork. In these conversations, the United supporters were openly distrustful of Zuma and became worried that an ANC two-

⁸¹ Author interview with 'Tom' (United), 12/06/2009.

⁸² Author interview with 'George' (United), 06/03/2009.

⁸³ Author interview with 'Bryan' (United), 22/04/2009.

⁸⁴ Entry in research diary, 08/11/2008.

⁸⁵ Author interview with George (United), 06/03/2009.

thirds majority would allow him to change the constitution.⁸⁶ Of those who would talk to me about their voting plans, all had resolved to vote for the largest opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA) in an attempt to prevent such a scenario. Contextualising this, the Chiefs games that I attended in the months leading to the election were a cauldron of pro-ANC and often pro-Zuma support with banners such as *“President Zuma will lead us from prison if arrested”*.⁸⁷ Furthermore, some Chiefs supporters wore ANC t-shirts along with their Chiefs ones. This in turn reinforced the resistance of the United supporters to the domestic game.

Themes of chaos and disorganisation filtered through in both the interviews and in the bar. For the majority of the United supporters, their frame of reference for domestic soccer was limited to when United came out to South Africa. Many had moaned at what they saw as poor organisation of the pre-season tournament. At the monthly branch meeting when I introduced the research, the overwhelming feedback regarding the organisation of the Vodacom Challenge was that the reserved seating system was not enforced; some United supporters finding domestic fans in their seats who refused to move. This, in turn, would cause confrontations between the United supporters who expected to sit in the seat on their ticket, and the domestic soccer fans coming from the first come, first served seating culture of the local game. Tom was the most vociferous, surmising:

“You know what the thing is that drives me insane and I don't think it's because, and going to say this and I believe it's the black people that are the problem when they go to the game. White people, they just act differently. I don't think it's a case of them actually deliberately being arrogant. I think it's because they're actually illiterate and they can't read A and Z so they don't know where they're sitting”.⁸⁸

The perceived failure of the local game became compared to an idealised view of European soccer as efficient and well-administered. Lee put it thusly:

⁸⁶ Entry in research diary, 14/03/2009.

⁸⁷ Entry in research diary ,21/03/2009.

⁸⁸ Author interview with 'Tom' (United), 12/06/2009.

I remember taking a tour of Wembley Stadium, the old Wembley. They said that if they have an open air concert, the maximum amount of people allowed – 72,000. Why? Because if you need to evacuate the stadium, we need eight minutes to evacuate the stadium. We can't evacuate more than 72,000 in eight minutes. Well, if you have 72,000 in a stadium over here, one hour after the game, a lot of them are still in the stadium".⁸⁹

It is this comparison between English and South African soccer that is explored in the next section.

Quality and style

The decision not to support or follow a domestic team was not always based on fear of crime or a sense of disconnection but sometimes a simple judgement of quality. Judging the comparative standards of the game in the PSL and the Premier League from the perspective of a fan is a very subjective exercise and I do not wish to make such a judgement. Nevertheless, the United supporters believed the Premier League to be of a far higher standard, both in terms of on the pitch and on the whole as a product. Even in the comfort of their homes, there was very little interest in watching PSL games, regardless of race, age and gender, with one member claiming that *"I'd rather watch my sister do ballet"*.⁹⁰ The major complaint that the United supporters had towards the domestic game was that they perceived the game as individualistic, in contrast to the European game, which they saw as a team game. For example, Susan argued that:

"It's not a team game. There are 11 individuals. From what I have seen, there are 11 individuals. I mean I see that when United come here and I watch them play Kaizer Chiefs, there are 11 individuals in the Chiefs team".⁹¹

⁸⁹ Author interview with 'Lee' (United), 25/03/2009.

⁹⁰ Author interview with 'Tom' (United), 12/06/2009.

⁹¹ Author interview with 'Susan' (United), 07/03/2009.

Such individual style of play frustrated the United supporters. Wayne complained that *"the football is outside more than its inside the ground!"*,⁹² a reference to the profligacy of strikers in front of goal. This frustration was commonly shared by many of the Chiefs supporters, especially after they had seen their team lose to Orlando Pirates in May 2009. Furthermore, both sets of supporters made references to a bygone golden era of domestic soccer. Although Wayne did not support a domestic team at the time of interview, he said that he used to support Arcadia Shepherds, a Pretoria-based team, *"when soccer was still good in the 80s"*.⁹³ Emphasising what they considered to be a gulf in class, there were some United supporters who made the distinction between South African 'soccer' and English 'football'; soccer signified an inferior game.

Chiefs supporters and the barriers to supporting United

While Chiefs was the team that they supported, every member claimed an affinity to a European club. Virtually all followed an English side, most of whom coincidentally followed Manchester United. Yet, while the United supporters generally chose to stay away from the domestic game, the Chiefs supporters found their access to the European game restricted through their relative lack of income. Although they could be understood as part of a wider imagined community as mentioned earlier, the class position of Chiefs fans led to their marginalisation from this community. The differences between the black working class and those with increased social mobility played out within the Chiefs supporters' club.

At the time of fieldwork, only two members had Dstv, although this number has increased slightly in the last year. Of these two, only Gerald had the full package, which allowed him to watch the extended coverage of the English game; Arsenal was the team that he favoured because of their recent history of African

⁹² Author interview with 'Wayne' (United), 31/01/2009.

⁹³ Ibid.

players in the team, such as Emmanuel Adabayor and Kolo Toure.⁹⁴ One of the reoccurring arguments made by the Chiefs supporters as to why they believed that there was a racial divide in soccer fandom was that whites could afford to support teams such as United; “*They [the whites] have more English soccer because they have dish [satellite television]*”,⁹⁵ argued Nelson. This view was supported by other supporters who complained that they could not afford it. Having the full subscription meant regular access to live Premier League, FA Cup and League Cup games that were unavailable through terrestrial broadcasting. Furthermore, partial coverage of Manchester United TV (MUTV) and Sky Sports News kept the United supporters informed on a frequent basis. In contrast, the vast majority of the Chiefs supporters had to make do with a highlights package on free-to-air terrestrial television by the state broadcaster SABC and also Champions League matches on the independent ETV channel. Additionally, internet access affects the ability to support a European team. The 2001 South African census highlighted a ‘digital divide’ in the country: less than 2% of black African-headed households had a computer compared to 46% of white households.⁹⁶ As with satellite television, there was a stark contrast between Chiefs and United supporters’ clubs in Johannesburg. While none of the Chiefs supporters have internet access at home (and few have access at work) the United supporters not only have internet connections but high-speed broadband access. Because the internet is a space where large amounts of information regarding the team can be stored and assimilated, the United supporters had quick and easy access to team sheets, latest news and video highlights. By participating in web forums about Manchester United, the imagined community that Desai refers to becomes a more tangible community. While there is plenty of coverage of English football in the press, it is not interactive as per the web forums, thus making the relationship between the Chiefs fans and their English team more of a one-way process.

⁹⁴ Author interview with ‘Gerald’ (Chiefs), 26/07/2009.

⁹⁵ Author interview with ‘Nelson’ (Chiefs), 12/01/2009.

⁹⁶ “Census 2001: Census in Brief.”

Another barrier was the cost of merchandise, which created an exclusionary effect in the age of commodified fandom. Replica shirts for South African club teams cost approximately R350 (£30) whereas European club jerseys sell for R500–600 (£45–£55). Many of the United supporters could be seen wearing the latest United shirt and generally own more than one. After the interview, Carlos proudly showed me his collection of United t-shirts bought from the stalls outside Old Trafford on match day while Michael took me on a tour of his signed and framed United replica shirts that were mounted in his bar. While the domestic replica shirts were cheaper than European shirts, these prices were still beyond the reach of the majority of the Chiefs supporters. Those with better jobs could afford the current shirt, while others had to make do with shirts from seasons past, or ingenious homemade uniforms made from old boiler suits and fabric remnants. This distinction between South African supporters of United and Kaizer Chiefs calls attention to Swain's observation that in today's game, *"Paying for season tickets, paying for satellite television access, paying for expensive team shirts, all mean that football is no longer for poor people"*.⁹⁷ Only two Chiefs supporters had United replica shirts, one of which was a present to the branch chairman. Most did not have any United merchandise, although Thabo had kept a poster of Ryan Giggs from a newspaper. More tellingly, it became apparent that there were class cleavages within the Chiefs supporters through attitudes towards Chiefs merchandise. Those in better paying jobs such as Robert, Gerald and Linda believed that it was imperative to have the latest shirt as it was the sign of a real supporter. Nelson argued that, *"it's important because if they [Chiefs] are wearing another shirt and I am wearing another shirt, it's as if I am not supporting the team"*.⁹⁸ He used his contacts within the club to get hold of Chiefs training kit and other clothes that were not available for sale in the malls, which set him apart from the other supporters. For both the 07/08 and 08/09 seasons, the club released replica shirts in two tiers; the cheaper imitation that resembled the kit but

⁹⁷ Jon Swain, "the Money's Good, the Fame's Good, the Girls Are Good': The Role of Playground Football in the Construction of Young Boys' Masculinity in a Junior School," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 21, no. 1 (2000): 100.

⁹⁸ Author interview with 'Nelson' (Chiefs), 12/01/2009.

was clearly not (R300) and the more expensive actual kit shirt (R500). Linda made a point of wearing the expensive replica as a symbol of her support. While there was little open hostility between those with the current replica shirts and those without, the wealthier supporters saw me as an outlet to privately complain about them. I had been told that those wearing pirated shirts were not 'real fans' and that they were robbing the club of money.⁹⁹ Long distance away games further reinforced divisions within the group. Games that involved travelling to Durban, Bloemfontein and Cape Town were marked by the absence of supporters such as Jimmy and Thabo, who struggled to afford to attend games in nearby Pretoria. Travelling to these games was a further signifier of a 'better' supporter.

In the latter stages of the fieldwork and during the return to South Africa for the World Cup, there was an increasing trend in the use of cellphones by the younger, upwardly mobile Chiefs supporters to update their profiles on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. For instance, driving back to the city with Linda and Bernard after watching Moroka Swallows v Maritzburg United in Germiston, the pair were continually on their phones having conversations with their Facebook friends. This trend continued in the taxis on match day and even during the game. While this process marked them apart from the poorer supporters, it also revealed that these supporters became more connected to 'their' English team. While Bernard would profess his allegiance to Chiefs on his Facebook profile, he would also claim support of Manchester United. Supporters such as Bernard became able to tap into the latest news surround the team, akin to the vast majority of United supporters, achieving a greater connectedness with global Manchester United supporters than the greater part of the Chiefs supporters.

Even for those who had become increasingly connected with United, they remained distant from the United supporters' club. Apart from Bernard, no-one knew that a Johannesburg branch of the United supporters' club existed until they

⁹⁹ Entry in research diary, 08/03/2009.

became aware that I was spending time with them. The interviews gave the United supporters the opportunity to reflect on why there were few non-white members in the supporters' club. Many believed the link between class and race was the key barrier. For example:

"I'm sure being a non-white person 20 years ago, the last thing on your list was joining some foreign club's supporters' club. There were a lot more important issues and there still is".¹⁰⁰

Supporting United was acknowledged as a costly affair that few black South Africans could afford to engage in, especially as a second team. There were further acknowledgements that the United supporters' club had restricted itself to "*drawing from a traditional pool of white supporters*".¹⁰¹ This was because the club did not advertise their existence in the local newspapers, where people such as the Chiefs supporters would come across it. Word of mouth was often relied on to promote the branch, and given that inter-racial contact in post-apartheid South Africa remains limited, especially in a social environment,¹⁰² it remains unlikely that the supporters' club will expand their non-white membership. Physical distance re-emerged yet again as a barrier. With few Chiefs supporters able to afford owning cars and the taxi network not operating late into the night, travelling through the city was problematic for most.

Gender and shared masculinities

However, despite themes of distance and separation, experiences of the Johannesburg soccer landscape were not always so different. Morrell and Ouzgane argue that "*all men have access to the patriarchal dividend, the power that being a man*

¹⁰⁰ Author interview with 'Eric' (United), 17/04/2009.

¹⁰¹ Author interview with 'Bryan' (United), 22/04/2009.

¹⁰² Jeremy Seekings, "The Continuing Salience of Race: Discrimination and Diversity in South Africa," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 26, no. 1 (2008): 2.

gives them to choose to exercise power over women".¹⁰³ Despite the presence of a minority of women, all three case studies were characterised by the dominant presence of hegemonic masculinity. At Chiefs and Wits matches, spectatorship was largely male, while watching Manchester United games in the pub or attendance at monthly meetings were similarly male-dominated. Occasionally, the half-time 'entertainment' at Wits games involved a group of female student cheerleaders in short skirts incorporating regular pelvic thrusting into their routine while the male student fans wolf-whistled throughout and tried asking for their phone numbers.¹⁰⁴ Female cheerleaders also featured at some Chiefs matches, although performances did not appear to be as overtly sexualised as at Wits games.¹⁰⁵ Akin to the wolf-whistling at Wits matches, the taxi journeys to Chiefs games were often opportunities for the male supporters to do the same at female passers-by. Leaning out of the window, Patrick was notorious for attempts to chat up women. On the journey back to Johannesburg, after watching Kaizer Chiefs against the Iranian national side, he began to explain to me with a big smile on his face that "*all the women in Port Elizabeth are fine*".¹⁰⁶ Waiting for him at a service station later on in the journey, Nelson told me that "*he's busy in the shop proposing. You know what he's like!*"¹⁰⁷ Climbing back into the taxi brandishing a phone number cause much laughter among the male supporters. This incident was indicative of a wider trend throughout the course of the research. Evidence of hegemonic masculinity was likewise present when watching Manchester United games. For instance, Eric was often a target for banter from other United supporters for sometimes not watching United games in the pub to spend time with his fiancée. Other supporters who made this choice were also ridiculed, albeit in a light-hearted nature.

¹⁰³ Robert Morrell and Lahoucine Ouzgane, "African Masculinities: An Introduction," in *African Masculinities : Men in Africa from the Late Nineteenth Century to the Present* ed. Robert Morrell and Lahoucine Ouzgane (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 7.

¹⁰⁴ This was first witnessed at the Bidvest Wits v Kaizer Chiefs fixture on 20/02/2008 but also recorded in subsequent games.

¹⁰⁵ Recorded in research diary, 15/11/2008. Cheerleaders were also regularly used at Lions rugby and Highveld Lions cricket matches, although there were a small number of male cheerleaders at both.

¹⁰⁶ Recorded in research diary, 11/07/2009.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

Although hegemonic masculinity was present in both cases studies, it manifested itself intermittently. If women external to the groups were being objectified by the male supporters, this was strangely absent within. Clayton and Humberstone argue that *"hegemonic masculinity can only exist as a benchmark, and all men embody hegemonic and subordinated and marginalised masculinities at any one time"*.¹⁰⁸ Visually, it did not appear to matter that there were female members in the Chiefs and United supporters' clubs. As secretary of the United supporters' club, Susan played a vital role. She claimed that *"there wouldn't be a meeting if I wasn't there! Simple as that"*,¹⁰⁹ which was later backed up by many other members. The chauvinistic posturing between male supporters as a group in public was less virulent in private conversations with me. Similarly, Ruth and Faith were members of the Chiefs' committee. Furthermore, there were occasions when the number of women travelling in the taxi to Chiefs games were comparable to men, and on the last game of the 2008/9 season against Platinum Stars, women outnumbered the male supporters. However, this was just one occasion. Issues of gender remained tacit and respondents rarely articulated identities through such a lens, yet the Johannesburg soccer landscape remained a masculine space.

Nonetheless, differences between the cases studies were manifested in relation to masculinities. Morrell and Ouzgane contend that *"not all men have the same amount or type of power, the same opportunities, and, consequently, the same life trajectories"*.¹¹⁰ Although this was apparent within the United supporters' club, it did not appear to impact on the masculinities within the group. In contrast, class and income disparity with the Chiefs supporters' club created tensions and subordinated masculinities. For instance, Gilbert and Nelson would laugh at Thabo's drunkenness while criticising his decision to spend money on beer rather

¹⁰⁸ Ben Clayton and Barbara Humberstone, "Gender and Race - What's That to Do with Football Studies?' Contested 'Knowledges' in Sport and Leisure Curricula in He," *Gender and Education* 19, no. 4 (2007): 517.

¹⁰⁹ Author interview with 'Susan' (United), 07/03/2009.

¹¹⁰ Morrell and Ouzgane, "African Masculinities: An Introduction," 4.

than provide for his family.¹¹¹ In private, Nelson subsequently criticised Jimmy and Arthur for drinking excessively and questioned their respective ability to be head of their households.¹¹² Although the Johannesburg soccer landscape was predominantly masculine and similar experiences occurred across the divisions and borders, it was uneven. Unlike the United supporters' club, income disparity reinforced and articulated multiple masculinities, and subsequently reinforced notions of difference within Johannesburg soccer fandom.

Conclusion

A cursory glance at the crowd at most PSL games in Johannesburg would appear to reinforce the concept of a racially divided soccer fandom in the city, reinforced by the Kaizer Chiefs and Manchester United supporters' clubs, yet this can obscure class divisions. Despite attempting to move beyond the race/ class binary in conceptualising everyday life in the city, they remain powerful modes of understanding the barriers and borders of soccer support. What emerges from these two case studies are themes of distance, dislocation and difference. The Chiefs and United supporters inhabited different areas of the city despite both claiming to represent Johannesburg. The reasons that the United supporters gave for not supporting a domestic club team fed into wider discourses of attitudes towards the city. Feelings of marginalisation and a sense of distance from the city permeated through the supporters while fear of crime repeatedly manifested itself, sometimes as feelings of besiegement in the post-apartheid city. United supporters created an Anglophone space in the suburban bars where they replicate the chants of Old Trafford and distance themselves from the surrounding city but while they tapped into a global imagined community of United supporters, they still remain rooted in South Africa. In contrast to the middle class suburbs of the city where the United supporters were generally located, the Chiefs supporters were often located in the

¹¹¹ Recorded in research diary, 22/02/2009.

¹¹² Recorded in research diary, 24/07/2010.

central and southern areas marked by urban decay. Without their own transport, movement through the city becomes limited. It is cheaper for Chiefs fans to support Chiefs rather than United, and for those who also follow English club sides, limited material resources restrict the manner in which they support that overseas team.

Yet, in concentrating on the barriers and borders between these groups, this chapter has begun to reveal the borderlands in which these supporters challenge and travel across these divisions. Although in the minority, not all of the United supporters had such a pessimistic view of the city; a small number believed that such attitudes were false and had experienced the local game. Moreover, class and mobility cleavages within the Chiefs supporters' club, between those who could afford merchandise and those who could not fed into a discourse of what constituted an authentic supporter. Connecting with other Chiefs and United fans via social networks such as Twitter and Facebook signified an engagement with Johannesburg soccer fandom beyond the divides. Wits offered a physical borderland where aspects of the divided fandom in the city were regularly brought together although the impact of this remains symbolic due to the small support base. While it is important to note that the divisions that characterise the Johannesburg soccer landscape are still visible at Wits games, this case reveals an optimistic alternative to the themes of division, distance and dislocation. While this chapter primarily focused on the divisions in soccer support, the next chapter focuses on specific spaces where different groups of supporters are brought together, challenging attitudes held about the other. It is in these spaces where the Johannesburg soccerscape is in flux.

CHAPTER SIX

THE EUPHORIA OF SOWETO DERBY DAY: CONNECTING SUPPORTERS AND CHANGING ATTITUDES?

In contrast to the previous chapter in which themes of division and difference were emphasised, this chapter examines key instances of borderlands within Johannesburg soccer fandom. Considering these spaces, where those who “*encounter these borders... collide and connect, as they remap identities within these spaces*”,¹ is necessary in attempting to move beyond the race/ class binary. Sometimes these moments are fleeting, little more than ninety-minute encounters, yet they reveal fluid processes of how the perceptions of some of these supporters towards domestic soccer and wider everyday life in the city fluctuated. Dolby understands taste as a way of highlighting “*the breaks and changes in the racial construction of selves*”.² In a similar manner, these breaks and changes emerge in the Johannesburg soccer fandom.

This chapter focuses primarily on one specific event in which some members from both the Manchester United and Kaizer Chiefs supporters’ clubs both ‘connected and collided’; the Soweto Derby match between Chiefs and Pirates in May 2009. In recent years, the relative decline of both Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates on the pitch has led to a slight malaise in fan attendance, especially when combined with teams deciding to play their ‘home’ games in different provinces. However, the derby is still the marquee fixture in South African domestic soccer and often either a sell-out or close to capacity in the country’s largest stadiums. This was not a ‘natural’ borderland but one that had been created through my presence as a researcher in both groups. I had become a conduit for those United supporters who were curious about the domestic game but had otherwise felt a sense of

¹ Dolby, *Constructing Race: Youth, Identity, and Popular Culture in South Africa*, 79.

² *Ibid.*, 67.

disconnection from it and felt unable to attend. Similarly, the Chiefs supporters viewed me as a conduit through which to attract and engage with a new set of supporters. The mental and physical barriers in the city, articulated in the previous chapter were at times subverted. Examining the motivations of those United supporters who went to the game and the reactions of the Chiefs supporters to the sudden presence of the United supporters emphasises a more fluid understanding of how these supporters travel through the city rather than just a more simplistic north-south or core-periphery dichotomy.

Yet, if emphasising division and difference in the last chapter began to reveal spaces in which these themes were being challenged, then emphasising spaces in which the various groups interact reinforces division and difference. Although Dolby uses taste to underscore a fluidity of identity, taste can also fix identities. Bourdieu argues, "*Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make*".³ For example, the Manchester United supporters that attended the derby were still seen primarily as white visitors by the Chiefs supporters. Furthermore, I became cognisant that I had a polarising effect within the United supporters' club. While some showed interest in the domestic game, I encountered resistance from some supporters who did not believe that I had the right to talk about domestic soccer at a supporters' club for Manchester United; their negative attitudes towards South African soccer arguably hardened. While the Chiefs supporters wanted to encourage the United supporters to travel with them to Chiefs games, they displayed little interest in reciprocating and attending meetings of the United supporters' club despite most of them claiming that Manchester United was their overseas team. If anything, this reinforced and highlighted their relative inability to travel freely through the city due to their economic status. Post-fieldwork, little has changed within the two groups. Departing from the field re-emphasised the boundaries and barriers between the two groups. If creolisation is "*understood as the*

³ Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, 6.

process whereby individuals of different cultures, languages, and religions are thrown together and invent a new language... a new culture, and a new social organization",⁴ the process cannot escape from the racial and class divisions that characterise both soccer fandom and the city.

Connecting the supporters

My presence as a white man in the Kaizer Chiefs supporters' club and at Chiefs games was often construed as an oddity, as if I did not belong there. Especially at the beginning of the fieldwork, I was often a photo opportunity for numerous fans at Chiefs games; an *umlungu*⁵ wearing a Chiefs shirt and later wearing a Chiefs *makarapa* was a memory to capture. Supporters reported to me that other fans had asked them who 'their' white man was; Nelson declaring that Malvern Branch was becoming known as "*the branch with the white man*".⁶ Yet it became increasingly apparent that the impact of my presence had been partially negated by my nationality. As an Englishman, the Chiefs supporters had automatically made the assumption that I would be a soccer supporter, which explained my presence there; "*I was saying to some guys that if you were an English guy and you didn't support soccer, people would find something odd about that*".⁷ Conversely, I did not have the same visual impact with the United supporters, but my inauthenticity developed different processes. The lack of pressure to become a member of the United supporters' club had allowed me to retain a distance from the group while simultaneously gaining access; the wearing of my red England shirt at meetings and watching matches displayed such a duality. Arguably the strongest reinforcement of my inauthenticity as a United fan was my disclosure of the Chiefs aspect of the research. Telling these supporters that I would travel by taxi with Chiefs supporters to the areas that many

⁴ Nuttall and Michael, "Introduction: Imagining the Present," 6.

⁵ *Umlungu* is isiZulu and isiXhosa for white person. The historical roots of the word are allegedly derogatory, although when I queried the Kaizer Chiefs supporters about this, no-one believed this. Instead, such usage was used to signify my difference from them.

⁶ Entry in research diary, 19/11/2008.

⁷ Author interview with 'Gerald' (Chiefs), 26/07/2009.

saw as no-go areas marked me out as different, 'crazy' and 'insane'. In both cases, I was on occasion claimed as 'one of them' but still remained apart. An awareness of my research with the other grew in each group as the fieldwork progressed. Members of Malvern branch (and later the merged Greater Johannesburg branch) had asked me repeatedly to bring other white people to Chiefs games, ostensibly so they could show them that it was a safe environment but in actuality because it would further enhance their reputation within the wider community of Chiefs supporters. At the same time, a small number of United supporters were curious as to my experiences in the domestic game and quietly told me that they would be interested in coming to a Chiefs game with me. Following the lead of Carrington (see chapter four) and acknowledging my role in both groups allowed the realisation that acting as such a conduit created the opportunity to further explore how members in each group interacted (or did not) with the city.

Chiefs supporters: Bafana v Cameroon, November 2008

Early on in the fieldwork, I had mistaken the absence of a communal gathering by the Chiefs supporters to watch Bafana games as a result of apathy towards the national team because of mediocre results. While such apathy did exist (see chapter seven), the lack of car ownership in the group meant that they were unable to have such a gathering as the taxi system would stop operating before the end of evening matches. A few days before Bafana played Cameroon in the annual Nelson Mandela Challenge,⁸ I had asked Nelson and Linda if members of the branch were going to get together to watch the Bafana game. Unwittingly, asking that question had given them the idea that I could drive people to Nelson's house for the match. Having another branch member that had a car meant that the members could become more mobile, making the city temporarily more accessible for them. After picking up Linda from her home, she admitted that she would have been unable to have

⁸ A one-off match between Bafana Bafana and an invited African team.

travelled had it not been for my car. This highlighted the everyday restrictions that the Chiefs supporters experienced. Aside from Jacob in the original Malvern branch and later Robert and Gerald after the Johannesburg branches had merged, the Chiefs supporters were forced to remain at home after dark or at least in their local vicinity unless someone could drive them. This incident was indicative of the wider usage of my car by some of the Chiefs supporters, thus connecting them to the city in ways they were previously unable. Wary of the fine line between not wishing to offend and not wanting to be taken advantage of, I would sometimes drive the branch chairman to the Chiefs Village in Soweto. For instance, having informed the members that I would be conducting an interview with a board member, the branch chairman insisted that he accompany me, to give me directions, but sitting in on the interview gave him – and thus the branch – a level of access to the club’s hierarchy that they did not have previously. I had to mediate my role as a researcher with my position as a branch member. While I asked questions about how the club viewed their support base and their plans to maintain and expand it, the branch chairman became privy to information regarding the club that he would not have done otherwise. In turn, the club became acutely aware of the existence of the branch to the extent that it was asked if they could do an interview regarding the branch for their monthly magazine. However, this did not materialise.

Returning to *Bafana v Cameroon*, it was during this match that Nelson and Linda concocted the idea of utilising me to connect them to previously inaccessible soccer supporters. As a group of five crowded into the bedroom of the chairman and huddled around a small television, we discussed who was to be on the branch committee as the club had requested this information. It was arbitrarily decided by the chairman that I was to be the Social Responsibility Officer of the branch although no-one could explain to me what the role entailed. While the challenges of positionality have been deliberated over previously, the concept that I could be a conduit between the two groups of supporters that were otherwise distanced crystallised. Despite having the words “Malvern Branch” printed on my Chiefs shirt

and membership card, which signified that I was their white supporter, and despite fleeting comments that my presence at games could be picked up by the television cameras and be seen by other white soccer fans, this was the first time that I was asked to actively recruit 'whiteys' to travel.

United supporters: interview questions

Unlike the Chiefs supporters, there were no calls for me to attract Chiefs supporters to the United supporters meetings or the bar to watch the game, despite many of the Chiefs supporters following United as their overseas team. At the outset of the United case study, the domestic game was referred to in negative terms alone; it was unsafe, disorganised, corrupt and boring. However, towards the beginning of 2009, the interview process began to reveal alternative thoughts. During the interview with David, he claimed that he followed Chiefs but had never been to a game, unless it had been against United. Asking why he had not was met with a long pause before answering, "*I don't really know*".⁹ Subsequent interviews revealed a similar trend. Sometimes acknowledgements were given that the interview had forced them to think about something that would otherwise pass them by. Post-interview, David became interested in my experiences with the Chiefs supporters. He expressed feelings of guilt that he had never been and asked if I could take him along to a game. After the branch meeting in February 2009, Darren and Eric approached me and claimed that they were interested in coming along to experience a Chiefs match. A small number of United supporters subsequently spoke to me in the following month with a similar request. Having deliberated over my role within the two groups, I decided to approach the branch secretary with a request to stand before the branch during the March meeting and issue an open invitation to the members to join with the Malvern branch of the Chiefs supporters' club for the Pirates v Chiefs fixture at Ellis Park Stadium in May 2009. I had chosen this fixture

⁹ Author interview with 'David' (United), 10/03/2009.

for the invitation as the Soweto Derby is a highly anticipated sporting fixture in South Africa and tickets often sell out. The invitation was later posted on the supporters' club web forum and a member-wide email was sent by the webmaster on my behalf to reach a wider audience than just those who would regularly attend meetings. On reflection, this had been a risky strategy. The Soweto Derby coincided with the Middlesbrough v United fixture; asking United supporters not to watch their team to travel to an area of the city that they might not be comfortable with, to watch teams that they felt little or no affinity with in stadium full of *vuuzelas* was unlikely to be met with much enthusiasm. Cognisant of the reasons in the previous chapter that the majority of these supporters gave for not going to the domestic game, especially fear of crime, I emphasised that they would be with a group of Chiefs supporters who had explicitly stated that they would welcome and look after any United supporters. To assuage such fears, I further stressed my experiences at the domestic game, although I omitted the incident during the Sundowns v Chiefs fixture (see chapter five). While I had made every effort to clear such a request with the branch committee, conversations with the secretary and webmaster towards the end of the fieldwork revealed that there had been reservations and resistance from some members, although these were not made to me directly. It was argued by these members that there was no place within the meetings to talk about domestic soccer at a Manchester United supporters' club; that they wanted to talk about United, not Chiefs or Pirates. Despite the fixture clash and resistance, seven members contacted me to say that they were interested. From these seven, three attended; Darren, Denis and Gary. The reasons for the others not coming included family and work commitments, although I suspected that the issues of fear and crime discussed in the previous chapter were key factors, as was the allure of watching their team play on the television.

An unconnected soccerscape

While these two short narratives demonstrate my active role within the two groups, they also highlight the feelings of disconnection within the city. Members in both groups claimed to follow the other but did not feel that they could interact with the other group. Any interest that the individual United supporter had regarding the domestic game was often stifled as they knew of no-one else who would be interested. Darren summarised this feeling of frustration:

“Tupelo, won’t watch South African football. He’s only interested in the English Premiership. He won’t watch South African football. Goody won’t go to a South African game. TK, if I said, “Listen we’re going to go”, he’d come along but he wouldn’t go out of his way to watch a game”.¹⁰

Not knowing anyone else who would be sufficiently interested in going to a game meant that Darren often chose not to go. Such a response is indicative of wider patterns of social interaction in post-apartheid Johannesburg. As Keim states, “*social mixing is very limited*”,¹¹ and as such, the sports stadium reflects this pattern. In his interview, Gerald eloquently articulated this problem:

“So whites and blacks, the only place they can interact is at work because there we’ve got to meet whether we like it or not. Where we choose to go, that’s a completely different thing”.¹²

While this is a little simplistic to understand movements of people in the city, both Gerald and Keim respectively underscore the race and class divisions within the city. Numerous taxis crammed full of workers from the townships and central areas of the city supply the northern suburbs with a labour force but take

¹⁰ Author interview with ‘Darren’ (United), 25/06/2009.

¹¹ Keim, *Nation Building at Play: Sport as a Tool for Social Integration in Post-Apartheid South Africa*, 11.

¹² Author interview with ‘Gerald’ (Chiefs), 26/07/2009.

them away at the end of the day, as if just visitors. The workplace is a site of social mixing but as these case studies suggest, leisure time becomes more distanced.

My ability to freely travel between these various spaces that both sets of supporters inhabit signified my inauthenticity in both groups. With regards to the United supporters, they were surprised to hear where in the city I was travelling. Discussing with them about how I would walk from Wits in Braamfontein to the meeting point in Joubert Park for Chiefs games was often met with questions of whether I felt safe in these places. Some of the older members recalled when they lived in these areas in the 1960s and 1970s but they had not returned to these places in many years. For example, Susan recalled how she would walk the streets of Hillbrow on her way to work when she lived in the area but claimed that she would no longer feel safe there and had no desire to return.¹³ On numerous occasions, she instructed me to be careful when I was working there. Even where I lived (the suburb of Westdene) had marked me out as different. Post-interview, Duncan had said that he used to live there in the 1970s but that it had deteriorated and he had not returned in decades. It was not just the locations in the city that had marked me out as different but the method by which I sometimes travelled between these places. As mentioned in the previous chapter, travelling to Chiefs games in the minibus taxis raised eyebrows with the United supporters. Whenever taxis were discussed in the group, it was usually with regards to the erratic driving style of the drivers and the dubious road-worthiness of the vehicles; for them it was not a viable way to travel through the city. My capacity to travel between northern suburb and southern township in a variety of transportation elicited a curiosity within some of the United supporters. For instance, such curiosity was raised when I arrived at the Grand Slam bar to meet up with the United supporters to watch the United v Everton FA Cup semi final in April 2009. Unwittingly, having driven straight from the ANC rally held at Ellis Park stadium, I had an ANC CD on display in my car. Telling the United supporters that I had been to the rally was met with incredulity.

¹³ Entry in research diary, 01/03/2009.

In response, I asked them why they were surprised that I had gone. In part, they were concerned that such an environment would be dangerous for a white man to go, especially by himself (similar to the safety concerns in the previous chapter). Furthermore, as they had all declared that they would not vote for the ANC in the upcoming general election, the rally held little appeal. However, after concerns about my safety and jokes made about me *toyi-toying* with ANC supporters, the United supporters became curious as to what I had thought of the experience as it would be unlikely that they would know many people who would have gone. With some United supporters, such a curiosity extended into my experiences with the domestic game. While they were able to check results and read match reports online and in the newspapers, I was providing details of the atmosphere and experience that they would otherwise not have heard. My choice of case studies and subsequent experiences meant that I had developed into a conduit for information, and later, access to the domestic game.

With limited social mixing outside of the workplace, many of the Chiefs supporters would have been limited in gaining access to white, middle class soccer supporters, evidenced by their reactions to my 'role' as their token white supporter. As with the United supporters, some Chiefs supporters also became curious about my experiences with the other group. However, instead of showing an interest in accompanying me to United monthly meetings or to watch United games in the suburban bars, the interest was articulated in the form of marketability; how to use me to attract these supporters. References to the 'branch with the white guy' had become a symbol of pride, that they were different from other branches of the Chiefs supporters' club. Conducting interviews and visiting Chiefs respondents at their houses became a partial social occasion. For example, Thabo introduced me to many residents of his neighbourhood in Malvern, visibly proud that he had a friend who was both white and from England. On occasion, he would 'test' me by asking me to enter the tavern across the road to see if I was willing to socially interact in such an environment (drinking quarts and learning phrases in isiZulu and

Tshivenda). Similarly, members such as Arthur and Jimmy would at times thrust their mobile phones at me and demand that I speak to whoever was on the other end; I did not know who they were but it turned out that they wanted to speak to the English member of the branch. I was constantly reminded of the novelty of my presence as a white man in such an environment. Attracting other white soccer fans would magnify the visible effect. However, as the next section argues, there were significant limits to my position as a cross-group conduit, which in turn reinforced the common perceptions of the city discussed in the previous chapter as much as it challenged them.

Travelling across boundaries: Chiefs v Pirates, May 2009

The build-up

Problems arose early on in the planning for this event. On the one hand, the Chiefs supporters, especially the chairman, had insisted that the United supporters who were coming were to meet members of Malvern Branch in the morning so they could be welcomed. Subsequently, everyone was to walk through central Johannesburg as a group, heading to the game at Ellis Park. The chairman declared that he wanted to show to other Chiefs supporters that “*Malvern Branch is different*”¹⁴ as it welcomed white soccer fans, although this is not to say that other supporters of both Chiefs and Pirates would not have done the same. This became immediately problematic considering the general reluctance of United supporters to travel through these areas by car, let alone on foot. The idea was rejected by Darren and Gary, who instead wanted to use the park and ride facility, which was to act as a practice run for the Confederations Cup two months later in which Ellis Park was a host venue. In turn, the chairman became irritated that they were unwilling to meet in Joubert Park although he was resigned to the fact that he did not have the power

¹⁴ Entry in research diary, 19/11/2008.

to change their minds. An alternative plan was thought up, where members from Malvern branch would arrive at Wits to 'escort' the United supporters and myself but this too was rejected; taking the bus was just an easier option. The significance of this was that although this small number of white, middle class United supporters were willing to cross the boundaries of soccer fandom in Johannesburg, it was negotiated in partially sanitised conditions. Rather than meet at the usual place in Joubert Park, experiencing the bustling atmosphere of central Johannesburg, interacting with the Chiefs supporters and travelling by taxi with *kwaito*, Afro-pop and football songs emanating from the speakers at deafening levels, travelling through the city centre in a bus bypassed this. Granted, there were a number of larger than life characters on the bus in their respective club colours, blowing *vuuzelas* and singing but the United supporters remained removed from life in downtown Johannesburg. Having each driven from their homes in various outlying suburbs, parking in the relative security of Wits with its security gates, guards and fences and then getting on the bus, was a signifier of a wider compartmentalisation of middle class lives in the city; travelling from home to work to place of leisure by car and thus choosing to encase themselves in the relative safety of locked doors. Even if they drove through areas such as Hillbrow, which many admitted to me that they would try to avoid at all costs, it was to travel through as quickly as possible. Such a pattern had emerged earlier in the fieldwork when David had asked me to take him to a Chiefs game. He was visibly reluctant when I suggested that he could travel in the taxi with the Chiefs supporters to Pretoria for the Nedbank Cup fixture against Pretoria University. Because United were playing Fulham earlier that day and he wanted to see the game, he decided that he would prefer to drive us to the Chiefs match once United had finished. While partly because of time constraints, he also admitted that he did not feel inclined to be driven in an unroadworthy vehicle by an unpredictable taxi driver, which thus deprived him of the wider game day experience and an opportunity to interact with the Chiefs supporters.

Although Darren had been to a Soweto Derby before, it was the first time for the others. Darren had brought two work colleagues of his sister while Gary had brought his brother with him. After disembarking from the bus near the stadium precinct, a group of white men wearing Chiefs shirts and colours drew attention from the crowd of supporters around us, many of whom would attempt to elicit which team we were supporting (despite wearing Chiefs colours). The key moment that signified the visible difference of the group on the approach to the stadium was when a newspaper cameraman wanted to take photos of the group. Although there were small pockets of white fans approaching the stadium, it was still a rare sight. If domestic soccer was indeed a black cultural space, the group were visitors rather than intruders. The frustration of the Chiefs supporters regarding white fans supporting the overseas team after United had played them in Cape Town almost a year previously had become an atmosphere of welcoming and camaraderie.

At the game

Despite having tickets for the north stand of Ellis Park, the branch chairman had contacted me to say that the branch were in the southern end of the east stand. Such a discrepancy was met with some wry smiles from the United supporters and did very little to challenge the common perception discussed in the previous chapter that the domestic game was disorganised and mismanaged, although the number of stewards and security guards had visibly increased greatly from other games due to the history and popularity of the fixture. This game was the first Chiefs v Pirates fixture held at the stadium since the 2001 Ellis Park stadium disaster in which 43 had died and 158 were injured through overcrowding and a lack of crowd control,¹⁵ something that had been mentioned regularly in interviews as an example of how poorly they felt the domestic game was administered. Having located where the branch were sitting, it transpired that the chairman had instructed members to

¹⁵ "Final Report," (Commission of Inquiry into the Ellis Park Stadium Soccer Disaster of 11 April 2001, 2002). <http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=70241>, 65.

arrive early to get 'good' seats (this was the first and only time during fieldwork that they had arrived two hours early), to welcome the United supporters and to make a good impression on them in the hope that a good experience would attract them back. Before the game, the chairman had proposed that he would give them membership forms in an attempt to persuade them to return and also swell the contingent of white members in the group. I decided to persuade him otherwise as such a forthright action had the potential to make them feel awkward; they were curious about the experience of the domestic game rather than having intentions of making it a regular habit. The Chiefs supporters enthusiastically welcomed the United supporters and friends with a plethora of handshakes, hugs and exclamations of how happy they were that they could watch the game with them. Photos were taken by both United and Chiefs supporters of each other; evidence for the Chiefs supporters that they had a number of white soccer fans with them, evidence for the United supporters that they had been to a Soweto Derby.

Looking around the stadium immediately before kick-off, I observed a small number of pockets of white fans but there was very little to suggest that the racial division of soccer fandom in the city was being challenged. A week later, while interviewing Ryan, he aptly summarised this image as "*white spots on a domino in the stands there*".¹⁶ Those 'spots' in the stadium, including the United supporters, were most likely visitors at a spectacle where they were not expected to be, observing events but not fully taking part in them. The sheer noise generated by an almost packed Ellis Park made it extremely difficult to talk during the match but it eased at half-time allowing me to discuss with the United supporters what they thought of the experience up to that point. Aside from the seating issue, which they laughed off, they had showed concern about the continuing crowd trouble at the front of the south stand. High chain fences had been erected to keep the supporters from rushing onto the field but sections of the crowd kept kicking it down to give them greater freedom of movement at the front to dance and wave their banners.

¹⁶ Author interview with 'Ryan' (United), 08/05/2009.

Repeatedly, the police and stewards battled to re-erect sections of the fence but eventually gave in, choosing to stand off. To the credit of the fans, they showed restraint and no-one ran onto the pitch. The concern that the United supporters showed was less about the behaviour of the fans and more about the visible struggles of the stewards and the security to maintain order in such a high-profile sports event. However, it was the carnival atmosphere of the game that they had all agreed on as the paramount memory. Despite only being a few miles from the Grand Slam where some of the United supporters would be watching United play, this was a world apart from that more anglicised space. Throughout much of the game, I acted as a form of guide for Denis who regularly asked questions about what was happening around him such as explanations of what was being worn by some supporters and why. Although Darren and Gary had a limited knowledge of the players on the pitch, all would enquire of me who was playing, player histories and form guide. Despite having been an outsider myself, I had become a partial mediator between the United supporters and the matchday environment. At one level, bringing these white, middle class United supporters symbolised a crossing of boundaries within the landscape of Johannesburg soccer fandom yet it also reinforced divisions. The enthusiastic reaction of the Chiefs fans to the presence of the United supporters was a reminder that fandom was still very much divided based on race (although this was not the only barrier). Not being able to speak isiZulu or Sesotho (the languages common in the supporters' songs) meant that their participation was restricted, sometimes asking me what the songs meant. However, there were fleeting moments when these differences temporarily evaporated. For instance, when Chiefs scored to level the game, the two-thirds of the crowd who were supporting Chiefs erupted in celebration. Chiefs and United supporters were spontaneously hugging and hi-fiving each other, regardless of race. When Pirates scored a second soon after, these celebrations turned to a stunned silence.

After the match

The chairman had organised a branch *braai* (barbeque) to be held at his home in Jeppestown, just southeast of the CBD. His plan was to invite the United supporters who had watched the derby so the branch could socialise with them in the hope that they could attract them back for future matches. However, all of the United supporters and guests declined the offer. After goodbyes were said, accompanied by more hugs and handshakes, Malvern Branch and the United supporters separated; the former group to find taxis to take them south to Jeppestown, the latter to pick up their cars to travel home to the outlying suburbs. The brief, unifying moments within the stadium became distant as the realities of everyday life in the city re-emerged. The ownership of cars and living behind numerous security measures in the suburbs reinforced the race and class divisions between the two sets of supporters. Although it had been a long day and the United supporters were understandably tired, there was an element of weariness about travelling to Jeppestown, especially at night. Worries about car parking and safety were voiced as reasons for a reluctance to go. Furthermore, travelling to Jeppestown would take them further away from home. While my colleague Dan and I returned to the chairman's home after saying goodbye to the United supporters, the Chiefs supporters were visibly disappointed that we had not brought more white people with us. Aside, the chairman quietly voiced his irritation and frustration that they were unwilling to come to his home. However, the *braai* provided further evidence that I was also a temporary visitor and that the novelty of my presence had not subsided. As this would be one of the final occasions when the majority of the branch was together while I was still in the field, I gave a speech thanking them for their help and hospitality. In response, numerous Chiefs supporters exclaimed that they were proud that they had a white man in their branch and relieved that once I had gone, Dan would still be there as their white member. Again, many photos were taken by the members (often with my camera) to capture the evidence that they had a white fan.

Why watch Chiefs?

The reasons for going

In the two months after the derby game, I had the opportunity to interview Darren, Gary and Denis to discuss and explore their reasons and motivations for deciding to attend the game. A key factor was knowing someone who had a knowledge of the domestic game and was able to organise people to come together. For Denis, the game itself was not that important but actually knowing other people who were willing to go:

“It could have been Moroka Swallows versus whoever. It wouldn’t have made any difference. ‘Guys, we’re setting aside a day to go to the football, do you want to come?’”¹⁷

The fact that it was one of the marquee events of the South African domestic sporting calendar had added to the attraction. Gary had similarly explained that he would not have thought about going had I not given him both the idea and the means to go. Darren had shown interest in coming with me to Wits and Chiefs games early on after I had first made contact with the United supporters. Furthermore, Denis focused on being able to discuss what was happening in the game with someone who knew the game (to an extent) and could speak fluent English. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the United supporters felt isolated from the domestic game because they did not know other people interested in going. However, Gary developed this thought, arguing that even if he did have friends who would have been interested in going, he still would not have gone:

¹⁷ Author interview with ‘Denis’ (United), 19/05/2009.

"I've always wanted to go to, a Chiefs v Pirates game but I wouldn't go if I just had to get a couple of mates without going with a few regular Chiefs supporters. I don't think I'd go to the game. Simply safety reasons and that type of thing".¹⁸

For Gary, going with a small group of friends did not assuage feelings of uncertainty about being part of a very small minority of white fans at a domestic soccer game. Yet, the way that I had marketed the invitation to the United supporters, focusing on the key concerns of crime and safety at the match and emphasising that members of Malvern branch had offered to look after them had at least partially neutralised such fears.

Challenging perceptions?

Darren and Denis had wanted to see how the domestic game had developed, especially in relation to crime and organisation since the last time they attended a domestic match, other than when Manchester United was playing. For Denis, this was the advent of multi-racial soccer in South Africa in the 1970s and his perception that a number of black soccer fans were acting as hooligans; the atmosphere was "*becoming dicey*".¹⁹ Darren had been to four games since he moved to South Africa in 1995 but he too had experienced a volatile atmosphere:

"The one derby I was at was really quite hectic. There was hundreds of bottles flying in each direction; the okes [people] were getting really aggro with each other".²⁰

Both had voiced concerns over their perceptions of the domestic game especially as the Confederations Cup was to be held the following month and the World Cup in the following year; for them, attending the Soweto Derby was a barometer for what to expect in the two upcoming tournaments. While the ticketing issue and crowd problems in the south stand underlined that much still needed to be done in terms of organisation and crowd education, Darren and Denis were

¹⁸ Author interview with 'Gary' (United), 19/05/2009.

¹⁹ Author interview with 'Denis' (United), 19/05/2009.

²⁰ Author interview with 'Darren' (United), 25/06/2009.

delighted that they enjoyed the overall experience. For instance, Darren made the observation that “*there wasn't any bottles getting thrown at other sets of fans*”²¹ this time around. This fed into the wider negative perceptions that the majority of the United supporters had about the domestic game. Although they believed that there was still much that needed to be improved in time for the World Cup, they had become attracted to the manner in which supporters of Chiefs and Pirates supported their teams. The vibrant colours of the *makarapas* and robes combined with the blowing and waving of *vuuzelas* had created an exhilarating atmosphere in which they were excited to be.

“Just the sights and the sounds and the kit and clothing and the extent the local supporters go to, to show their allegiance. I think I can learn a lot of loyalty from that. That was great!”²²

“Everything they bring through, their signboards, all that type of thing, it all contributes you know? The way they passionately support their club, I'd say that atmosphere at that game would be on par with Old Trafford”.²³

The comparisons with the matchday experience at Old Trafford, which were often more favourable to the latter as in the previous chapter, had been reversed in these instances. The domestic soccer stadium was in this sense not a space of crime, grime and corruption but a more positive one that revealed central Johannesburg in a vibrant, carnival-esque light. Their assessment on the standard and style of play further reflected this more positive reappraisal of the domestic game. Although still believing that the English Premier League was of a higher technical standard, Gary believed that the domestic game was far better than many of his fellow United supporters thought it to be; “*the football isn't great. It's not bad, it really isn't too bad. I think South African football is on the up*”.²⁴ Darren had echoed similar sentiments in conversation on a number of occasions.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Author interview with 'Denis' (United), 19/05/2009.

²³ Author interview with 'Gary' (United), 14/05/2009.

²⁴ Ibid.

However, even at this point where new understandings of the city's soccer scene were being formed by these United supporters, the interview process served further reminders of the divisions that existed. Gary was so excited by his experience at the derby that he declared:

“The R20 entrance fee really, I mean, honestly, it's a game where I would be willing to pay R300 – 400 because it really is worth it”.²⁵

Although he believed that such an inflated price would still be worth it for the experience, especially when compared to ticket prices for a United game at Old Trafford, this amount would be beyond the reach of many of the Chiefs supporters over the course of a season, especially those who were at the lower end of the social mobility scale such as Thabo who struggled to raise the funds to travel to games beyond Johannesburg. While Gary valued the Soweto derby at such a price, many of the Chiefs supporters in Malvern branch (and later Greater Johannesburg) balked at paying R30 for Chiefs games rather than the usual R20 that I had often encountered. This has since further increased to R40 as Chiefs now play some of their home games at Soccer City (now FNB Stadium), which has increased the operational costs. The financial value that he attributed to the game was out of the reach of the majority of Chiefs supporters in the branch. In his interview, Denis described the reaction of his work colleagues when he returned to work the next week:

“Only on Monday when I got back to the office (*laughs*) and they said “What?” and I took out the stub and showed them that I'd been to the game and this was just too much for most of them. That umlungu, the white boss that's actually been to the game!”²⁶

The surprise of his predominantly black colleagues when seeing the ticket stub as evidence of being at the Soweto derby echoed the reaction of many of the United supporters earlier in the fieldwork when they discovered that I regularly

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Author interview with 'Denis' (United), 19/05/2009.

attended PSL matches and travelled to areas that they would generally be reluctant to. To consider the wider implications of this, it is important to return to Manchester United's 2008 tour of South Africa. When those Chiefs supporters in Cape Town asserted the claim that domestic soccer was a 'black' cultural space, this assumed that non-black soccer fans did not belong there. Those who did go regularly were constructed as an oddity, which was reinforced through their reactions to my presence there, and later the reactions of Malvern branch to the United supporters. It is not just soccer that this speaks to but the wider landscape of the city. In the post-apartheid city, spatial boundaries are still often delineated by race. The willingness of these white, middle class United supporters to transcend these social boundaries underlines that around the margins of everyday life in the city are challenges to the orthodox understanding of racial divisions in South Africa.

The lasting impression that the Soweto derby had made on Darren, Gary and Denis was a mixture of excitement at the atmosphere combined with the disappointment of organisational problems. Yet, when asked if they would return, all three replied unequivocally yes. There was a realisation that such an experience was on their doorstep rather than having to travel across the world to watch United play. Instead of remotely accessing soccer through a variety of media forms, they had encountered the excitement that 'being there' bestows on the sports spectator. Towards the end of the main body of fieldwork, Darren stated that he was thinking about joining the Wits supporters' club for the following season because of what he saw as a cheap, accessible package (R350 for a replica jersey and entry to all home games bar Pirates, Chiefs and Sundowns). This was cause for optimism; these supporters' attitudes towards the domestic game were changing in a positive way. However, on reflection, this was not so apparent. Although Denis admitted that he was pleasantly surprised with the overall experience, both Darren and Gary in interviews and informal conversations had revealed more favourable attitudes towards domestic soccer than the majority of United supporters anyway. While Gary voiced concerns about crime and safety at the domestic soccer stadium, Darren

had a far more positive attitude about the future of Johannesburg and South Africa as a whole. This suggests the impact that I had acting as a conduit between the two groups was very limited, with generally only those with a more favourable attitude towards everyday life in Johannesburg interested in attending the derby. Darren's idea to watch Wits games during the following season requires further scrutiny. Although Wits was the most convenient for him as he worked in Braamfontein, where the ground and the university were also located, it was also a more sanitised and less intimidating atmosphere (see previous chapter). Wits was symbolic of a culturally-fused fan base in domestic soccer but was not representative of wider soccer fandom in South Africa. Denis qualified his statement of intent to return to the domestic game by saying that he would "*go with a couple of mates*".²⁷ Although an innocuous statement at first glance, this re-emphasised the key problem of disconnection with local soccer. Despite their curiosity, not knowing anyone else in their social groups who would be interested in going had kept them away. Although I had taken on the role of brokering new connections between these two groups, there was little to suggest that they would return once I had left the field, something that was reinforced by the events of the Telkom Charity Cup, the first domestic soccer event held at Soccer City post-World Cup; this will be discussed in the following chapter. However, there have been shreds of optimism since I left the field. For example, Eric, who had been interested in coming along to the derby match in 2009 before pulling out because of the safety concerns of his fiancée, found an interested friend to go with to the derby game in February 2011 and has expressed considerable excitement about the prospect.

There is a danger that the significance of these United supporters at the Soweto derby is overstated. Although their attitudes towards the domestic game were evolving, these were only three of a wider group of over three hundred supporters that received the invitation to join with the Malvern branch of the Chiefs supporters' club to watch the game; not a significant sample. The invitation was met

²⁷ Author interview with 'Denis' (United), 19/05/2009.

with a wide indifference by most and in some cases resistance. The overlap with a United fixture was clearly a sticking point but even if this had not been the case, there was little to suggest that many more would have gone to the Soweto derby. Claims that they would rather watch soap operas or ballet than watch a domestic game were evidence that the majority of the United supporters were just not interested in it. The quote regarding the 'natural transformation' of soccer fandom in the city at the beginning of the previous chapter is unfortunately over optimistic. The small increase of small pockets of white fans at the domestic game reinforces the idea that it remains a heavily 'black' cultural space in which these fans are just visitors. Meaningful transformation of soccer crowds in Johannesburg outside of Wits has not yet taken place and it seems unlikely to do so in the near future.

A one-way conduit?

The enthusiasm of the Chiefs supporter to get me to act as a walking advertisement and attract white fans to the group was not reciprocated by the United supporters; neither did most of the Chiefs supporters show interest in joining with the United supporters to watch United matches, despite the majority claiming to support or follow the team. This section argues that this was not based on race but class and mobility. As per the previous chapter, those non-white members of the United supporters were well-heeled, upwardly mobile as opposed the working class Chiefs supporters. They were able to be extremely knowledgeable about United through various forms of media. Whereas Malvern and later Greater Johannesburg branches wanted to attract white members to further enhance their status within the club and supporters, the United supporters' club did not view attracting a greater number of black supporters in the same way. Secondly, with regards to the Chiefs supporters, the attraction of travelling north to watch a game on a television in a suburban bar was understandably less than the experience of being there but also travelling north was not something unusual and exotic. For some, work was in the northern suburbs i.e. Linda and Jacob in Randburg and thus being in the more middle class areas was

an everyday occurrence as opposed to the United supporters who rarely entered the predominantly black, working class central areas of the city.

The apathy towards the Chiefs supporters

While I had been told by committee members of Malvern branch to actively encourage and seek new white members for the group, there was little reciprocal enthusiasm in the United supporters to attract new black members. When I asked their opinions on how they could attract a more diverse membership in the interviews, the common response was that maybe it would change if they had a separate branch in outlying townships in Soweto and Lenasia. Although they were aware of my research with the Chiefs supporters, my bringing some of these supporters to meetings did not occur to them. One key reason was that while the Chiefs supporters accepted that those United supporters who attended the Soweto derby would still support United first, the United supporters would have unlikely accepted anyone who would have chosen another team above United (my position as a researcher had negated this obstacle). The negative reaction from a section of the United supporters towards my talking about domestic soccer at the monthly meeting was evidence that this would not be tolerated. Whereas my presence in the Chiefs supporters' club was unique, the first white man in the branch, the United supporters' club already had a number of non-white members, although small; they did not require my 'help'.

The perception of domestic soccer supporters was often not favourable, which would have provided an obstacle to myself acting as a conduit between the two groups. The *vuuzela* blowing was a consistent gripe. Carlos would complain that "*those vuuzelas kill me*"²⁸ while George envisaged a continuous, incessant noise being blown in his ear by someone behind him regardless of what was happening in

²⁸ Author interview with 'Carlos' (United), 19/05/2009.

the match with spit dribbling out of the horn and onto his head.²⁹ Stories of confrontations with black domestic soccer supporters sitting in the incorrect seats at games featuring European club sides reinforced perceptions of domestic soccer supporters, invariably black, as unruly. Tom was the most vociferous in his opinion of these supporters when he asserted that, *"It's prehistoric behaviour, man! The cavemen used to act like that!"*³⁰ With such perceptions widely held, the chances that the United membership would have wanted some of these fans at meetings was slim. However, being black and a soccer supporter was not automatically associated with these images. As in the previous chapter, these attitudes were not held towards the non-white members of the United supporters' club, such as Wayne and Peter. They did not conform to this perception of the ill-educated and uncouth black, working class soccer supporter. Even though Peter still attended some Orlando Pirates matches, United was his primary team. Their current, in-depth knowledge of the team through a variety of electronic media sources, combined with having travelled to Manchester to watch the team play, signified their difference from the Chiefs supporters, that they were not one of them.

Disinterested in United?

The lack of curiosity that the Chiefs supporters had regarding the operations of the United supporters' club was in stark contrast to their enthusiasm in getting me to attract these people to Chiefs games. Although most were aware of the other through my work, few questions were ever asked about where they were located, what they did or if they could join me. Such an imbalance raised the question as to why they seemed to be disinterested. On reflection, this fed into wider patterns of movement within the city. Of course, the appeal of travelling to watch a game of football in a bar was probably not as attractive a proposition as the sensory experience of 'being there', especially if a United game clashed with a Chiefs fixture.

²⁹ Entry in research diary, 14/03/2009.

³⁰ Author interview with 'Tom' (United), 12/06/2009.

However, travelling to the northern suburbs did not necessarily have the same allure. Whereas the majority of the United supporters would rarely venture into the areas of the city, often inhabited by black, working class people such as the Chiefs supporters, many of the Chiefs supporters would travel to the suburbs on a regular basis for work or even for leisure. Some like Linda and Jacob worked in the suburbs, while Robert as a private taxi driver and tour guide would frequently travel between affluent suburbs and the urban decay of the city centre. Even people such as Thabo at the bottom end of social mobility within the Chiefs branch would occasionally enter the suburbs as the taxi taking the Chiefs supporters to away games would stop for petrol there. The suburbs were not no-go areas because of fear of crime. They were already temporary visitors in these areas. However, as the last section discusses, there was interest shown by two of the Chiefs supporters in travelling with me to watch Manchester United play with the United supporters' club. Yet, as I argue, this does not represent a breakdown of the racial divisions of the Johannesburg soccer landscape but rather reinforces them.

Crossing boundaries? The case of the 2010 FA Community Shield

Both Linda and Bernard, who had become a couple during my fieldwork, were outliers within the Greater Johannesburg branch. Living in the middle class suburb of Darrenwood in the north west of the city created a physical distance between Linda and the majority of the branch. Bernard lived further away in Pretoria. Although he chose to remain in the township of Soshanguve with his family, his job as an auditor for the municipality meant that he had a greater disposable income than most of the branch members. What was significant about Bernard was that he had once been a member of the United supporters' club in South Africa, although this had been when the current committee had lost the rights to the name to a sports marketing company. As such, he had no personal contact with the other members and so the interviewees in the United club had no knowledge of him. Bernard subsequently let his membership lapse. However, when this came to light in the

interview, we engaged in a dialogue over how the United supporters' club operated in the present day and he asked if he could accompany me to the next meeting. The difficulty was that, not only was he based in another city, but the football season had already come to a close and the meetings would not start up again until the beginning of the new season. Before I left the field, I told the secretary of the United supporters' club of his existence but leaving the field soon after, nothing further came to pass. Returning to the field in 2010 provided the opportunity for these two Chiefs supporters to travel across the divisions in the Johannesburg soccer landscape and interact with the United supporters.

Knowing that he wanted to experience watching United play with 'official' supporters, I invited him to come with me to watch the Community Shield, the annual curtain raiser to the English season, in early August. As neither of them had a car, I drove into central Johannesburg to pick them up. Upon meeting them, it was instantly noticeable that they had a greater disposable income than most of the other Chiefs supporters in the branch. Both Bernard and Linda were wearing the latest United replica shirts (clearly official merchandise and not pirated copies) along with United baseball caps. These were just a sample of their wide collection of replica soccer shirts and other merchandise. On entering the Grand Slam and introducing them to the small group of United supporters who had turned up, it generated comparisons with events at the Soweto Derby. Unlike then, when the United supporters were greeted with enthusiasm, this time was far more understated. Admittedly, this was not a key sporting event with weeks of anticipation and most of the supporters at the bar were not expecting me to bring them. However, this served as a reminder that whereas the presence of white spectators with the Chiefs branch served as a status symbol, the opposite did not necessarily apply. At one level, the sight of Linda and Bernard in the bar challenged the norm in this specific environment. Unlike the numerous times when I had observed an all-white clientele at the bar, combined with Wayne noting that he was often the only black person on the customer side of the bar, the presence of these two was visibly notable.

However, the clothes that they were wearing and the fact that they could afford to drink in this establishment were behavioural signs that they were little different from the United supporters. Like Wayne, while their racial identities marked them out as different, they were similar in terms of class and social mobility. At Chiefs games, Linda and Bernard were a common sight in the front of the stands with *makarapas* and *vuvuzelas* accompanying the 'hardcore' of supporters leading the singing and dancing and blending in with the carnival-esque atmosphere. In the suburban bar, they had assumed a different identity, one portraying success and mobility. At the domestic game, they would sing and speak primarily in isiZulu and Sesotho (unless they were speaking to me) but spoke English at the bar. They were able to adapt to the different social situation that they found themselves in. This led me to think whether the other members of Greater Johannesburg branch would be able to do the same. Again, those Chiefs supporters who were less socially mobile would have been restricted, especially those such as Arthur and Thabo who struggled with English. As in the previous chapter, it is the socially mobile black South Africans that are able to cross the racial divisions within Johannesburg soccer fandom. The presence of Linda and Bernard at the Grand Slam was not a signifier that racial barriers in fandom were being radically broken, but instead that a small number of middle class blacks were being assimilated into European soccer-watching cultures.

After leaving the field in 2010 I kept in contact with Greater Johannesburg branch. The social mobility of Linda and Bernard expanded in a literal sense when Bernard acquired a car. Since then, the couple have travelled across the city and attended sporting fixtures more commonly associated with the predominantly middle class, especially the national cricket side when they have played at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg. On occasion the two of them would flit from the domestic soccer stadium to the rugby stadium on the same day, from the more Africanised atmosphere of Wits v Maritzburg United to the principally white and strongly Afrikaans environment of the Golden Lions v Blue Bulls in the Currie

Cup.³¹ However, the couple did not return to the United supporters' club after I had left the field. In contrast, the majority of the Chiefs supporters' club remains distanced from European soccer support.

Conclusion

The derby game became a space in which some Manchester United supporters collided and connected with both Kaizer Chiefs supporters and the domestic game, an occurrence that was atypical of Johannesburg soccer fandom. As such, opportunities arose for both the Manchester United and Kaizer Chiefs supporters to reinterpret their perceptions of the city and to challenge the divisions of Johannesburg soccer fandom. The enthusiasm of the Chiefs supporters in wanting to attract new white members signified an active challenge to these divisions. The willingness of a small number of United supporters to step out of their comfort zone to watch Chiefs v Pirates signified this slow but organic transformation in the city's fandom. This in turn bolstered the more optimistic interpretations of the city as one emerging from the legacy of apartheid rather than perpetually trapped in it. Derby day gave these United supporters the opportunity not only to experience the domestic game but to re-examine their perceptions of it. Their overarching impression was one of optimism, excited by the vibrant, carnival-esque atmosphere. Such enthusiasm had led to Gary, Denis and Darren to say that they would attend more domestic soccer games in the future.

However, further reflexivity away from the field led to a re-appraisal. These supporters, having been thrown together, were not necessarily participating in a creolising process. Bringing these small groups of soccer supporters together actually reinforced divisions. The anticipation of the Chiefs supporters to the influx of white soccer supporters into the group and the subsequent animated welcoming

³¹ South Africa's premier domestic rugby competition.

at the stadium highlighted the unusual sight of a group of white fans at a domestic game. Although making the effort to attend such a game, it was done on sanitised terms. This was in part deliberate on my behalf as I had made the conscious decision to focus on the sense of security that watching the game with Malvern branch would bring to assuage the fears of crime articulated in the previous chapter. However, the United supporters had sanitised the match day experience themselves. Choosing to use the park and ride facility on the edge of the city centre rather than meeting up with Malvern branch precluded them from experiencing the raucous atmosphere of the taxi with its deafening music, the dancing and singing of the Chiefs supporters as they approached the stadium and the opportunity to interact with them. Travelling by bus through the city to the stadium distanced them from the everyday context of downtown Johannesburg, reifying the wider middle class experience of the city, ensconced behind security measures at home, work or leisure and moving between these places by car rather than engaging with the city around them. Similarly, Linda and Bernard accompanying me to watch a United game with the United supporters' club was at first glance indicative of racial barriers breaking down but a deeper understanding of the scenario revealed that this was done along class lines. The majority of the Chiefs supporters still remained distant from the United supporters' club.

Utilising the concepts of creolisation and taste emphasises the instability of racial and class identities, especially in popular culture. This flux has opened up breaks to examine Johannesburg soccer fandom beyond cursory observations. However, the paradox in South Africa that Walker identifies, that race is both absent and everywhere is apparent here.³² The temporality of taste is evident as although the small number of United supporters momentarily chose to engage with the domestic soccer environment, returning home reinforced difference and division. The Johannesburg soccer landscape is a site of both racial and class division and also

³² Walker, "Race Is Nowhere and Race Is Everywhere: Narratives from Black and White South African University Students in Post-Apartheid South Africa," 43.

one in which soccer supporters can engage with the city and each other beyond these barriers. Such a paradox impacted on the calls for national unity behind Bafana Bafana during the 2010 World Cup.

CHAPTER SEVEN

“I CAN SHOUT FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN CRICKET TEAM AND RUGBY TEAM BUT NOT THE FOOTBALL TEAM”:¹ BAFANA BAFANA, CONFLICTING IDENTITIES AND SPACES OF CHANGE

Utilising the concepts of creolisation and taste has revealed both breaks and shifts in the Johannesburg soccer landscape that temporarily change and challenge the barriers and divisions, both within the domestic game and the city as a whole. However, such divisions were simultaneously reinforced. Likewise, attempting to move beyond race and class as ways of understanding everyday life in the city emphasised their importance. Such paradoxical flux and rigidity in soccer fandom impacts on how these supporters perceive the national team. As the final of three ethnographic chapters exploring different aspects of the Johannesburg soccerscape, this chapter narrates the reasonings for supporting the men’s national soccer team in relation to how the Springboks (rugby) and Proteas (cricket) were constructed within the case studies of the Manchester United and Kaizer Chiefs supporters’ clubs in Johannesburg. The divisions in domestic fandom re-emerged in the support for the national team. Regardless of racial background, the majority of United supporters in the interview process admitted that they had little enthusiasm for Bafana Bafana. Key was how they understood how Bafana Bafana represented, or **did not** represent them. For some, the team did not represent them as there was a lack of white players in the team. There were accusations of political interference; that the ANC government had imposed racial quotas on the team, similar to what had happened with the Boks and Proteas. The fear of crime and the manner in which many supported the team (especially the *vuvuzelas*), which was displayed in their attitudes towards the domestic game in previous chapters, also featured prominently. While Bafana Bafana may have been emblematic of a nation, it was a

¹ Author interview with ‘Lee’ (United), 25/03/2009.

national identity that many of these supporters were at odds with; the theme of marginalisation in democratic South Africa again emerged. Another key theme was how some professed support for the Boks and Proteas, yet claimed allegiance to a different national team for soccer. When I asked whether this was a contradiction, many had not thought about this having believed that their choices were 'natural'. Conversely, the Chiefs supporters in the interviews claimed to support all the national teams yet in practice, Bafana Bafana generated little enthusiasm in what would be considered to be the game's core support base. The lack of competitiveness² combined with mediocre opposition for a mid-week evening fixture, such as the Malawi game, did not inspire these 'hardcore' supporters to go to the match, preferring to watch the game at home. Throughout the season, the more upwardly-mobile Chiefs supporters often wore clothing with the Springbok emblem, something that would have been virtually unthinkable only twenty years previously. The entire group claimed to follow other national teams, predominantly Brazil and England but these were not conflicting national identities. Bafana Bafana was 'their' team while the interest in other teams was based on styles of play and exposure to global names such as Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo and Wayne Rooney.

Similar to the previous chapter, not all United supporters distanced themselves from Bafana Bafana. There were moments when some individuals engaged with the domestic soccer supporters at Bafana Bafana matches at the 1996 African Nations Cup and the 2009 Confederations Cup, recollecting positive experiences from places that they were usually reluctant to enter. However, it was the 2010 World Cup that offered new breaks and shifts in the soccer landscape that once more challenged divisions. The hype and euphoria surrounding Bafana Bafana in the build-up to the tournament was accompanied by soccer fans travelling to parts of the city that they would have otherwise avoided. New perceptions of both

² During fieldwork, Bafana fell from 78th (January 2008) to 90th (April 2010) out of 207 members in the FIFA world rankings.

soccer in South Africa and life in the city underwent reassessment. Yet this shift also underlined racial and class divisions, already apparent in Johannesburg soccer supporters. Underneath the saturation of flag-waving and rhetoric of national unity lay processes of marginalisation and exclusion and reinforced divisions within the city. The World Cup created more sanitised and gentrified spaces in the city, which allowed middle class fans to 'support' Bafana Bafana. The Johannesburg soccer scene had undergone various re-interpretations but this was only temporary.

Bafana Bafana metamorphosed

In October 2008, I went to watch Bafana Bafana play an international friendly match against Malawi at Germiston Stadium, just south east of Johannesburg. The game itself was of little competitive significance; both teams could not field full-strength teams as the game was not on a FIFA-sanctioned international matchday and therefore clubs were not obliged to release their players for international duty. The decision to host the game at the 18,000 seater stadium was a tacit acknowledgement by SAFA that the game was not going to attract a large crowd. A lack of sufficient entry points around the stadium caused crowd congestion at certain bottlenecks and at the small entry gates, police fought back crowds of fans who were becoming impatient at their lack of progress into the ground. Such commotion outside belied a large emptiness within. At first glance, the stadium appeared to be less than a third full but hundreds of ticketless fans who had been forced to remain outside at kick off were let in approximately twenty minutes into the game. While the game ended 3-0 in Bafana Bafana's favour, it was a dull affair. A slow-paced game with few shots on target was not a good advertisement to encourage fans to return to subsequent matches. This had not helped the atmosphere in the ground, which had been muted throughout the majority of the game, aside from the goals. Within the small crowd, my colleague Dan and I were noticeably two of a very small number of white spectators dotted throughout the ground, similar to my experiences watching South African domestic club soccer. With the sparse crowd mumbling the national

anthem, this game was unlikely to generate a feeling of national euphoria; Bafana Bafana's inability to fill a relatively small stadium was a sad testament to the team's inability to capture the national imagination.

This apathy was not an isolated event. In September 2007, I watched England play the Springboks in a Rugby World Cup fixture in the Dros bar in Auckland Park,³ Johannesburg. Perhaps foolishly, I walked into the bar with my England rugby shirt on and felt numerous pairs of eyes glare at me, rekindling a fierce rivalry stemming from the colonial era. The packed bar mainly consisted of white Springbok supporters, many of which with their replica jerseys on, speaking a mixture of English and Afrikaans. Those who were not white had a visibly sufficient disposable income to participate in the experience, evidenced by their clothes, cellphones and cars. When the national anthem was played, the crowd in the bar stumbled through the isiXhosa, isiZulu and Sesotho sections but a sudden crescendo hit as the Afrikaans section began; an illuminating instance re-emphasising the predominantly white support in the bar. England proceeded to lose 36-0 and I became the focus for many comments; one policeman claiming that I was "*either brave or stupid*" to wear 'that' shirt.⁴ Significantly, the atmosphere in the bar was rowdy throughout, which was in stark contrast to when I watched Bafana Bafana compete at the 2008 African Cup of Nations in the same bar in the following January. Then, the bar was virtually empty when they played against Angola; a small group of six black men and myself watching the game on the outside television screen was the only discernable sign that the game was being played. There was little visible pride that the national team was competing. The contrast between the raucous atmosphere when watching the Springboks juxtaposed against the tepid support that Bafana Bafana generated emphasised racial and class divisions between supporters of the Boks and Bafana Bafana. Yet, fast forward to

³ Auckland Park is home to the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) and the University of Johannesburg. With a large student population, the area is a racially mixed environment.

⁴ Entry in research diary, 14/09/2007.

Bafana Bafana's World Cup warm-up matches in 2010 and the Johannesburg soccer scene had undergone an apparent metamorphosis. Having arrived back in South Africa in mid-May 2010, I had the opportunity to watch Bafana Bafana play Bulgaria at Orlando Stadium and Colombia at Soccer City, both in Soweto. Walking from my car to the stadium on both occasions, I noticed that the demographic of the crowd had altered from what I had been used to during the main period of my fieldwork. Instead of the vast majority of the crowd being black, male and working class, there were now large minorities of white, coloured and Indian fans dressed in Bafana Bafana jerseys, carrying national flags and blowing, or attempting to blow *vuvuzelas*. *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*, the national anthem, was sung by the crowd with a passion that had been absent during the Malawi match in Germiston two years previously. Choruses of *Shosholoza*⁵ resounded around the stadiums while the noise of the *vuvuzelas* was constant throughout.

Manchester United supporters and conflicting national identities

Within the United supporters interviewed, only three admitted to actively supporting Bafana Bafana. Seven more articulated a passive following of the team, often mediated through watching snippets of Bafana Bafana games live on television, highlights on the news and checking the scores in the next day newspapers. During the interview process, the discourses of crime, fear and security that featured prominently in the previous two chapters were important factors in the reasoning why they did not attend Bafana Bafana games. For instance, Ryan believes that he hadn't felt "*the need to go*"⁶ to a Bafana Bafana game because of what he saw as the threat to his personal security combined with perceived disorganisation. He reinforced his argument by comparing what he saw as the

⁵ Shosholoza is originally a song that was originally sung by migrant labourers in the late 1800s from Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) when travelling to the mines on the Transvaal (now Gauteng Province) in South Africa. The song became popularised in national sports events during the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

⁶ Author interview with 'Ryan' (United), 08/05/2009.

matchday experience at a Bafana Bafana match with his experiences when visiting Old Trafford:

“I don't feel like the rugby scrum in getting to the game. You know, going to Old Trafford, there is public transport literally to the Lancashire Cricket Club and then you can walk a couple of metres. Security is an issue and one of the big problems with games over here, it doesn't matter if you have a reserved seat, it's first-come first-served, which I'm sure you've probably noticed the other day and that's a problem and you shouldn't have to arrive for three o'clock game at 10 or 11 in the morning and stake your claim”.⁷

However, a couple of supporters believed that the prestige of international matches as opposed to domestic PSL games meant that security concerns would be met by SAFA. While not having been to a Bafana Bafana match before, Gary, a university student, argued that a Bafana Bafana game “*would be relatively safe as it's an international game; security would be beefed up*”.⁸ Nevertheless, such attitudes were not common. In the build up to the FIFA Confederations Cup in June 2009, George, an insurance broker, complained about such perceptions on the supporters' club web forum. Notorious within the group for his pessimistic views on the organisation of South African soccer, he reasoned that the FIFA tournament would still be stewarded by the same people who worked at domestic games and therefore would be just as disorganised and chaotic.⁹ The 11th-hour strike by stewards just hours before the opening ceremony along with crowd congestion problems at Ellis Park appeared to justify his stance although there were few other instances. Attitudes towards the organisation of the tournament were more favourable from the United supporters who had displayed a more active interest in the national team. Having attended two Confederations Cup games with Darren, an office administrator in Braamfontein, he chose to view these problems in a more optimistic light, arguing that the crowd and traffic congestion problems were progressively easing as the tournament developed; the organisers seemingly learning from

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Author interview with 'Gary' (United), 14/05/2009.

⁹ Entry in research diary, 24/06/2009.

mistakes made.¹⁰ Yet, like Gary's opinion, such a positive approach was in the minority. To frame this lack of interest in Bafana Bafana purely as a result of a predominantly white, middle-class discourse of crime and fear is to conceive of such people as feeling trapped in their wider, everyday lives in the city. As chapter five argued, there is a large element of this but there is more to how they experience and negotiate life in Johannesburg.

There were more mundane, logistical reasons as to why the majority of United supporters hadn't been to watch Bafana Bafana play live. During the main period of fieldwork, Bafana Bafana only played once in Johannesburg before the Confederations Cup; the Malawi friendly mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Other Bafana Bafana games were often played in distant cities such as Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth. Especially if they were midweek evening fixtures, the time and expense of such a trip meant that most, if not all of the United supporters were unwilling to attend such games. Through the process of playing across the country in an undoubted attempt by SAFA to bring the team to the people, these Johannesburg-based Manchester United supporters felt physically dislocated from the national team. Such a dislocation from the team was reinforced by their everyday self-imposed displacement from domestic soccer. With little interest in the domestic game, many United supporters admitted that they knew few of the players other than the famous European-based players such as Steven Pienaar and the occasional prominent PSL-based player such as Siphiwe Tshabalala. Philip, an IT consultant, found it difficult to follow any of the South African national teams as he could not name the squads. Even those United supporters who were more enthusiastic about the national team felt at a disadvantage. Darren admitted that he was "*not as clued up on the local game... I don't even know some of the players that are playing for Bafana most of the time*".¹¹ Consequently, he felt that he was unable to have the same level of in-depth conversation about Bafana Bafana as he would do

¹⁰ Entry in research diary, 24/06/2009.

¹¹ Author interview with 'Darren' (United), 25/06/2009.

about United, especially as most of his friends were disinterested in the team. Having few friends who shared his enthusiasm for Bafana Bafana created a further barrier to supporting the team. Tellingly, when he had a spare ticket for Bafana Bafana v New Zealand during the Confederations Cup, he offered it to me, an Englishman who had only been in the country for little more than a year, saying, *"You're the biggest Bafana fan that I know"*.¹² This statement emphasised the lack of penetration of the national soccer team into the predominantly white, middle class suburbs of Johannesburg. When Bafana Bafana did play in Johannesburg, it would be in stadiums such as Ellis Park and Germiston in the centre and the south of the city, or Soccer City on the outskirts of Soweto, areas that most United supporters were unwilling to travel to at night. Bafana similarly had little public presence within bars in the northern suburbs. For example, in the Grand Slam in Dowerglen, the favoured bar of the United supporters to watch United games communally, the soccer scarves and framed soccer shirts on the walls were heavily orientated towards European club soccer, specifically English and Italian, although there was a Bafana shirt mounted. Frustratingly for the United supporters who attended the Grand Slam for United matches, Springboks rugby games had priority on the big screen with soccer only on the occasional small screen and without commentary. Towards the beginning of my season with the United supporters, I had been promised by Susan, the club secretary, that the Grand Slam would be well attended by members for games against the other 'big four' teams (Arsenal, Liverpool and Chelsea) but when I arrived to watch the Arsenal v United game in November 2008, the bar was packed with people wearing Springbok jerseys in anticipation of South Africa v Wales; few United shirts were visible. Conversely, Bafana games did not have the same impact in such venues, as illustrated at the beginning of the chapter. Springbok games were big social events; Bafana games did not even register.

If a lack of exposure and knowledge of the local game hindered the ability of the United supporters to follow Bafana, their comprehensive knowledge of English

¹² Entry in research diary, 18/06/2009.

league football and its players fostered an affinity with the English national team for some. Furthermore, with a significant number of United players featuring in the England squad over the last twenty years, England became a partial extension of Manchester United rather than representative of a nation. While she did not support any national team, Susan divulged that she had at one time 'followed' England because of the number of United players in the squad:

"There was a time when the backbone of the England team was the Neville boys, Nicky Butt, Scholes, Teddy [*Sherringham*], David Beckham; then I followed them, because they were United players, not because of England".¹³

However, this had now finished because England were now "*full of Arsenal, Chelsea and Liverpool players*".¹⁴ The sentiment of following England as an extension of United rather than as a national team was shared by other members. Identifying himself as Irish although he had moved to South Africa in the seventies, Duncan, a civil engineer, claimed that he too followed England; "*I'm more familiar with the English players, especially because of United players... I hope that England qualify for that reason*".¹⁵ For Duncan, following England for such reasons stripped away any Anglo-Irish sporting and political tensions that might have manifested themselves.

The most significant example of this affinity with England through United players came to light when I interviewed Wayne in his home in Soweto. Given that the location of his house was in a South African soccer heartland, I entered the interview with the assumption that he would be a Bafana supporter. However, once he disdainfully declared that he would rather watch 'The Bold and the Beautiful' or 'Prison Break'¹⁶ on television rather than a Bafana game, he revealed that 'his team' were England. Identifying himself as both Pedi¹⁷, black and South African, Wayne

¹³ Author interview with 'Susan' (United), 07/03/2009.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Author interview with 'Duncan' (United), 11/01/2009.

¹⁶ Both are American television serials broadcast on SABC.

¹⁷ One of the official ethno-linguistic groups in South Africa.

felt that he was unable to support Bafana purely “*for the sake of being patriotic*”¹⁸ as he had no passion for the domestic game. At a similar time to when he became a United supporter, he was drawn to the England team due to the United players. He reminisced about the England squad during the 1990 World Cup and claimed that he could still recall most of the squad. As with Susan, Wayne’ affinity towards England faded as the number of United players in the England setup declined. However, when I asked him who he would want to win if England faced Bafana, he initially hesitated but eventually decided South Africa; “*I would say South Africa; let South Africa win. I’d like my players to play well but any other team, if England are playing Nigeria, I’ll still go for England to win*”.¹⁹ Throughout the section on international football in the interview, Wayne appeared more interested in talking about the England team than Bafana despite having no ties to England other than the club side he supported. Another assumption that I had carried into the research was that these supporters would automatically have a national team that they supported, primarily because this was how I understood my sporting allegiances. However, for those who displayed an indifference towards Bafana, some went further and showed a lack of interest in international soccer generally. While Susan stated that she did not support any national team, her husband Ben argued that international football was unimportant; it was Manchester United first and foremost.²⁰ For them, there was no space for them to support another team, even at the international level. Norman, an investment broker, echoed comparable sentiments. While he was interested in the results of South African national sports teams, they were lower in his sporting priorities than United; *if the others lose everything, as long as United win, I’m happy*”.²¹

It was not just England that some United supporters had developed an affinity with through the consumption of Manchester United. The globalisation of

¹⁸ Author interview with ‘Wayne’ (United), 31/01/2009.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Entry in research diary, 18/06/2009.

²¹ Author interview with ‘Norman’ (United), 18/05/2009.

soccer had brought regular UEFA Champions League games to South African television, both satellite and terrestrial. Exposure to global soccer stars such as Lionel Messi of Barcelona and Kaka of Real Madrid and exciting, attacking styles of play was a factor in some United supporters expressing an interest in Brazil and Argentina. As with England, this was a choice based on sporting concerns devoid of national sentiment. However, understanding the general apathy towards Bafana as a result of exposure to English rather than South African soccer is limited. While a wide-ranging knowledge of the English Premiership had created associations between some United supporters and England, most did not have such affinities. On several occasions throughout the fieldwork, the United supporters watching the soccer in the Grand Slam had sung anti-English chants such as *"Fletcher for Scotland! Too good for England!"* and *"that boy Ronaldo makes England look shite!"*²² These were sometimes sung at me in an attempt to rile me, which I had to shrug off. Admittedly, I had unwittingly created a target for this banter by wearing my red England replica shirt to some monthly meetings and games in the bar; a soccer shirt in the colours of their team but signifying that I was not a full member. In the interview environment, Gary laughed at the idea of following England²³ while Philip likewise had no interest in England even though he was well-versed in the squad.²⁴ Outside of the English context, the chairman of the club emphasised that he would not follow a national team just because it had a United player in. Highlighting this point, he argued that *"when Quinton Fortune played for Man United... I supported him. When he put a Bafana shirt on, I couldn't give a rats tail about him"*.²⁵ The presence of a United player in the Bafana setup did little to endear the team to him.

The dislocation of the vast majority of United supporters from the sphere of domestic football certainly had ramifications on their ability to access and

²² Entry in research diary, 16/05/2009.

²³ Author interview with 'Gary' (United), 14/05/2009.

²⁴ Author interview with 'Philip' (United), 22/05/2009.

²⁵ Author interview with 'Lee' (United), 25/03/2009.

understand Bafana Bafana. Knowing little about the players, conversations about the team were constrained while, to a certain extent, their knowledge of the European game fostered affinities towards certain other national teams. Concerns over crime and security articulated in the previous two chapters with regards to the domestic soccer arena often filtered into their conceptualisations of a national soccer space. However, underneath such a disconnection lay more complex issues of how they conceived and identified with the idea of a South African nation. As the next section will argue, the different national sports teams often represented different ideas of what it was to be South African. Bafana was frequently constructed as a poorly managed and corrupt outfit in contrast to the more slick, professionally organised national rugby and cricket sides. Bafana became a vehicle in which to emphasise dissatisfaction with the ANC government's policies of affirmative action and black economic empowerment (BEE) and reiterate the ideas of marginalisation in the previous two chapters. The soccer team was seen as hampered by the politics of race and quota systems, evidenced by Bafana's plummeting world ranking and in contrast to the Springboks as rugby world champions and the Proteas as the number one test playing cricket nation. However, for Eric and Darren, Bafana symbolised a more optimistic idea of the rainbow nation.

Passions would frequently flare when discussing the issue of race-based quotas within South African national sports teams. Not one interviewee within the United supporters' club had said that this was not an issue that affected them. Some understood Bafana as victims of such quotas. Tom was adamant that quotas existed in South African soccer, even though there has never been an official policy in place; *"I'm telling you 80% of the players have to be black and that doesn't apply to the cricket and the rugby team"*.²⁶ For these supporters, Bafana became representative of the ANC government rather than the nation. Carlos recalled how his first memory of Bafana on the world stage was the shirt; *"It was not South African colours; it was ANC colours*

²⁶ Author interview with 'Tom' (United), 12/06/2009.

(laughs)! *The green and the gold and the black*”;²⁷ which became a barrier between him and supporting Bafana in the 1990s. Some United supporters became frustrated when discussing what they saw as double standards in the enforcement of such quotas:

“If you look at the cricket; you get into the argument, how come there aren’t any more white players in Bafana? Because they’re not fucking good enough! But if there aren’t any blacks in the rugby team it’s racist but if there aren’t any whites in the football team it’s because they’re not good enough to make the team”.²⁸

Such sentiment fed back into the re-occurring perception of white, middle class inhabitants of the city suffering from constant marginalisation. Bafana became constructed as a site of the reproduction of neo-patrimonial politics when Carlos complained that immediately after Bafana’s 1996 African Nations Cup victory, *“you had about 20 to 30 officials with their R30,000 suits coming onto the field. It’s all about them. I couldn’t grasp it, I couldn’t understand it. It’s as if they were more important than the team”*.²⁹ For these supporters, Bafana had not always been associated with what they thought was wrong with the country but a cause for optimism. Although Susan asserted that she did not support a national team, she enthusiastically recounted her experience of being at that final at Soccer City in 1996:

“We arrived at 1 o’clock and we couldn’t get in. It was choc-o-block. They’d broken the fences to get into the stadium. You look at pictures of that stadium today and it’s completely full. We sat on the steps... and we had an absolutely fabulous day. There was a band sitting behind us. They’d brought all these little wind instruments and drums and everybody was just so friendly”.³⁰

Other members had their own stories of where they were when Bafana became champions of Africa but the common theme was one of hope and optimism. This was the ‘golden age’ of Bafana culminating in reaching consecutive FIFA World Cup finals tournaments in 1998 and 2002. However, the decline in Bafana’s

²⁷ Author interview with ‘Carlos’ (United), 19/05/2009.

²⁸ Author interview with ‘George’ (United), 06/03/2009.

²⁹ Author interview with ‘Carlos’ (United), 19/05/2009.

³⁰ Author interview with ‘Susan’ (United), 07/03/2009.

fortunes was attributed to politics, especially affirmative action. George had reminded me that the captain of Bafana's only major championship triumph was white.³¹ Norman asserted the quota system was damaging to elite sport in South Africa; *"why are we the best sevens team in the world? And it's all guys of colour. There might be one white guy"*.³² However, the truth is that it has been rugby and cricket that have been subject to transformation policies, not soccer. In the interviews that were conducted in the build-up to the Confederations Cup and the British and Irish Lions rugby side's tour of South Africa, I commonly asked which competition interested them more. The usual reply was the rugby. This was not just down to their better knowledge and access to the Springboks over Bafana but their attitudes towards the teams. This was not restricted to the white members. While Peter had stated that should the Boks and Bafana be playing at the same time, he would rather watch the rugby, although his personal background of playing competitive rugby influenced such a choice.³³ Wayne claimed that he was a passionate supporter of the Boks as *"they play for the badge"*,³⁴ for the nation rather than for perceived individualistic reasons. Bafana became symbolic of what the United supporters saw as the worst of the country. However, to say that the opposite was also true, that the Boks and Proteas were representative of the best of the nation, would be misleading. There was also much animosity from some United supporters towards the Springboks. Not only did Springbok games interfere with watching games at the Grand Slam, numerous references were made to me about how they weren't 'Dutchman', an often derogatory reference to Afrikaners. After watching Arsenal v Manchester United in George's home with his family and friends, he changed the channel to watch the end of the Springboks v Wales rugby game. No-one in the room wanted the Springboks to win although they were predominantly British expatriates. His daughter, although South African, declared that she couldn't support a team whose players had stupid names, a reference to the Afrikaner

³¹ Author interview with 'George' (United), 06/03/2009.

³² Author interview with 'Norman' (United), 18/05/2009.

³³ Author interview with 'Peter' (United), 27/07/2009.

³⁴ Author interview with 'Wayne' (United), 31/01/2009.

players.³⁵ In this case, not supporting the Boks became a way to differentiate themselves from Afrikaans-speaking whites.

Claims of dual nationality and ancestry were made as legitimising reasons by two-thirds of those interviewed to support a national soccer team other than Bafana, yet this was rarely consistent throughout the choice of nation for national teams. Lee felt a loyalty towards England in soccer because he was born there yet he admitted that *"when South Africa play England in cricket, I'm absolutely passionate that we beat England at cricket"*.³⁶ Likewise, Les, who often referred to his English-style upbringing in what was then called Rhodesia, revealed his conflicting national loyalties when he claimed, *"if South Africa are playing anybody, I will support South Africa, but I support the England soccer team above all things"*.³⁷ Ryan did not claim English parentage when he said that he supported England. Instead, he took the opportunity to watch England live when he lived in London for nine years.³⁸ As previously, it was not limited to those who identified with England in soccer. For instance, Tom fiercely supported Italy while Gary and Carlos had affinities to Portugal, all because of recent ancestry from these countries. Bafana as a focus for South African nation-building seemed tenuous. With the United supporters that claimed such alternative allegiance, I asked them who they would want to win should Bafana play 'their' team. This question was regularly met with hesitation. Eventually, most sided with Bafana despite their connection elsewhere because South Africa was home. For instance, Philip's response was: *"I might be Jewish and Israel might be my promised land but I'm not Israeli"*.³⁹ Still, Bafana had limited meaning to these supporters. To get around this question, some differentiated between 'meaningful' and 'meaningless' games; *"If it's a friendly I would want South Africa to win because I live here. If it was a tight game for the World Cup or something like that, I don't think South Africa would be able to go all the way so I would support*

³⁵ Entry in research diary, 08/11/2008.

³⁶ Author interview with 'Lee' (United), 25/03/2009.

³⁷ Author interview with 'Les' (United), 20/04/2009.

³⁸ Author interview with 'Ryan' (United), 08/05/2009.

³⁹ Author interview with 'Philip' (United), 22/05/2009.

England".⁴⁰ For those interested in other sports, only Tom had hinted that he wouldn't necessarily support the Springboks against his other national team, although he had earlier asserted that he was a Bok supporter, something periodically reinforced by his taking great pleasure in reminding me that the Boks had beat England in the 2007 Rugby World Cup final; *"Even though I know Italy are going to get a hiding! I cheer for South Africa. So I don't look like in the idiot but in the bottom of my heart, why don't you just have a draw?"*⁴¹ What was different to his position on national soccer was that he appeared genuinely torn on who he would support in the rugby. In contrast, the expatriate members of the supporters' club felt little connection with any South African national sporting sides and still associated with their country of origin. Duncan asserted his Irish identity when he said that he supported the Republic above any other national team. Similarly, while watching a United game with George at his house, he showed me his Ulster flag and declared that he was *"a proud Ulsterman"*, despite having South African citizenship.⁴² In international soccer, he said that he supported Northern Ireland but it was difficult to do so as Northern Ireland matches were rarely broadcast on South African television. In rugby, he asserted his Irish roots when he took great pleasure in infuriating me after Ireland had beaten England 14-13 in the 2009 Six Nations.⁴³ He boasted that he had committed a cardinal sin when, *"At one stage I had a Springbok rugby shirt and the guys wanted to kill me because I put an Irish badge on the other side! I sewed it onto the Springbok jersey because I said I was dual nationality!"*⁴⁴ This was not a genuine attempt to display his identification with two nations but an opportunity to antagonise his Springbok-supporting friends. Despite his South African citizenship, he did not feel South African. However, Bafana was not completely insignificant to these people. Both Duncan and George displayed past interest in Bafana, notably when they won the 1996 African Nations Cup; *"I was in the street when they came*

⁴⁰ Author interview with 'Ryan' (United), 08/05/2009.

⁴¹ Author interview with 'Tom' (United), 12/06/2009.

⁴² Entry in research diary, 08/11/2008.

⁴³ The Six Nations is an annual rugby union tournament featuring England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France and Italy.

⁴⁴ Author interview with 'George' (United), 06/03/2009.

home with the trophy, in the tickertape parade through the streets. It was brilliant!"⁴⁵ However, this was a rare positive association with Bafana. For the vast majority of the United supporters, it was felt that Bafana at best loosely represent them.

However, it would be inaccurate and over-simplistic to argue that all the United supporters constructed Bafana as a negative reflection on the nation. Focusing on two supporters, Eric and Darren, there were alternative understandings of Bafana, framing not only the team but the future of the nation in a more optimistic light. Eric, who described himself as *"a South African Cypriot Greek"*⁴⁶ felt passionate on the subject of choosing a national team. Although he claimed an affinity with both the Cypriot and Greek national soccer teams, he actively supported Bafana. He had not been to many live games but attributed this to a combination of his friends being disinterested in Bafana and *"laziness"*.⁴⁷ He became angry at the prevalent negative view of Bafana and wanted to counter such perceptions. *"I have to watch it and read what happened because I know there'll be some prick the next day giving shit about it, having never watched the match and I want to set them straight"*.⁴⁸ His positivity towards Bafana fed into a wider, optimistic outlook on the future of South Africa and feeling proud to be a South African; *"I feel like I should be a poster boy for patriotism in South Africa. I love it. It's just gone from strength to strength"*.⁴⁹ Conversely, Darren did not identify himself as South African nor did he have citizenship. He identified himself primarily as Scottish as he had been born and raised there and still referred to it as 'home'. Furthermore, when asked who he would want to win between the Scottish and South African soccer teams should they meet, he unequivocally answered; *"If Scotland was to go to war against South Africa, I would fight for Scotland. It's a no-brainer. I don't know why. I am Scottish and that's the done deal!"*.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, he also considered himself to be a Bafana

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Author interview with 'Eric' (United), 14/04/2009.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Author interview with 'Darren' (United), 25/06/2009.

supporter. South Africa had also become home and he had become excited to be part of what he saw as a positive future for the country; *“we love it here... so why shouldn't we be part of what's going on?”*⁵¹ Unlike the majority of United supporters, he clearly articulated that Bafana was more important to him than the other main South African national teams as he would choose to watch Bafana play over the Springboks. His enthusiasm for Bafana became clear during the Confederations Cup, travelling between Rustenburg, Bloemfontein and Johannesburg to watch Bafana play.

Within the United supporters' case study, Bafana registered little importance with most of the supporters. Although the dislocation from the domestic soccer arena combined with concerns over crime and security were factors in this disconnectiveness from the national team, Bafana came to represent a different idea of the South African nation from the Boks and Proteas. It symbolised what they saw to be the worst excesses of government and authority in post-apartheid South Africa; corruption and neo-patrimonialism. The declining number of white players in the team was often constructed as symbolic of their own perceived marginalisation in political and economic life.

Kaizer Chiefs supporters, accepting the Springbok and apathy towards Bafana

Unlike the Manchester United supporters, there was no hesitation within the Chiefs supporters' club as to who their national soccer allegiance was with. Bafana was 'their' team and it came to represent their aspirations in post-apartheid South Africa. There was no hesitation in declaring support for both Bafana, the Proteas and the Springboks, the latter surprising considering that during apartheid, the majority of black South Africans would support whoever the Springboks were playing. However, while Bafana was more easily associated with, it still generated

⁵¹ Ibid.

apathy within the core constituency of South African soccer supporters. The Chiefs supporters often experienced feelings of dislocation and distance from the national soccer team although this was fostered more by physical barriers than any construction of a team that did not represent them.

In the interviews, the question 'do you support Bafana Bafana?' was always met with a resounding and immediate yes. In some cases, the facial expressions of some of the respondents at this moment indicated that they felt that this was a facile question; of course they supported Bafana. In all cases, this was because South Africa was 'home'. Gerald, an engineering inspector, asked in reply, "*who else if I don't support them?*"⁵² This was a salient question as there were no ancestral ties to European countries to complicate matters as there was within the United supporters and no ties with other African countries from what I had been told. Furthermore, the limited income of most supporters had meant that they had never left South Africa; Gerald, was the notable exception as he had travelled to various continents for work conferences. For these supporters, Bafana represented a more positive, aspirational ideal, especially for those who displayed increased social mobility in the post-apartheid era. However, when talking about how they related to the Springboks and the Proteas, I was surprised that no-one hesitated in claiming to support them as well. In this case, the three major national sports teams represented the same idea of a broader singular nation rather than multiple fragments. Various items of Springbok merchandise would be on display in the taxis on the way to Chiefs games. For instance, particularly in the winter, Faith would wear her Springbok jacket over her Chiefs shirt while Gilbert had his Bok fleece. Significantly, Alfred had made a *makarapa* which expressed his simultaneous loyalties towards both Kaizer Chiefs and the Springboks. One half declared "*Makhosi [Chiefs] For Life*" while the other stated "*Mabhokobhoko [Springboks] For Life*".⁵³ In this context, the Boks became stripped of their association as a symbol of apartheid, becoming one of a

⁵² Author interview with 'Gerald' (Chiefs), 26/07/2009.

⁵³ Entry in research diary, 11/07/2009.

new South Africa. Yet, for all of the claims that they supported Bafana, the Boks and Proteas, the latter two were more of a following. If United supporters found it problematic to follow Bafana due to their lack of knowledge of South African domestic soccer, Chiefs supporters were similarly restricted by their relative inexperience with domestic rugby and cricket. As discussed in chapter five, most Chiefs respondents did not have Dstv and therefore had little televisual access to these sports. Furthermore, none had attended a live Springbok game, although that was perhaps unsurprising considering the disparity of ticket prices between Bok and Bafana matches. For example, Bafana tickets prior to the Confederations Cup had cost R20 as opposed to R1000 for the Springbok v British and Irish Lions test matches, thus putting them out of reach of almost all the Chiefs supporters. Although claiming to support all three teams, it was Bafana that was more important. As in some cases of United supporters preferring to support or follow England because of its United contingent, Bafana became important in part because of the presence of Chiefs players in the national setup. Arguing which Chiefs players should be selected for the Bafana side to play against Chile in February 2009, Arthur and Jimmy both lamented the small number of Chiefs players in the squad arguing that this was the reason for Bafana's mediocre performances. Nelson agreed, asserting that Bafana did well when Chiefs supplied the backbone of the team. Bafana, therefore, was not only associated with a national identity but a club one.

However, although the interview process had highlighted Bafana as a symbol of optimism and national pride, the actions of the supporters belied apathy towards the national side. Nelson recounted how in the early days of Bafana's readmission to international football, they were an embarrassment:

"They used to say that we can't play soccer and we used to lose to a country like Zimbabwe, you know? But not Botswana and Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Zambia and them. So everybody started up talking us; "You South Africans can't play".⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Author interview with 'Nelson' (Chiefs), 12/01/2009.

Pride in watching Bafana re-enter international competition was tempered by poor results. Believing that they had world class players, early losses to teams such as Nigeria and Zimbabwe had shocked much of the South African soccer-going public. While the 1996 African Cup of Nations success had rectified this, the decline of Bafana in recent years had clearly affected the Chiefs supporters' perception of the national soccer team. On several occasions when trying to engage various supporters in conversation over Bafana, there seemed a distinct lack of interest. When Bafana failed to qualify for the 2010 African Nations Cup in Angola, outrage was mixed with a sense of resignation and indifference. As long as Chiefs did well, the results of Bafana were immaterial. The squad selection for Bafana created further annoyance. Nelson argued that the inclusion of European-based players who rarely started for their club but were regulars for the national team did little for the team's prospects and therefore turned supporters off spending their money on going to the game; "*Soccer supporters are not stupid*".⁵⁵ This level of apathy was not limited to the Chiefs supporters' club. In contrast to the lifelessness of a Bafana matchday in the city, I had decided that I needed to head to the soccer heartland of Soweto for a comparison. I was to be taken by a couple of friends to a notorious soccer-watching tavern to experience the atmosphere during the Bafana v Chile match in February 2009. However, as my research diary recounts, the apathy towards Bafana had also infiltrated the township:

"We drove to three different taverns; the first was closed and the other two were virtually empty, even though they were showing the game".⁵⁶

We settled on the fourth tavern, although that was more to do with kick off quickly approaching than finding a packed, vibrant place to watch the game. I estimated that there were about fifteen people there and although it was a small township tavern, there were still many empty seats. No-one had Bafana shirts or

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Entry in research diary, 11/02/2009.

Bafana-branded clothing on. The only visible sign that it was a Bafana gameday was the small television in the corner. During the match, I spoke to some of the tavern's patrons, who were visibly bemused that a white Englishman would head into Soweto on a weekday evening just to watch a Bafana game on television. It was explained to me that the bar would always be full for Pirates and Chiefs games, especially for the Soweto Derby when there would be people outside the building looking in at the television. These would be loud, raucous affairs where, the barwoman admitted, the tavern would make a lot of money. This was clearly not going to be the case during the Bafana match that I was watching. It was further explained to me that the key reason for people staying away during Bafana games was because of the performances (or lack of) of the national team, both in terms of results and style. Although a personal anti-climax, this experience illuminated the limited appeal of Bafana at this time.

The apparent lack of enthusiasm for Bafana within the Chiefs supporters was not just rooted in a sense of apathy but also reinforced material barriers. For the poorer supporters in the group, Bafana games were a luxury they could ill-afford. Supporters such as Thabo, who struggled to get enough money together to attend Chiefs matches outside of Johannesburg, had little hope of travelling to the majority of Bafana games, especially those in outlying cities such as Durban, Cape Town and Bloemfontein. For Thabo, Chiefs games were of higher importance to him than Bafana games. He had grown up as a Chiefs supporter, while Bafana has been a relative newcomer, only playing their first international match after readmission in 1992. This was something that had impacted on many of the Chiefs supporters. Particularly with the older supporters, they had grown up watching Chiefs live at the stadium, on television or listening to games on the radio while they could not with Bafana. Chiefs remain for most, if not all, the supporters as their first team. However, for those with a higher level of disposable income, Bafana games were still problematic to attend. Furthermore, the group were unable to watch the games as a supporters' club. With only one car owner in the original case of Malvern

branch and then two more following the branch merger in 2009, few could drive to the games, even if they were within a feasible driving distance. More significantly, they were unable to travel to a single location such as a tavern to watch the game as all forms of public transport stopped before the end of evening kick offs; they could all potentially meet but would be unable to get home. These logistical problems combined with the commitments of everyday life, notably family, meant that Bafana games could not be social events in the same way that Chiefs games could be. The camaraderie and party atmosphere of travelling as a club in the taxi to the games with kwaito and house music blaring out through insufficiently powerful speakers, the singing and dancing within the taxi and *vuvuzela* playing while leaning out of it was absent for Bafana games. A Chiefs gameday was something to be anticipated and planned for throughout the week while a Bafana match was just something to watch on television.

As in the previous chapter, I realised that I was becoming integrated into what I was studying. A week before the annual Nelson Mandela Challenge Cup⁵⁷ game in November 2008, I asked both Nelson and Linda on separate occasions why Malvern Branch did not watch Bafana games together. Both raised the issue of transport but as I was a car owner, they pointed out that I could drive a few of them to Nelson's house so that they could. Realising that they had played me, I felt compelled to take on the role of chauffeur for the evening of that game. On the drive from the northern suburbs to Malvern, Linda explained her frustrations over being unable to watch Bafana games with her friends as she did not have transport and it was "*too dangerous*" to walk the streets at night.⁵⁸ Yet again, I had unwittingly become a conduit for the supporters to travel outside of their everyday lives. There were six people crammed into Nelson's small bedroom sitting on the bed and the floor, huddled around the television. For every goal that Bafana scored, this small group of people jumped up screaming, cheering and hugging each other. It was at

⁵⁷ The Nelson Mandela Challenge Cup began in 1994 and is an annual one-off match between Bafana and an invited national team with proceeds going to charities.

⁵⁸ Entry in research diary, 19/11/2009.

this point that I began to revise my ideas of apathy towards Bafana. Such actions clearly illustrated that Bafana was still important to them as South African soccer supporters despite mediocre performances and results. After the 2008/ 2009 domestic season had been completed, a keen interest in Bafana emerged in the build up to the Confederations Cup that June. The branch chairman announced that the branch would be organising transport for the Bafana v Poland game as they did for most Chiefs matches. This was significant as this had been the first time that such an outing had been suggested while I had been with the group. With the season and another failed bid from Chiefs to win the league over, club allegiances were now much less of a distraction from the national team. On the following day, the front page of the Sunday Times featured a large colour photo of Bafana supporters in action during the game, which included two of the Chiefs supporters. Rapidly approaching the beginning of the Confederations Cup, only one person in the Greater Johannesburg branch had applied for tickets. Unfortunately for him, he had not fully understood the ticketing process and allocations and had ended up applying for the most expensive category one tickets for all the games at Ellis Park; a precursor to the problems surrounding the World Cup ticketing process. In the end, he could not afford to pay for the tickets and therefore missed out. However, on the day of the opening game, there was a desperate attempt by a few of the Chiefs supporters to find tickets for Bafana v Iraq as they wanted to support 'their' team. It had been assumed by many that because I regularly had spare tickets for Chiefs game, which I passed onto the branch chairman for the branch, I would also have spare Confederations tickets. I was inundated with calls and text messages asking for these fictitious tickets. While the fact that I didn't frustrated some, Linda and Bernard said that they were desperate for Bafana tickets and headed down to the stadium precinct. Contrary to what FIFA and the organising committee had said regarding access to the stadium precinct for ticket holders only, I happened to see them asking fans queuing up for spare tickets. It later transpired that they had managed to get hold of a pair of tickets and so they were able to watch the game. In subsequent games, other Chiefs supporters along with other circumvented official

ticket procedures and gained tickets through a network of domestic soccer supporters. From displaying little interest in the team, Bafana tickets had become an important commodity for these supporters. A small number of Chiefs supporters including Linda and Bernard travelled by taxi to Bloemfontein for Bafana's final group game against Spain without having tickets but again, they managed to acquire some before the game started. The problem was that, as will be discussed in the next section of the chapter in relation to the World Cup, the Chiefs supporters who managed to travel and watch Bafana play in the Confederations Cup were those with a greater level of disposable income. Thabo complained to me that he was too poor to go to the games while Jimmy said that he could not afford to take time off work to go and watch any matches. The realities of everyday life were more pressing than a soccer match.

In both cases, Bafana as a focal point for the generation of a cohesive national identity is complex and problematic. Referring back to Smith and Porter's astute observation discussed in chapter two, making the leap to seeing the national team as the embodiment of the nation, it becomes difficult to see what nation or image of the nation Bafana is seen to represent. With the United supporters' club, Bafana represented a variety of ideas. It was an Africanised, corrupt and mismanaged team that was symptomatic of wider governmental and societal issues in the country for some while a lack of white players in the squad precluded others from supporting Bafana. Bafana represented a different South Africa for the majority of the United supporters as opposed to the Springboks or the Proteas, just as the two supporters' clubs represented different ideas of the city. Conversely, the Chiefs supporters associated Bafana as being representative of home and themselves, with the question of whether they would support Bafana seemingly ridiculous to them. However, as the next section argues, the World Cup a year on from this at one level changed the metaphorical playing field, allowing middle class soccer fans (including United supporters) to be able to support Bafana. Yet, underlying this new-found soccer patriotism lay exclusionary processes that marginalised the core

support base of Bafana, including the Chiefs supporters; this was only a temporary and superficial shift.

The World Cup

Before returning to South Africa for the 2010 World Cup, excerpts from two interviews suggested what to expect. Looking forward to the tournament, I had asked the CEO of Wits about his views on the World Cup as a nation-building force. Although he believed that most South African would get behind Bafana by the opening game, he alluded to future problems that threatened such harmony when talking about regular domestic soccer goers:

“they’re not going to see the type of games and a lot of South Africans have no clue how the allocation of match tickets works. They believe that they’re just going to buy tickets and see a game”.⁵⁹

As with my experience in the Confederations Cup, he expressed concern that most within the traditional constituency of South African soccer supporters would be unaware and unable to get access to tickets, especially those for Bafana games. Instead those with money, especially those with credit cards and access to the internet would have a distinct advantage. If this happened, it had the potential to reinforce racial and class cleavages in the city rather than bring people together. Secondly, when asking him about the lack of white fans at Bafana games, Nelson constructed these fans as foreign rather than as South African like himself:

“The very regular supporters of soccer, they’re going to support Bafana Bafana and the very same guys, Indians and whites, they are going to support their overseas countries... It’s obvious that I’m going to support my home country. Even whites now, they’re going to support Ireland. They’re going to raise this flag there; “I’m Irish”.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Author interview with Bidvest Wits CEO, 17/11/2008.

⁶⁰ Author interview with ‘Nelson’ (Chiefs), 12/01/2009.

Such a construction had largely supported what I argued in the earlier part of this chapter, that the predominantly white, middle class United supporters often had a greater affinity with European national teams rather than Bafana. This had important ramifications for the utilisation of Bafana as a nation-building force; how could Bafana bring all South Africans when it was felt by some that it did not represent them? Furthermore, the tournament had been marketed as for all South Africans but as I will argue, much of the core support base of domestic soccer, including the Chiefs supporters' club, often found themselves on the margins.

In the build-up and during the Confederations Cup, there was little evidence that the tournament was underway on the streets of the city. Aside from a few billboards and national flags spread sparsely around the city, it appeared to be business as usual. Yet, on returning to Johannesburg a year later, it was strikingly different. The World Cup had captured the public imagination that the Confederations Cup as a second tier tournament could not. The streets of Sandton, Johannesburg's commercial centre, filled with people wearing football shirts, waving national flags and blowing *vuuzelas* at midday with two days to go before the World Cup. This had been organised by the Southern Sun hotel chain in a public show of support for the national team under the catchphrase "*Sisonke* [togetherness] *in hosting Bafana*".⁶¹ Approximately 25,000 people congregated along the route taken by the bus carrying some of the Bafana squad on a pre-Cup parade and by 10am, traffic approaching the area had ground to a standstill. For those who were unable to make it to Sandton, radio stations encouraged people to leave work between 12-2pm and blow their *vuuzelas* in support of the team. I witnessed this while I was stuck in traffic in the city during that time. Within the space of two minutes, people rushed out onto the streets dancing and making a raucous noise. While travelling through the city during that following hour, it became apparent that this was widespread. In this moment, Johannesburg was a place of celebration and carnival rather than the face of crime and poverty. In the following morning, the

⁶¹ Entry in research blog, 10/06/2010.

Johannesburg press reported how this event had unified all South Africans. The *Sowetan*, a daily aimed at township readers believed that the team had “*basked in the glory of a loving nation*”;⁶² while *The Star* claimed that “*We finally have national pride*”.⁶³ National sentiment expressed as flag-waving saturated the city in the build-up to the beginning of the tournament and beyond. Flags flying from buildings, on advertising boards and the rapidly popular trend of national flag car wing-mirror covers served as a reminder for all South Africans to follow the boys.

I was woken up at 5:45am on the morning of the opening game by a group of people blowing their *vuvuzelas* with enthusiasm. The early-morning drive through central Johannesburg to my office had been transformed with revellers on their way to work, briefcase in one hand, *vuvuzela* in the other. The journey from my office to the Soweto fan park revealed an inner-city Johannesburg that was off-kilter with what I had come to expect. Walking past Noord Street taxi rank, a reputedly dangerous area in the CBD, the sight of two white men with Bafana shirts and *vuvuzelas* caused consternation from passers by. Yet it was not just my colleague and myself who were challenging commonly-held perceptions. Groups of tourists walked the streets taking photos with their digital cameras; a virtually unthinkable happening in this part of the city only a couple of months earlier. The bus to the stadium and fan park was squeezed full of supporters, both Mexican and South African, singing loudly. The crowd in the Soweto fan park buzzed as kick-off approached. It was a predominantly black crowd, unsurprising given where it was but there was a noticeable contingent of other South African fans as well. Travelling from the suburbs to the township was symbolically significant; the informal segregation of the city being challenged. With people waving flags and singing the national anthem, this was a moment in which these Bafana fans could temporarily forget the travails of everyday life and support the same team. It can be tempting to discount the national euphoria generated from such global sporting events from our

⁶² ‘Mzansi Erupts for Bafana’. *Sowetan*, 10/06/2010.

⁶³ ‘Bafana Fan Frenzy’. *The Star*, 10/06/2010.

metaphorical armchairs as nothing but an ephemeral experience but the process of 'being there' bestowed a different perspective. When Siphiwe Tshabalala scored for South Africa, the fan park erupted in hysteria. People of all races and ethnicities jumped around in jubilation, hugging each other. At this point in time, it was not hard to imagine similar images happening across the country; the notion was intoxicating. While Bafana's next game against Uruguay provided more disappointment than cause for optimism, their final group game against produced another groundswell of hope. This time watching the game in the fan park in central Johannesburg, yet more South Africans were jubilant as Bafana went 2-0 ahead against France. More cheering and hugging ensued with murmurings of possible qualification from the group stage growing louder. Unfortunately, Bafana's inability to convert their numerical advantage over the former world champions was anti-climactic; a muted crowd dreaming of what could have been.

The World Cup also impacted on attitudes towards the city and how some people travelled through it. The increased police presence on the streets of central Johannesburg was a factor in the creation of a cocoon of safety, allowing those who once saw such an area as a no-go, crime-infested place to reinterpret it. One of the United supporters described his opening game experience on the online forum:

"We started off a 9 a.m.... caught a "proper" taxi with 4 Mexican supporters to a shebeen in Orlando... had a chow and few quarts... then off to Soccer City".⁶⁴

As discussed in chapters five and six, the prospect of one of the United supporters catching public transport was rare but this instance is just one illustration of how the attitudes of some members towards using public transport in the city has changed. Johannesburg City Council had been encouraging ticket holders to use public transport to attend games to alleviate traffic congestion and

⁶⁴ 'Bafana Bafana 1-1 Mexico'. S.A. Reds: Manchester United Supporters' Club of South Africa – SA Reds Forum. http://manutd.co.za/index.php?option=com_kunena&func=view&catid=26&id=51048&Itemid=100079

Metrorail, the commuter train operator, offered free transportation for ticket holders. Heading to Park Station in the centre to catch the train for the Ghana v Uruguay quarter final, it quickly became apparent that the capacity of the car park was woefully inadequate, forcing fans to park on the streets. This prospect would usually be met with apprehension and in some cases outright refusal for fear of being mugged or having their car stolen but the World Cup had dampened such attitudes. Watching throngs of people from across the spectrum of race, class and gender walking the streets of the CBD at night, talking and laughing was in contrast to everyday occurrences; people were happy enough to leave their cars while the informal car guards profited from it. Furthermore, it was rare to see white and Indian middle class fans using this form of transport regularly used by the black working class to commute from the township to work. This pattern continued throughout the tournament. For instance, I encountered Tom by chance exiting the train at Soccer City for the quarter final, a sight that had admittedly surprised me. Similarly, in conversation with Eric and Darren post-tournament, we discussed how middle class football fans were re-engaging with Johannesburg in a way that would have been virtually unheard of only a few months previously; taking the trains, minibus taxis and buses to the stadium.

However, underneath the euphoria and rhetoric of unity lay processes of exclusion. As I attended seven World Cup matches, it was immediately apparent that many of the usual domestic soccer supporters were absent. Although FIFA had earmarked a number of tickets exclusively for South African residents at a reduced rate, it seemed that few were going to who they were aimed at. Category four tickets for group games cost R140. As a soccer-supporting Englishman, I was envious of those who had these 'cheap' tickets. However, after various discussions with the Kaizer Chiefs respondents, it transpired that few of them had tickets to matches. While R140 seemed cheap to me, it was still a large sum of money for many of them. Furthermore, most did not understand the ticket application process. While the most convenient method of application was online, the vast majority of

my Chiefs informants did not have internet facilities at home, although a few did have at work. Even with such access, virtually none had a credit card, which was vital for the process. This meant that they were limited to applying in person at branches of First National Bank, an official sponsor of the tournament. The problem with this was threefold. Firstly, the application booklet was in English only. The legalese of the small print at times baffled myself, a native English speaker, yet English was the second, third or at times even the fourth language for these fans. Secondly, the computer system crashed on numerous occasions, frustrating applicants. Finally, these fans found the concept of an application process alien to them as opposed to ticket available over the counter or at the gate on match day. Some did attend games, although this was in spite of the system. For example, Nelson was given a ticket for the second round match between Argentina and Mexico by his workplace. However, he was disappointed as he was expecting the company to have provided more tickets for their workers. Thabo, who had struggled to afford to go to Chiefs games, was given a ticket for a group game by his cousin while Robert had been given a semi-final ticket by a group of foreign tourists who he had been driving around the country. Noticeably, Bernard had won multiple tickets in a competition organised by one of the tournament sponsors and so he and his girlfriend attended plenty of matches but most were consigned to watch the games on television or occasionally in the fan parks. Conversely, most Manchester United supporters had personal internet access and credit cards. While a few such as George made the choice not to attend games, many spent thousands of rand buying tickets and some tens of thousands. While travelling to Nelspruit with Tom and Andy of the United supporters' club to watch Australia v Nelspruit, it transpired that Andy had bought a ticket package that included a match in each knockout round, including the final. Such packages ranged between R3,350 and R19,096. Both Tom and Darren had gotten final tickets through corporate means. Ticket prices were not the only prohibitive factor. Not only was this far more expensive than the usual price for most domestic club games and Bafana games prior to 2010 (R20-30), the cost of the whole outing became prohibitive for many.

Within the stadium, the concessions and merchandise were far more expensive than in the local game. Beer was R30 for something that would cost R10-15 in a tavern or shebeen, while food items such as hot dogs were R20. The match day experience became one in which only those with sufficient disposable income could take advantage of.

Lacking many regular South African soccer fans, the matchday experience also lacked authentic local flavour. The local hawkers and traders, a common sight at the domestic game, were absent or obscured at World Cup matches. The hotdogs and other mass-produced snacks emphasised the absence of pap and steak or chicken commonly sold at the domestic game. The match day experience had been sanitised and monopolised by FIFA, allowing only official merchandise and vendors within the perimeter of the stadium precinct to protect the investment of the tournament's major sponsors. This disenfranchised local vendors who believed that the World Cup was their opportunity to make money but had become disillusioned and had directly affected some of the Chiefs supporters' club members. During a conversation with the branch chairman, such frustration became apparent when he asked me how much vendors were selling pap for. When I told him that no-one was, he responded thusly:

Nelson: "But this is South Africa! They must have pap there! Why is there no pap?"

Marc: "Because only sponsors' products are allowed".

Nelson: "But this could be Brazil or Germany or anywhere!"⁶⁵

Nelson and his partner had a food stall just outside the perimeter of Ellis Park stadium for the duration of the tournament. They regularly lamented that they were making little profit, believing that tourists were unwilling to try local cuisine. The cost of renting the equipment severely ate into their margins. The major gripe was that they were unable to charge what they wanted. On several occasions when I went to such stalls, the vendors often claimed that FIFA were controlling prices.

⁶⁵ Entry in research blog, 18/06/2010.

Similarly, the disappointment felt here was apparent in home owners who had spent their savings in renovating their homes in the belief that European tourists would stay there and pay premium prices. I was shown around the home of one of the Chiefs' respondents in Naturena, Soweto. I was told that they had been instructed by Match, FIFA's hospitality arm,⁶⁶ to make numerous improvements, from installing a security system to buying new linen, crockery and cutlery. Furthermore, she explained how Match had told her to go on a hospitality course at her own expense to learn how to make a cappuccino, amongst other things. Having spent thousands of rand on such improvements (she declined to tell me how much), she had not heard from FIFA whether she had been allocated a foreign visitor to host. This was with just a week to the beginning of the tournament. Other Chiefs supporters had painted their rooms and bought new furnishings in the hope that they could make money but most were left disappointed. These people had refused to sign up with Match to advertise their properties to foreign tourists because of what they saw as high fees and unfair conditions, thus limiting their chances of getting guests. Irvin Khoza, the chairman of the tournament's organising committee, had claimed that the World Cup was for "*all of the 44 million South Africans*".⁶⁷ However, the giant image of Cristiano Ronaldo emblazoned on the side of a tower overlooking the public viewing area in central Johannesburg served as a constant reminder of the corporatisation of the tournament, to the detriment of the local entrepreneur.

While at one level, attitudes towards the city had changed, this had taken place within sanitised spaces. Although middle class fans had re-engaged with the city, this had only happened under certain conditions including the visible police presence on the streets and in the stadiums. Furthermore, the fact that it was a FIFA-organised tournament helped to disassociate itself from the perceived allegations of

⁶⁶ Entry in research diary, 29/05/2010.

⁶⁷ FIFA.com, "President Mbeki: In 2010, We Will Win in Africa with Africa," <http://www.fifa.com/worldcup/archive/southafrica2010/organisation/media/newsid=106910/index.html>.

corruption and disorganisation in domestic soccer, despite subsequent allegations. On reflection, attitudes towards the city had been reinforced, not changed. The movement of people during the tournament was compartmentalised, not fluid. Tourists were taken from their accommodation to the match and back again, driving through the city but unable to interact with it. Walking the streets of Joubert Park and Doornfontein just east of the CBD and heading to Ellis Park Stadium for the Spain v Paraguay quarter final, the atmosphere was eerily empty. This was a World Cup quarter final but it was difficult to tell. No crowds of people were making their way to the stadium, no build-up of anticipation. This encapsulated life in Johannesburg, where the streets are empty in the darkness, people afraid of leaving the 'safety' of their homes. The park and ride buses took fans close to the stadium, bypassing the inner city; the Park & Walk locations were even worse still. On several occasions when talking with a variety of European fans, they were baffled about the disjointed nature of the World Cup experience. I had intended to watch the final on the big screen erected at Melrose Arch in the northern suburbs. Set behind huge walls and numerous electric fences, it aims to recreate the feeling of a cosmopolitan town centre with restaurants and shops lining the streets. It is in essence a town within a city. The marketing claims "*Open spaces replace the cage and cocoon. Life pulsates on the streets once again*".⁶⁸ Yet the cage is still there, just not so readily apparent. Its fortifications prevent the surrounding city from encroaching; its street life accessible only to the socially mobile middle classes with plenty of disposable income. On the afternoon of the final, Melrose Arch was full of a mixture of tourists and well-heeled South Africans enjoying the build-up, removed from the rest of city life. Just because the middle class were using taxis and trains did not mean that this would become entrenched as part of their everyday lives. The Metrorail network served the southern half of the city, specifically the poorer suburbs and townships and therefore had little relevance to those who lived and worked in the more affluent northern suburbs. The juxtaposition of soccer stadium and informal settlement was a reminder that very little had fundamentally changed.

⁶⁸ Entry in research blog, 12/07/2010.

The search for a social cohesion in the World Cup was very much a middle class agenda, a feel-good device that allowed these people behind their high walls and fences to wave their flags and be proudly South African, yet it was questionable whether township inhabitants were as eager to find this paper-thin unity or whether there were more pressing, day-to-day concerns.

While the World Cup had transformed attitudes towards the city and how people moved around it to a limited extent, it was questionable as to what the flag waving meant to these fans. Aside from the numerous South African flags flying from buildings and cars, there were also a significant number of European flags on cars alongside South African ones. This dual nationality approach had received criticism from the Johannesburg press. Notably, one opinion piece in the Mail and Guardian scathingly attacked such a white, middle class 'disloyalty' to the nation:

"Look at the flags, our limp attempt at nationhood, stuck on cars... A lot of whites have two flags on their cars... their heads sensibly in Africa, where they enjoy a first-world lifestyle at cut-rate third-world prices and their hearts in the land of their ancestors".⁶⁹

The author later contrasted this group of people to black South Africans who "*don't really have cars*"⁷⁰ to fly flags from. The common sight of car wing mirrors covered in different flags, especially the England/ South Africa combination, reinforced what I have argued earlier in the chapter. In terms of soccer at least, white middle class fans often looked towards Europe to find 'their team', once Bafana had been dumped out of the competition. In the knockout phase, those South Africans with sufficient disposable income to attend these games made up a large number of fans in the stadiums. For instance, at the Spain v Paraguay, virtually all the crowd were dressed in Spain shirts and flags but the national anthem was eerily silent. Within the United supporters, tensions within the group surrounding ideas of multiple national identities and the support of Bafana were

⁶⁹ 'Rainbow-nation Patriotism, pah!'. Mail & Guardian, 18/06/2010.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

regularly articulated on the online forum. For instance, this excerpt from a much wider dialogue illustrates the arguments over who was a 'real' Bafana supporter.

Mark: "We all know Bafana are not 'that' good, but we [*South Africans*] are always gonna be proud to support them".

Ashley: "You're suggesting here that all South Africans will always support Bafana and that's just plain and simply not true. As soon as they're knocked out, no one beyond the hardcore that watch them all the time will give a toss about... that's not patriotism, that's choosing to act patriotic when it suits you".⁷¹

A small number of United supporters claimed to be 'big' Bafana supporters, in similar proportion to those who had in the interview process. However, Mark's dialogue was evidence that the euphoria surrounding Bafana was affecting perceptions of the national team. Yet this shift was temporary. For instance, Tom repeatedly likened the tournament to a party⁷² and while he wanted Bafana to do well, it was Italy's failure to progress beyond the first round that had really affected him. Even at the height of the national euphoria during the World Cup, Bafana had limited significance to the United supporters.

Flag waving served as a divisive issue as much as a unifying one. The Football Friday initiative created by the Southern Sun hotel chain and subsequently endorsed by the organising committee, which encouraged all South Africans to wear their Bafana jerseys to work on Fridays leading up to the World Cup was designed to foster a nationwide support for Bafana but paradoxically reinforced divisions. Adidas, the official kit manufacturer of Bafana, had released three 'levels' of replica Bafana shirts. The cheapest, at R300, was devoid of both the SAFA logo and the national emblem of the Protea; the middle level retailed at R600, which

⁷¹ 'Soccer City'. S.A. Reds: Manchester United Supporters' Club of South Africa – SA Reds Forum.

http://www.manutd.co.za/index.php?option=com_kunena&func=view&catid=26&id=50598&limit=20&limitstart=20&Itemid=100079

⁷² 'Bafana Bafana'. S.A. Reds: Manchester United Supporters' Club of South Africa – SA Reds Forum.

http://www.manutd.co.za/index.php?option=com_kunena&func=view&catid=26&id=51222&Itemid=100079

incorporated the SAFA logo; the 'full' shirt cost a prohibitive R1000. While Linda and Bernard took pride in their official Bafana shirts, Nelson complained that he not afford such a shirt. Football Fridays equated being a good South African with wearing the national shirt yet if this was the case, this would have questioned the national credentials of a large number of South African domestic soccer-goers. A year previously, Nelson himself had asserted that one of the hallmarks of a 'true' supporter was to wear the official merchandise; "*I must have it as a soccer supporter. You know it's very funny Marc if you haven't got your own country's jersey*".⁷³ Being a good South African was reconstructed along middle class lines. Those who could not afford these shirts often turned to fake, *fong kong* shirts to show their patriotism but it created a perception of a second, lower tier of patriotic supporter. However, this is not to say that those who could afford to bought the official shirt. For some, authenticity was not important, choosing pirated copies instead. I gained an insight into this when I spent one morning with a black marketeer shortly before the tournament. There was a steady flow of white, middle class people who wanted to place bulk orders for Bafana shirts and when the trader told them that they were fakes, the customers were more concerned about the price than the shirts.

Even if the hyper flag-waving of the World Cup had brought South Africans together for brief moments, the acid test for such a sporting unity was to be in the major sports events post-tournament. Standing in the Soweto fan park in the build-up to the opening game, Gilbert, one of the Chiefs supporters who had travelled with me to the park marvelled at the number of white people in the township, something which had clearly taken him by surprise. However, his optimism was tempered by an insightful observation when he said "*I wish the whole nation could be here after*";⁷⁴ referring to life post-tournament. Soon after the tournament ended, "Football Fridays" were recast as "Fly the Flag Fridays", designed to celebrate South Africa's successful hosting of the event although this had visibly fizzled out almost

⁷³ Author interview with 'Nelson' (Chiefs), 12/01/2009.

⁷⁴ Entry in research blog, 12/06/2009.

immediately. The number of Bafana shirts that I saw worn on these days were notably less than in the frenzied build-up to the competition. Street traders and hawkers were left with an abundance of Bafana shirts and South African flags that they were unable to sell, even at vastly reduced prices. Newspapers and billboards were saturated with self-congratulatory messages such as “*We’ve shown the world what a nation united can do*”⁷⁵ and “*This is the greatest country in the world*”.⁷⁶ Attention changed to whether a post-World Cup national unity could be sustained. Two key football events in the immediate aftermath of the World Cup suggested that the Johannesburg soccer landscape had altered very little: the Telkom Charity Cup and the Bafana v Ghana international friendly, both at Soccer City.

The Charity Cup, the annual curtain raiser to the domestic football season featuring four club sides (Kaizer Chiefs, Orlando Pirates, Mamelodi Sundowns and Amazulu), broke the attendance record set during the World Cup, with 87,001 fans. This tournament was the litmus test for whether the World Cup had challenged the perceptions of the domestic game held by those football fans who stayed away from it; it did not appear so. The Premier Soccer League had catered for these new fans with an allocation of tickets for a self-contained family zone separated from the commotion of the rest of the stadium. The ‘Rainbow Nation’ on display in the stadiums during the World Cup was conspicuously absent. At first glance, there were few white, Indian and coloured fans there; the usual constituency of black, working class fans were back with their unconventional costumes, elaborate *makarapas* and banners. Trapped in the unruly crowd at the bar, one fan claimed that now the World Cup was over, the football authorities were “*treating us blacks bad*”.⁷⁷ Throughout the day, other fans came to me to say how happy they were that “whiteys” had come to watch “our” football but there were too few. The Bafana v Ghana friendly provided further opportunity to continue the national feel-good effect of the World Cup but it had sabotaged itself from the outset. While Bafana

⁷⁵ ABSA advert, Sunday Times, 11/07/2010.

⁷⁶ First National Bank advert, Sunday Times, 11/07/2010.

⁷⁷ Entry in research diary, 08/08/2010.

tickets had already been inflated to R40-50 in the build-up to the World Cup, the South African Football Association had decided to raise tickets prices to R100, thereby excluding many usual supporters from attending with many choosing to watch it in the warmth of their own homes. The stadium was half-empty, which deadened the atmosphere. The national anthems were played through speakers on the pitch rather than through the stadium's audio setup; a quiet and electronically generated backing track facilitated a limp and lifeless rendition. Although Bafana won 1-0, the goal was a rare bit of excitement in a dull affair; the cold wind dampening the enthusiasm of the crowd. Walking back to the car, the enthusiasm and optimism of the World Cup had disappeared. Before leaving South Africa for the last time, I had the opportunity to attend a branch meeting for both the United and Chiefs supporters' clubs. In both instances, there was little talk about the World Cup, as if it was already a footnote in history.

Conclusion

Attitudes towards Bafana followed the racial divisions division that characterised the Johannesburg soccerscape. The fractured soccerscape of the city imposed barriers and restricted 'the need' to want to support Bafana. The ever-present spectres of crime and security lurked in the minds of the United supporters, who continuously compared the 'unsafe' local arena with the 'safe' space of European soccer while their self-removal from the domestic game had impeded their ability to form connections with the national side as they had a lack of knowledge about the players, being more familiar with the global superstars of European and South American teams. Bafana represented the negative aspects of South Africa for the majority of these supporters, if it represented anything for them at all. Perceptions of political interference combined with a lack of white players in the squad served to distance themselves from the national team. Conversely, the Chiefs supporters saw Bafana as 'their' team; some perceiving the question to be redundant. Yet apathy surrounding the national side was not constrained by these boundaries. A team in

the grip of a consistent decline had made soccer supporters embarrassed rather than proud.

The World Cup offered the potential for new shifts in the terrain of Johannesburg soccer fandom. For a brief moment, the nationwide euphoria that had washed over South Africa during the World Cup had transformed indifference towards Bafana into an intense support for 'our boys', regardless of race or class. In some respects, the realities of everyday existence in the city were momentarily suspended as areas formerly seen as no-go areas by middle class soccer supporters became open to them. Yet, the legacies of such sports mega-events that remain for years afterwards often emphasise themes of exclusion and marginalisation. Whitson and Horne argue that the 1998 Winter Olympics and the 2002 FIFA World Cup in Japan left the country few tangible benefits, which included a "*rarely used bob sled track*".⁷⁸ Similarly, the euphoria in Johannesburg quickly faded while ongoing processes of exclusion, which perpetuated the divisions in the Johannesburg soccerscape. Supporting Bafana fully became interpreted in terms of consumption; buying the replica shirt and waving the flag. The Bafana nation was inscribed along middle class lines with those who could not afford to be pushed to the margins. Once the euphoria had dissipated, the limitations of Bafana as a nation-building focus became apparent once again, something which looks unlikely to change in the future.

⁷⁸ David Whitson and John Horne, "Underestimated Costs and Overestimated Benefits? Comparing the Outcomes of Sports Mega-Events in Canada and Japan," *The Sociological Review* 54, no. s2 (2006): 75.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION: SOCCER, RACE AND THE RAINBOW NATION

In concluding, it is pertinent to first return to the moment in which race and class divisions were initially intensified, the 2008 Vodacom Challenge. The tournament brought soccer supporters from across such divides together in the stadiums, where they encountered different styles of supporting. It was apparent that there were race and class cleavages running through soccer spectatorship; Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates supporters were predominantly black while the Manchester United supporters were often white, coloured or Indian. These divisions were not neat boundaries that all the supporters slotted into. There were those who did not conform to such conventional wisdom; black Manchester United fans and white Kaizer Chiefs fans were also present. Class divisions, while tied in with the racial barriers, were equally evident. The display of wealth through replica shirts, expensive cellphones and the costliest tickets for the match also framed support for United as a signifier of social mobility. In contrast, the homemade outfits, pirated team jerseys and the use of minibus taxis to get to the game indicated a different class base. As with race, this division was not that orderly.

However, supporters of both teams were interacting in a space where this would not often occur. Although the tournament highlighted and reinforced themes of division, segregation and difference, it was also where disparate groups of supporters engaged with the domestic soccer stadium in alternative ways. Communicating with and socialising between the fans offered up breaks within the terrain of soccer supportership, which allowed opportunities to enquire and understand fandom as something more than simply divided. 'Talking soccer' with different fans had the potential to shift perceptions and create new understandings of the domestic game, yet if this happened, then it was only a temporary shift. Claims of a black 'ownership' of domestic soccer were made by the Chiefs

supporters after leaving Newlands stadium; assertions of disinterest in the local game made by the United supporters. The continued importance of race in South African soccer fandom contradicted calls for national unity in supporting Bafana Bafana in the 2010 World Cup. These calls ignored both race and class divides in fandom, yet offered possible opportunities where soccer supporters could engage with the other beyond the boundaries of race and class. Similarly, the 'rainbow' characteristic of post-apartheid South African national rhetoric eschewed racial discourse, but at the same time reified racial identities. Shifts in the soccer landscape during the World Cup were only temporary; the realities of race and class in everyday life remained.

Sport, Gramsci, and the Everyday

Sport is not merely competition between athletes at their physical peak, nor is it simple leisure activity that people engage in as a break from their lives. This thesis has established that sport matters to people. This is something that is slowly being acknowledged by scholars and needs to be capitalised on. For example, after the World Cup, Nauright wrote:

“The recent World Cup has focused international attention, scholarly and otherwise on South Africa and its sporting cultures. However it is up to scholars... to build on this impetus and continue to expand our understanding of the role of sport in South Africa”.¹

Similarly, sports fandom is not simply a combination of flag waving, badge wearing and anthem singing. The claims from South African political and sporting elites that soccer could bring South Africans together restricted their definition of a South African identity to the concept of 'getting behind the boys'. Imposing such an identity left little room to acknowledge the complexities of South African soccer as a space where race and class divisions were both reinforced and contested. However,

¹ John Nauright, "Epilogue: Making New Histories of Sport in South Africa," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no. 1 (2011): 184.

South African soccer fandom is also not merely a site of resistance and protest outside of traditional power structures. Referring back to Coplan and Diouf respectively in chapter two, there are aspects of the Johannesburg soccer landscape that are spaces of defiance and escape discussed in chapter five. For supporters such as Nelson living in rural areas in the 1970s, listening to Kaizer Chiefs matches on the radio and cutting out pictures of players from soap boxes were forms of escape from their everyday lives on the margins. More recently, supporters such as Thabo, Jimmy and Arthur can comparably be viewed as using their support of Chiefs to escape the realities of their everyday lives. For instance, living with his family in one room of a cramped house could be temporarily forgotten through the drinking, singing and dancing in the exciting and dynamic environment of a Chiefs match. Furthermore, United supporters could also be understood as using their team as a means of escaping feelings of marginalisation. Despite remaining rooted in South Africa, supporting an English team in a northern suburbs bar or their own homes removed them from the domestic game, which was often perceived as a black cultural space.

Nonetheless, sport, and in this case soccer, is not simply a case of flag-waving and anthem singing, but nor is it purely a site of struggle. The move in popular culture studies to employing Gramscian ideas of hegemony and the shift in sports sociology from the structure/ agency binary moves sport from a study in microcosm to a study embedded in wider everyday life. From this, studying sport is not inward-looking, studying sport for the sake of sport, but becomes a lens for which to explore and generalise about wider everyday life and social issues. The utilisation of Gramsci and Giddens additionally transforms the perception that popular culture and sport can be used as mirror on society. Sport does not merely reflect the identities of the fans and supporters; it is where these identities actively reified. For the three Manchester United supporters that attended the Soweto Derby, they were not using this opportunity to actively challenge the divisions in the soccer landscape, nor were the Kaizer Chiefs supporters who wanted to attract more

'whiteys' to their branch doing so primarily to contest such boundaries. Through the lens of popular culture, sport is embedded in the wider society in which it is located. Rather than as a mode of escapism, where everyday life is put to one side for the ninety minutes of a soccer match, everyday happenings shape how fans and supporters experience sport. Referring once more to the Soweto Derby, the perspectives of both the United and Chiefs supporters were shaped by how they engaged with the city. Although excited about experiencing such a game, concerns voiced before and after fed into a wider discourse of white fear and marginalisation. Concurrently, engaging with the domestic game and stadium was not a suspension of how these United supporters perceived the city but created opportunities for reinterpretation and recoding. The refusal of other United supporters to accept the offer watching the game was not simply a case of a fixture clash, but concerns over their possessions and personal safety on entering such a space. Nonetheless, if sport is embedded in the everyday lives of these supporters, the experiences of the United supporters at the Soweto Derby would also seep into daily life. Although they did not return do the domestic game during the fieldwork, the willingness to return indicated a reappraisal of the domestic soccer game as an unsafe space, and 'not for them'. The surprise of Denis's black work colleagues when he showed them evidence that he had been at the game indicated that perceptions, albeit on a localised level, were being contested.

Employing Gramsci and a popular culture studies approach has ramifications on the study of sport in Africa. In expanding the understanding of the role of sport in South Africa, this thesis provides a rare collection of ethnographic data on sports fandom in South Africa and the wider African context, especially when compared to scholarship on European sport. In answering Vidacs's call for an ethnographic approach to sport in Africa, it moves beyond conceptualising African sport in terms of politics, policy and economics. This is not to say that academic enquiry into African sport should eschew such perspectives. Instead, this compliments such approaches, building a more comprehensive, wide-reaching

understanding of the role of sport in the African context. Yet, through the embedding of sport in everyday life, the voices of fans are being heard. The Foucauldian concept that the book is more than an object holds great relevance here. The study of sport in Africa, and in the wider global sense, is more than simply the production of a text. Locating sport in the cultures and societies that it is rooted in breaks through ideas of sport as a static reflection, and instead can capture dynamics of flux, ambiguity and temporality.

Appropriating popular culture studies' turn to Gramsci also opens up sport beyond the study of sports mega-events, globalisation and the politics of sport. Ndlovu-Gatsheni laments what he sees as "*the seemingly popular topic for researchers of the political economy of mega-stadiums and the concomitant theme of the potential economic development brought about by mega-sporting events*".² What this thesis shows is that an event such as the World Cup is more than just a mega-event but a piece in a much wider tapestry of sport and the meanings people derive from it. Similarly, the study of South African soccer has to be more than the World Cup, its build-up and fallout. Although this thesis has encompassed the World Cup, it provides a segment of much larger sporting whole. Such a tournament has to be rooted in the wider sporting history of where it is located, which, in turn, needs to be embedded in the everyday lives of the fans and supporters. Furthermore, the study of soccer, and sport in general, is not just the game itself. Although a focus on the twenty two players on the soccer pitch and the fans watching in the stadium, in the bar or at home can reveal fascinating insights about sport, this happens within wider everyday life. The realisation during the fieldwork that the soccer game was a secondary research site to interacting with respondents in their homes, at their workplaces, or during non-soccer leisure time reinforced the argument that the study of sport should not be purely focused on the sport itself.

² Sabelo J Ndlovu-Gatsheni, "The World Cup, Vuvuzelas, Flag-Waving Patriots and the Burden of Building South Africa," *Third World Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2011): 283.

Such a focus on major sporting events, teams and politics has often marginalised fans in scholarly enquiry. Thus, omitting fandom from scholarship on African sport relegates them to passive units, consuming sport and its vast array of symbolism. Instead, through employing the theoretical perspective of this thesis to wider African sports fandom would bring out more voices of those supporters across the continent. Without greater social science enquiry into African sports fandom, journalistic accounts will remain prevalent. As mentioned in chapter two, Zambia's African Nations Cup victory in 2012 has been framed as a national fairy tale but this creates a plethora of questions that cannot be answered without considering the fans and supporters of the team. Assuming that the national team has the nation behind them, what does this victory mean to them as Zambians? Are they interested? What effect does the win have on their everyday lives, if any? There is much left uncharted in terms of sports studies in the wider African context but this thesis is a beginning in answering such questions.

Creolisation, taste and popular culture

If utilising Gramsci is a proverbial crowbar to prise apart the structure/ agency dichotomy, Nuttall and Michael's employment of creolisation can be employed in a similar way to break the race/ class binary that has characterised the study of identities in South Africa. Through, embedding sport in everyday life allows openings into broader questions of identity in South Africa. Wasserman and Jacobs critique of the creolisation approach to identity in post-apartheid South Africa holds salience in the Johannesburg soccer landscape. It is difficult to conceive everyday life in the city for these supporters without recognising how race and class cleavages continue to shape their lives. The initial observations made at the Vodacom Challenge held weight throughout much of the Johannesburg soccer landscape. Responses from fans to my presence at these games signalled the infrequent sight of a white man in these spaces. The desire of the Chiefs supporters to have their photo taken with me to capture the moment and the worry expressed by the United

supporters over my regular encounters with domestic soccer reinforced racial divisions.

Racial divisions still impact on the choice of team to support, be it domestic or foreign. The unwillingness of many of the United supporters to attend a live domestic game was often articulated in terms of racial difference, not wanting to stand out in the crowd. Fear of crime at the games fed into a wider discourse of fear in the city; such a discourse held racial undertones. Recollections of watching the white-run NFL and the collapse of the league further revealed these tensions as the white supporters began to feel threatened, unsafe and retreated from the domestic game. In contrast, the surprised reaction of the Chiefs supporters to have a white member in their group emphasised the limited racial mixing in social interaction. Both the Chiefs and United supporters' clubs inhabited different parts of the city, both in work and home; the Chiefs supporters in the urban decay of the central areas, the United supporters in the leafy middle class suburbs. Mapping race onto the soccer landscape in the city would indicate distance between these groups. Furthermore, Wits could be viewed as anomalous in an otherwise racially divided soccer fandom.

However, to accept this would be to accept the liberal/ plural approach to identity, which has long been discredited. To view the Johannesburg soccer landscape purely as racially divided would be to see these groups of soccer supporters as homogenous entities in opposition to each other. Drawing from van den Berghe in chapter three, any interaction between these groups would be articulated in terms of conflict and tension. While such tensions based on race emerge throughout the research, this is not the only process happening. In response to Seekings and Natrass's concerns that class has been overlooked in recent academic investigation on identity in South Africa, class and soccer has a dynamic relationship in Johannesburg. Supporting Manchester United became a signifier of social mobility; access to satellite television, official merchandise and annual trips to

Old Trafford displays of wealth that the Chiefs supporters did not have. The presence of black, middle class Manchester United supporters in the organisation was further evidence that class dynamics existed, which a pluralist perspective would overlook. Class divisions also occurred within the Chiefs supporters' club between those who could afford the replica shirt and travel to watch Chiefs play across the country as opposed to those who couldn't. Nonetheless, although a class-based perspective could explain the presence of Wayne and Peter crossing supposedly immutable racial barriers, it too would obscure other processes. Similar to Bozzoli's critique of the Marxist paradigm, social class conceals a multiplicity of non-class identities.

Creolisation offers a path beyond the megaliths of race and class that dominate investigation into identities in South Africa. Through this lens, identities are destabilised. Nuttall's 'conscious and unconscious' entanglements provide breaks in Johannesburg soccer fandom through which division and difference are not the only processes at work. Bidvest Wits provides a unique space in which fans from different backgrounds could interact while watching the game. Unlike watching the vast majority of Chiefs games, it would be far harder to claim that Wits matches were a black cultural space. Rather than viewing Wits as on a racial fault line in the city, these lines were at times hazy. Fans connected and collided with each other beyond the boundaries of the domestic game in Johannesburg.

Interest from some of the United supporters in experiencing the domestic game combined with excitement from the Chiefs supporters that they were able to connect with soccer supporters beyond the boundaries of Johannesburg soccer fandom was evidence that these people wanted to interact with their surrounds in ways that did not necessarily fit with these divisions. The Soweto Derby in May 2009 further illustrated these interactions. Moments interspersed throughout the game broke through these barriers such as Chiefs equalising goal. Hugging, cheering and then analysing the passage of play, white and black, middle class and

working class fans connected as soccer supporters. Understanding domestic soccer as a black space, and in turn, European soccer as white, becomes insufficient. Both sets of supporters engage with Appadurai's global flows. Creolisation is both uneven and unstable; the Chiefs supporters often found themselves on the margins of these flows due to a lack of material resources, similar to Dolby's poor students. Following Manchester United was restricted because of this, yet they could still engage with global fandom. The World Cup brought these global flows to the doorstep of these supporters; the skills of global superstars such as Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi were able to be witnessed live. In Johannesburg, the tournament connected white, Indian and coloured middle class soccer fans to the city in new ways; fear had been replaced with optimism. These fans were using public transport to take them to places such as Soccer City in Soweto and travelling, sometimes walking, through what were previously 'no-go' areas in the CBD. The euphoric moment of Bafana's first goal in the tournament cannot simply be discounted. Fans at the fan parks in Soweto, Sandton and the CBD were cheering for the same team in this moment, the divided soccer landscape somehow forgotten.

Still, this thesis shows that creolisation is incomplete and transient. For the three United supporters who went to Pirates v Chiefs in May 2009, the experience had been exhilarating but this had been a single soccer game. Although interviews revealed that they would be willing to attend further games, this did not materialise. The matchday experience itself had reified race and class barriers. The Chiefs supporters wanted to use me to attract more 'whiteys'; as such, the whiteness of the three United supporters was utilised to advertise the branch. Similarly, the choice of using the park and ride service rather than travelling with the Chiefs supporters, bypassed the inner city, partially sanitising the experience. Match day at Wits similarly reinforced divisions. A mixed-race fan base did not automatically mean soccer supporters engaging beyond the boundaries of Johannesburg soccer fandom. It was a common sight to see clusters of fans in the ground comprised of a single racial group. Participation was uneven as well, as when white fans looked on

in bemusement at fans singing in isiZulu and Sesotho, unable to join in. The transformation of the soccer scene during the World Cup was bound by exclusionary processes. Expensive tickets and merchandise meant that the majority of Chiefs supporters were again on the margins as they could not afford to buy tickets. As with the United supporters at the Soweto Derby, middle class fans' experience of the Johannesburg soccer scene was sanitised. Post-tournament, it appeared that little had changed in soccer fandom. Using both creolisation and taste to move beyond the race/ class dichotomy reinforces it. Although creolisation and taste destabilises identities, the instability is also a weakness. The temporality of boundary crossing in Johannesburg soccer fandom cannot escape the realities of racial division and difference in everyday life. Creolisation is still bound by the salience of race and class in post-apartheid South Africa.

This is not surprising considering that democratic South Africa is still in its relative infancy. Attempts to rectify the injustices of the past through policies such as black economic empowerment continue to reinforce race as a key marker of identity. As Hammett states, "*race remains a crux issue in the nation-building project*"³ and does not appear to be diminishing. Significant flashpoints during the World Cup year served as reminders that racial divisions continue to scar the country. The murder of Eugene Terre'blanche, the leader of the far right Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) by black farmhands in early 2010 "*threatened to provoke the unrepentant Afrikaners into committing racial violence*".⁴ The furore surrounding the leader of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), Julius Malema, when he publicly sang the liberation song 'Shoot the Boer'⁵ became another flashpoint of racial rhetoric. The everyday articulation of race in South Africa is widespread, on television, in newspapers and through the daily social interaction of people at home, work and leisure. Nonetheless, as Dolby earlier argued, race is not

³ Daniel Hammett, "Zapiro and Zuma: A Symptom of an Emerging Constitutional Crisis," *Political Geography* 29, no. 2 (2010): 91.

⁴ Ndlovu-Gatsheni, "The World Cup, Vuvuzelas, Flag-Waving Patriots and the Burden of Building South Africa," 281.

⁵ Boer is Afrikaans for farmer

bound to cultural absolutes. It is insufficient to see soccer, Johannesburg and South Africa in terms of division alone. Creolisation maybe an imperfect tool to understand identity in South Africa but it does serve as a means by which the researcher can uncover other processes and move beyond static dichotomies. As in chapter three, Johannesburg is more than a collection of barriers and divisions. While electric fences, razor wire and security guards are common aspects of daily life in the city, these alone do not characterise it. Reflecting on Simone and Mbembe's thoughts on alternative understandings of the city, the study of Johannesburg soccer fandom provided examples of a dynamic environment where divisions were altered, crossed or temporarily forgotten. Future research on South Africa needs to move beyond the concept of a divided society.

Rainbowism, creolisation and national identity

The utilisation of creolisation as a theoretical lens view South Africa therefore has major implications on the characteristics of South African national identity and the discourse of Rainbowism. Chapter three argued that the fluidity of and breaks within creolisation stand in contrast to the fixed categories of Rainbowism. Constructing South Africa as the 'Rainbow Nation' has reinforced apartheid racial categorisation rather moving beyond them. In that chapter, Steyn's argument that Rainbowism helps white South Africans avoid having to confront issues of privilege, combined with Gqola's silences within the discourse, reveal the 'polite proximities' within the nation that Nuttall and Michael had identified. The focus on the World Cup in chapter seven concludes with a pessimistic outlook that appears to underpin such silences and distance through processes of marginalisation and exclusion. The sporting and political elites that Cornelissen and Swart identified in chapter two equated being a good South African to wearing official merchandise, waving flags and blowing *vuuzelas* denied, not critiquing and emphasising the silences. Television and newspaper images of white, black, coloured and Indian soccer fans in national colours omitted the reality that this national euphoria

masked class divisions. The silences echoed through how middle class soccer fans engaged with the city, through sanitised ways, be it bypassing the inner city on the park and ride buses and trains, the commercialised environment of the World Cup stadium, or watching the games in 'safe' venues such as Melrose Arch.

Based on this, the choice of Bafana Bafana as the sports team to galvanise would appear to entrench a divided soccer landscape, and a wider, divided society. With little prior knowledge of the team or its players, the majority of Manchester United supporters were able to lay a claim to supporting the team. However, such a weak connection was easily broken when Bafana was knocked out of the World Cup and these supporters were able to revert back to their earlier articulated allegiances. Akin to Durkheim's totems, flag waving had acted as similar symbols, but these symbols were interpreted very differently according to the differing experiences of the city, the soccer landscape, and the country. As such, a South African community imagined during the World Cup is polyvalent. Referring back to Cohen's call for a personal nationalism in chapter two, if the national symbols of the nation were substantiated through personal experiences and these experiences are of division and differences, it is unsurprising that a South African national identity would mean very different things to members of the cases studies. The weakness of Bafana as a unifying force post-World Cup was demonstrated in the relative apathy towards the national team in the friendly match against Ghana.

Thus, Chipkin's question remains unanswered. If the rainbow discourse is the hegemonic national discourse in South Africa, it is difficult to see what someone from Soweto would have in common with someone from Sandton other than waving the same flag. Although this thesis has sought to move away from race and class as the key defining markers of identity in South Africa, it is evident that they still remain megalithic. Yet, despite the reinforcing of the silences and polite proximities of Rainbowism, it is insufficient to leave the conclusion at this point. Within the static racial categorisation of the discourse, alternative encounters and

understandings emerged, albeit intermittently, unevenly and sporadically. It is not the conclusion of the thesis that creolising processes have replaced race and class, but the lens of creolisation reveals more fluid and dynamic constructions of identity than the discourse of Rainbowism suggests.

For some of the Chiefs and United supporters, the World Cup un-silenced the silences of Rainbowism. Of the United supporters, Eric and Darren's respective conversations regarding the middle class engagement with soccer during the tournament glossing over the marginalisation of poorer South Africans was indicative of an awareness of the limitations of the Rainbow Nation. Likewise, Tom's admission that he saw the World Cup as little more than a party also revealed the unwillingness of at least some soccer supporters to buy into the Rainbow discourse. Kaizer Chiefs supporters were similarly sceptical, evidenced through Gilbert's desire for a sustained multi-racial soccer fandom after the World Cup. Supporting 'the boys' was not simply an exercise in papering over the cracks of a divided nation but an opportunity to reflect on them. Covered in chapter two, Armstrong's argument that soccer as a nation-building force was merely a '90-minute delusion' also needs to be reconsidered. It is too easy to discount what happens both within the ninety minutes and its effects as ephemeral. Nuttall's 'mutual entanglements' in chapter three are again visible here. In spite of the many marginalising process throughout the tournament, soccer fans and supporters from across the divided soccer landscape were engaging in a series of encounters that would unlikely have happened elsewhere. Middle class Manchester United supporters encountered and conversed with soccer fans that they would unlikely engage with when supporting United. For Chiefs supporters such as Linda and Bernard, who were able to attend World Cup games, such encounters could challenge perceptions of South African soccer as a black cultural space, while Nelson could do similar as a food vendor outside Ellis Park stadium. Opportunities for comparable encounters also occurred in the fan parks and walking through central Johannesburg. If it had been possible to assume a similar high vantage point to de Certeau in New York, the

'urban text' that these soccer supporters were writing was markedly different from the domestic soccer supportership. Being South African was not merely about division, difference and static categorisation.

The World Cup and this research can be viewed within the wider continuum of South African soccer history. As with soccer in the country historically, soccer in this research has both reinforced and challenged racial divisions within the country. Although the discourse of Rainbowism still featured prominently around the World Cup, the tournament also created spaces where supporters could challenge and question the discourse through mutual entanglements. Within such entanglements, creolisation can take place. Supporters can view the other not purely in terms of race or class but can develop new understandings that may in time incubate a truly non-racial soccer landscape. Nonetheless, this creolising process is a slow and painstaking one. Despite events such as the World Cup and the Soweto Derby throughout the research offering alternative understandings to the race/ class binary, creolisation is not yet potent enough to enact sustainable change in perceptions. The experiences of those Manchester United supporters at the Soweto Derby did not lead to a wider, sustained interest in domestic soccer, while increased interest in Bafana during the World Cup had tailed off post-tournament.

Supporting (or not supporting) Bafana encapsulates the contradictory nature of South African nation-building; bringing people together across divisions and yet reinforcing the very same divides. Looking to the future, utilising Bafana and the other national sports teams to foster a sense of national unity will continue to entrench such contradictions while Rainbowism continues to be the hegemonic national discourse. Yet, there is evidence to suggest that not all soccer supporters buy into the discourse but recognise the silent divisions.

A South African sports ethnography

This research has made a valuable contribution to the development of an ethnographic methodology in the context of African sport. This thesis has drawn from the respective soccer ethnographies of Giulianotti and Armstrong. Although both focus on aspects of British soccer fandom, they provided a foundation from which to explore fan/ supporter identities beyond superficial observations. However, the appropriation of UK-centric methodologies for the South African context had its limitations. Together, Giulianotti and Armstrong aimed to place themselves in the position of their respondents to gain a better understanding of the meanings attributed to their soccer teams. Yet, as a white, middle class, Englishman, the barriers that I would have to cross in the South African soccer context were plentiful. For such a person to be able to place themselves in the position of a poor, black, working class man living in the urban decay of central Johannesburg would not only be unlikely but presumptuous. However, in recognising these difficulties, it open a new way of approaching the ethnography. Through initially reflecting on my positionality as a researcher in the field, I realised that the differences between the respondents and I generated new data. Carrington's embrace of the researcher's self within the ethnography allowed the possibility for new breaks in the Johannesburg soccer landscape. The reactions of both United and Chiefs supporters to my presence in their groups reinforced themes of separateness and dislocation and yet it also disrupted how some of the supporters perceived and engaged with their surroundings. The destabilising nature of my presence made the United and Chiefs supporters more acutely aware of each other, questioning what was happening with the other. The culmination of curiosity that I had inadvertently generated led to the creation of an opportunity allowing them to connect and collide in a space where this would not normally happen.

Nonetheless, in utilising aspects of an autoethnographic methodology, it remains imperative to connect with the respondents beyond the self and to counter

the temptation to become self-absorbed. Semi-structured interviews produced such connections, but they also created opportunities to interact with the supporters beyond the soccer environment. If soccer, and sport in general, is embedded in the everyday lives of the supporters, it is then insufficient to limit the scope of data collection simply to the soccer stadium, the sports bar or travelling to and from games, although these are still core parts of sports ethnography. Interviews were one method of engaging with supporters outside of match day, travelling to respondents' workplaces, homes and social hangouts. Long-term immersion in the respective supporters' clubs led to observing and taking part in other aspects of the social lives of the respondents. The soccer match is not the most important locale in which to engage with soccer fandom. Still, such a methodology is intensive and puts a strain on the researcher, especially when the researcher is part of what he or she is studying; leaving the field becomes crucial.

The 2010 World Cup has been a watershed moment in the history of South African sports fandom. Albeit sanitised, the tournament allowed soccer fans in Johannesburg to engage with the city and each other in ways that were often absent before. Chapter seven began to chart how the euphoria of the World Cup began to dissipate in the month after the tournament but it remains to be seen whether soccer fandom in the city has had any significant lasting change as a result of the World Cup. There was potential that the tournament could foster further curiosity in the United supporters towards the domestic game and that it could attract new fans from beyond the divisions in the city's soccer fandom. However, indications soon after the tournament suggested that this was not so. Returning to Johannesburg would present an opportunity for further longitudinal study, to see how attitudes have changed and developed over time. Although not in the remit of this thesis, other aspects of identity such as gender and age need to be considered in developing the scope of our understanding of sports fandom in South Africa and beyond. The necessary focus on one city in this research creates new questions over whether the dynamics of the Johannesburg soccer landscape can be easily applied to

other soccer communities such as Cape Town, Durban and Bloemfontein. Soccer ethnographies need to be responded to through ethnographies of fandom in rugby and cricket, amongst other sports, to ascertain a broader knowledge of sports fandom in South Africa and what this can tell us about broader societal issues. Moreover, with South Africa due to host the 2013 African Cup of Nations, this also presents the prospect of examining whether such a tournament can again transform the dynamics of the soccer landscape. Further afield, the 2014 World Cup to be hosted in Brazil provides an opportunity locate South Africa's World Cup in the wider milieu of global sports mega-events. Yet soccer is not restricted to the major tournaments. From the UEFA Champions League to informal games; whether watching the game at the stadium, in the pub or at home, soccer means something to people in their everyday lives across the globe. In South Africa, soccer is bound up in the spatial and mental legacies of apartheid and yet it also offers spaces and moments in which they are absent and new identities can emerge. This thesis has placed sports fandom at the forefront of South African sports studies and has built a foundation for which to advance scholarly understanding of sport in its wider context.

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'Denis', 19/05/2009
'Lee', 25/03/2009
'Peter', 27/07/2009
'Gary', 14/05/2009
'Carlos', 19/05/2009
'Michael', 18/05/2009
'Susan', 07/03/2009
'Duncan', 11/01/2009
'Philip', 22/05/2009
'Ryan', 08/05/2009
'George', 06/03/2009
'Norman', 18/05/2009
'Eric', 17/04/2009
'Tom', 12/06/2009
'Les', 20/04/2009
'Darren', 25/06/2009

'Jonathan', 17/05/2009
'Thomas', 31/01/2009
'David', 10-03-2009

Kaizer Chiefs supporters and club

'Thabo', 03/12/2008
'Gerald', 26/07/2009
'Bernard', 23/05/2009
'Nelson', 12/01/2009
'Vincent', 22/07/2009
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APPENDIX

The following article was published from initial empirical data under the title “‘You must support Chiefs; Pirates already have two white fans!’: Race and Racial Discourse in South African Football Fandom.” *Soccer and Society*, 11, no 1-2 (2010): 79-94. This was subsequently re-published in *South Africa and the Global Game*, edited by Peter Alegi and Chris Bolsmann. London: Routledge, 2010, and translated into Italian as “‘Devi tifare per i Chiefs; i Pirates hanno già due tifosi bianchi!’: Razza e discorso sulla razza all’interno delle tifoserie del Sudafrica”, *Afriche e Orientali*, 1 (2010).

‘You must support Chiefs; Pirates already have two white fans!’[1]:race and racial discourse in South African football fandom

At Premier Soccer League (PSL) matches around the country, the overwhelming majority of players, officials and especially the fans are black South Africans.[2] However, there are a significant number of white South African and European coaches, with the presence of the Europeans a contentious issue throughout the continent.[3] While European football and specifically English Premiership games are televised alongside local matches in township taverns, the local game rarely features in bars in shopping malls, spaces where white South Africans often congregate. Manchester United’s 2008 tour of South Africa magnified this division. The predominantly black supporters of the South African teams were outnumbered in the stadium by predominantly white Manchester United fans joined by significant numbers of Indian fans and, in the case of Cape Town, Coloured fans. At the grounds, and subsequently in the media, many fans of the local teams argued that the Manchester United fans were being ‘un-South African’, often identifying race as the key factor in determining football loyalties.

Based on extensive ethnographic fieldwork in Johannesburg between April 2008 and February 2009, this essay explores the salience of race in South African football and society through an analysis of the racial discourses surrounding the tour. The case studies of Kaizer Chiefs and Manchester United supporter clubs in Johannesburg bring into sharp relief important factors that have engendered stark divisions in South African fandom. For example, issues of class and the financial means to follow the team are of great importance; perceptions of black ‘ownership’ of the domestic game; crime and safety issues and the locales in which these games are watched and consumed are also significant. The essay draws on a third case study, that of Bidvest Wits supporters club, to argue that while there is still a racial divide in South African football culture, the game is more racially and ethnically diverse than usually recognized. In other words, football is not the exclusive domain of black fans.

Post-apartheid Johannesburg

During apartheid, central Johannesburg was demarcated as a white residential area. However, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was an exodus of white residents from the central areas to the northern suburbs with poorer black residents replacing them. Czeglédy attributes this to the increase in urban crime and decay,[4] although the collapse of influx control in the mid-1980s and the refusal of many whites to live in multi-racial neighbourhoods were also contributing factors.[5] The increased fear of crime among whites

led to an exodus for the northern suburbs, where residents 'fortified' their homes through the application of alarms, personal panic buttons, electric fences and high walls around the property and 24-hour private armed security. The relationship between race and class is of key importance in South Africa. White South Africans have a much higher employment rate than people of other racial backgrounds (61.4% White, 49.2% Indian/ Asian, 46.1% Coloured and 27.8% Black African).[6] Of those in employment, whites still hold many white-collar jobs, even though they only make up 7.9% of the population.[7] The high cost of residential properties in the northern suburbs effectively excludes a large proportion of the black population. Research has shown that in the late 1990s, only 1–2% of properties in the former white-only suburbs were being sold to blacks.[8]

Beginning in the late 1980s, big business also relocated from the Central business district (CBD) to the northern suburbs, including Sandton. Consequently, there was less private money and tax revenue that could be invested in urban renewal, accelerating the urban decay of the centre.[9] Today, most white inhabitants of Johannesburg prefer to work and shop in the more secure environment of the suburban shopping mall or office complex,[10] often treating the CBD as a 'virtual "no-go" zone'. [11] A further problem arising from the northern migration of business is that it 'prejudices black workers'. [12] Blacks make up approximately 85% of the population in the south of the greater Johannesburg area.[13] New low-income housing projects are frequently built on marginal land on the outskirts of the townships, so that these residents have to travel further to work, even if they can ill-afford to do so. The former black townships have high unemployment rates and shack settlements are still commonplace. Alarming, life expectancy projections between 1995 and 2005 revealed an abyss between whites and black Africans: 74.4 years for the former and 46.7 years for the latter.[14] The prevalence of HIV/AIDS and lack of access to health care and sanitation are contributing factors to this bleak reality. Yet, the stereotype of the poor township is challenged by the middle-class areas of Soweto, such as Diepkloof Extension and also Naturena in the south. Moreover, modern, air-conditioned shopping malls have emerged in some townships, making a wide variety of consumer goods available for those who can afford them.[15] As the case studies on football fans in different areas of Johannesburg will show, segregation based on race and class still exists in South Africa after apartheid.

Kaizer Chiefs – Amakhosi[16]

Named after its founder, Kaizer Motaung, Chiefs first entered the black-run National Professional Soccer League in 1971. Originating in Phefeni, Soweto, the club is named after Motaung's former North American Soccer League team: the Atlanta Chiefs. At present, Kaizer Chiefs are homeless due to the programme of stadia upgrades for 2010. They often play home games in nearby Pretoria but also hundreds of kilometres away in Durban, Rustenburg and Mafikeng.[17] Regardless of venue, wherever Chiefs play their Soweto-based rivals Orlando Pirates and Moroka Swallows,[18] it is still referred to a Soweto Derby. The club claims to have fourteen million fans, which would mean that there is one Chiefs fan for every 3.5 South Africans![19] Chiefs have been an extremely successful club, winning numerous league and cup titles in the 1980s and 1990s, including the African Cup Winners' Cup in the 2001/02 season. Chiefs are the most popular club in South Africa and a commercial juggernaut. It is commonplace for Chiefs jerseys to be worn on the streets (more so in the predominantly black areas), and many taxis and cars are adorned with Chiefs stickers. Along with a vast array of merchandise including replica shirts, jackets and flags, joining the supporters club entitles the member to funeral cover and retail discounts. The aim of the club is to become a 'global football brand' like Manchester United.[20]

Bidvest Wits

Formed in 1921, Wits was the all-white student-only football team (until 1974) of the University of the Witwatersrand. Wits are part of a long history of white football in Johannesburg, the pinnacle of which was reached in the 1960s when clubs like Germiston Callies, Southern Suburbs, Johannesburg Rangers and Highlands Park played in the professional National Football League (NFL). While crowds were generally small, historian Peter Alegi noted that the 1959 Rangers v Callies and 1960 Durban City v Johannesburg Ramblers Castle Cup finals attracted crowds of 16,238 and 22,524 respectively.[21] Falling attendances in the 1970s and 1980s forced these clubs to disband or be sold. For example, Highlands Park in the 1960s drew about 13,000 fans per game. Yet, by the early 1980s, crowds averaged 3,000 people.[22] Jomo Sono, a black South African football legend, bought Highlands Park in 1983, renaming it Jomo Cosmos. Like Motaung, the name was influenced by Sono's time in the USA with the New York Cosmos. In the mid-1970s Wits competed against Highlands Park in the white professional NFL and then became the first white team to join the black-run NPSL after the NFL disbanded in 1977.[23]

Wits are thus the only historically white professional top-flight team still in existence. The 2002 sponsorship deal with national business conglomerate Bidvest impacted heavily on the club. Not only did the name of the club change from Wits University FC to Bidvest Wits, but the financial backing of the sponsor has meant that the club is no longer reliant on gate receipts and can heavily subsidise tickets for members of the supporters club and Bidvest employees.[24] Unlike Chiefs, Wits has a small, localized fan base, drawing the majority of the fans from the student population.

Manchester United in South Africa

One of the most recognizable global football brands, Manchester United in South Africa have a predominantly white, English-speaking fan base. Noteworthy South Africans that have played for United include the former Chiefs and Wits goalkeeper Gary Bailey (1978–87) and Quinton Fortune (1999–2006), whose Fortune FC team in South Africa became a feeder club for Manchester United. During apartheid, Manchester United legends Bobby Charlton and George Best signed short-term contracts with all-white Arcadia Shepherds (1976) and Jewish Guild (1974) respectively. Eddie Lewis, one of the Busby Babes in the 1950s, went on to coach both Wits and Chiefs, among other South African teams. While Manchester United do not have official ties to any South African clubs (unlike Ajax Amsterdam and Ajax Cape Town), it has run football clinics in black townships. Furthermore, the South African leg of the Manchester United Premier Cup, a youth tournament to find new young talent, is hosted in Soweto. United merchandise is a common sight on the streets of Johannesburg. Sports shops in malls stock United jerseys alongside local shirts, sometimes overshadowing them. Yet United shirts and other products can be seen in the townships, although there are also many fakes due to the exclusionary cost of the official goods. Given the diverse social geography of Chiefs, Wits and United support, this essay provides three different insights into South African fandom.

Methodology: 15 hours in a minibus taxi and back again

Anthropologist Bea Vidacs argues that ethnography is needed to avoid thinking of football as a phenomenon existing 'apart from the larger society in which it [is] embedded [and] thus making it rather thin and irrelevant for an understanding of social processes'.[25] Building on existing ethnographic research on African football, such as Baller's work on Senegal[26] and Vidacs' on Cameroon,[27] it is important to consider why football fans choose to

support the teams they do and what meanings come from this. This approach demonstrates how sport 'gains its significance and meaning from the outside world' and why it cannot be treated as existing in a social vacuum.[28]

The three case studies analysed in this essay are located in three different urban environments. Malvern, the home of the Chiefs supporters' club branch that I have been following, is located just southeast of the Johannesburg CBD. Formerly a white working-class suburb, it is experiencing urban decay and is now a black working-class area. Wits is located in Braamfontein, just north of the CBD. Like Malvern, it was a former white area but is largely a retail area. Its residents are increasingly black but the university has a high proportion of white students. In contrast, the monthly meetings of the Manchester United supporters club of South Africa (MUSCSA) and the pubs they use for watching games are located in the white middle-class suburbs of Waverley and Dowerglen.

Using an ethnographic approach which 'can provide insights into social, cultural, and historical processes which go beyond the sporting arena', my research concentrated on three key sites for data collection: the stadium, the bar/tavern and vehicles transporting fans to the games.[29] The stadium is where team and national symbolism is on display. It is a cauldron of emotion where the researcher has a 'hope of experiencing these ecstatic moments'.[30] At the time of writing, I have attended 13 Chiefs and nine Wits games during the 2007–08 and 2008–09 seasons. Data was collected by engaging fans in informal conversation and debate and recorded using my trusty notepad and pen.[31] Visual data has been recorded using a digital camera. Secondly, following Weed's insight that 'the pub has been a place in which to read about football, to talk about football, and to meet with friends before going to a live match',[32] I analysed the MUSCSA in bars and taverns situated in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. Finally, as per Hans Hognestad's suggestion, I conducted research in buses with travelling Chiefs fans.[33] This option was only available for the Chiefs fans as they are the only group in the study that organizes transport to matches.

However, the stadium is not an environment conducive to conversation outside of what is happening within the game. Similarly, the bar environment, while being a more restricted space where questions can more easily be asked, suffers from the same problem. Fans are there to watch the game, not to be interviewed. The minibus taxis that the Chiefs fans use to get to the game do provide a 'captive' audience. The 15-hour journey that I took from Johannesburg to Cape Town (and back again) for the first Chiefs game against United provided hours of debate (and back pain). But with kwaito music[34] and Afro-pop usually blaring at deafening levels, it was sometimes challenging to engage fans in discussion. Even so, participant observation provided valuable context for semi-structured interviews with members of the supporters clubs. Data gathered in this manner informed the construction of interview questions and, importantly, raised issues that I had not previously considered. The interviews offer the opportunity to 'achieve some control along with meaningful comparisons',[35] allowing the respondent time to consider what meanings he or she derives from identifying with certain football teams. The interviews have in turn informed the participant observation.

Racial discourses surrounding the 2008 Manchester United tour

Walking back to the minibus taxi with members of the Chiefs supporters' club after the 1-1 stalemate between Chiefs and United in Cape Town in July, many complained about how they felt outnumbered by Manchester United fans in the stadium. More importantly, they bemoaned that these fans were mostly white and coloured, even going as far as accusing the white fans of being racist. I was told that 'these whites never come to our games' and 'what do they know about our soccer?'[36]

Subsequent newspaper reports and readers' letters to the papers latched onto these ideas and were often framed in racial discourse. These ranged from more subtle critique to direct accusations of racism. Editorials were generally worded more cautiously, arguing that it was the duty of all South Africans to support the South African team. One such editorial published in *The Sowetan*, a daily aimed at black township readers, stated: 'In what looks like misdirected loyalty ... fans in Red Devils colours outnumbered both Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates fans when these local sides played Manchester United'.^[37] Readers' letters were more racially explicit. One such letter to Johannesburg's *Star* newspaper argued: 'I think that white people still have this belief that just because Manchester United is from England, they should support them. There is still a mentality that whatever is done by Europeans is better.'^[38] What infuriated many Chiefs fans was the notion that many of the United fans had probably never been to Old Trafford to see 'their' team live, although ironically the same could be said about Chiefs fans. One member of the Chiefs supporters club put it thus: 'Just pick ten Indians. Ask them have you been in England? Maybe all ten of them, they've never been.'^[39] This statement is indicative of racial tension between Africans and Indians in post-apartheid South Africa. In a widely reported case in 2002, the musician Mbongeni Ngema courted controversy when the lyrics of one of his songs attacked the Indian population in KwaZulu-Natal, claiming that they were exploiting and discriminating against Africans.^[40] Interestingly, South African Indians have had a history of supporting white and European football teams. Alegi noted that a large minority of the fans of the all-white team Durban City in the 1960s were Indians, although he also highlighted that Indian administrators and teams were crucial to the creation and maintenance of the non-racial South African Soccer League (SASL) and the anti-apartheid South African Soccer Federation (SASF).^[41]

Members of MUSCSA in Johannesburg denied these accusations of being unpatriotic. They argued that their decision not to attend local games was based on a number of issues. Many individuals felt that local games were unsafe, had poor stewarding and organization, and featured football of a low standard. Countering charges of racism, one MUSCSA member complained that 'the media' had their own agenda in portraying the local Manchester United fans as unpatriotic. In this view, the media had manipulated the letters and calls received on the subject and had not allowed MUSCSA to put forward their arguments. As one member said: 'The programme controller wouldn't put me on air because I was criticising the organisation at Loftus [Pretoria rugby stadium where the match was played]. Instead they took calls from people who praised the facilities. The impression was that everything at Loftus was hunky dory, certainly not the case.'^[42]

What is clear from this brief snapshot of discourses surrounding the 2008 tour is that there are well-defined racial boundaries within the sphere of South African football fandom. There is not just an informal segregation at work here, but claims of a black 'ownership' of the domestic game, with many black fans referring to 'our game'. Although the World Cup has been framed by elites as a tournament for all South Africans, this vehicle for nation-building has clear fractures.

The Divided Game

An initial examination of the Chiefs and United supporters clubs in Johannesburg would appear to fit this racial divide in football fandom. Almost all the members of the three main Chiefs branches in Johannesburg are black, whereas the vast majority of MUSCSA members are English-speaking whites. However, the racial divide highlighted through the discourses surrounding the United tour is over simplified. Many of the Chiefs fans also have 'their' English Premiership team, typically one of the big four, Chelsea, Arsenal, Liverpool and

Manchester United, with the latter two pulling in the most support. Yet the ways in which fans follow these teams are markedly different.

Wealth inequality has major implications on South African fans' choice of team. Members of Chiefs' Malvern branch (and non-members) who travel to games together are all employed as warehouse operatives, security guards, shop workers – working class occupations far removed from middle-class comfort, let alone upper-class luxury. Some of these supporters live in shacks. One lives with his family in a single room of a house, and many others rent rooms and flats in black-dominated neighbourhoods in the city, such as Jeppe and Malvern. This is in stark contrast to MUSCSA, which includes doctors and IT consultants. One United respondent claimed that he did a lot of his business on the golf course.[43] Socio-economic background is significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, the average cost of a ticket for a PSL game is R20 (approximately £1.40), whereas the cheapest tickets for the United tour were three times the price at R60 (£4.20). While this may seem inexpensive in Western terms, even R20 tickets can be exclusionary to the black working poor. As a result, some Chiefs fans choose not to go to certain games as they cannot afford it. Even more striking is that MUSCSA members have the opportunity to see their team live through their annual overseas tour to Old Trafford, while some members see United play when they travel to the UK on business. This access to the English club and some fans' active participation is beyond the reach of Chiefs fans, few of whom, if any, can afford such costly adventures.

The second factor affecting fan loyalty revolves around televisual access to the team. 'They [the whites] have more English soccer because they have dish [satellite television]', argued a Chiefs respondent; 'Even if it is a big local soccer game, they prefer to watch Manchester United'.[44] The majority of MUSCSA members have satellite television subscriptions, which allows them to watch English Premier League and English cup competitions on the Supersport satellite channels. In comparison, no members of Malvern branch have satellite television. Hence like most black football fans, they enjoy limited coverage of English league games on free-to-air terrestrial television by the state broadcaster SABC and also Champions League matches on the independent ETV channel. According to sociologist Ashwin Desai, 'The imagined community are the millions linked live by satellite television across the globe',[45] but the class position of Chiefs fans leads to their marginalization from this community through limited access to satellite TV. Chiefs fans could have been further marginalized when the PSL agreed a R1 billion five-year deal with Supersport in 2007. Fortunately an agreement was reached, granting SABC exclusive rights to 100 games,[46] yet this still reduced the number of PSL games available on state television.

Similarly, internet access affects the ability to support a European team. The most recent South African census highlighted a 'digital divide' in the country: less than 2% of black African-headed households had a computer compared to 46% of white households. [47] As with satellite television, there is a stark contrast between Chiefs and United fan clubs in Johannesburg. While none of Malvern branch members have internet access at home (and few have access at work) members of MUSCSA not only have internet connections but high-speed broadband access. Because the internet is a space where large amounts of information regarding the team can be stored and assimilated, MUSCSA members have quick and easy access to team sheets, latest news and video highlights. By participating in web forums about Manchester United, the imagined community that Desai refers to becomes a more tangible community. While there is plenty of coverage of English football in the press, it is not interactive as per the web forums, thus making the relationship between the Chiefs fans and their English team more of a one-way process.

The third factor influencing fan choices is the cost of merchandise, which has an exclusionary effect in the age of commodified fandom. Replica shirts for South African club teams cost approximately R350 (£25) whereas European club jerseys sell for R500–600 (£35–£42). Many of the MUSCSA members can be seen wearing the latest United shirt and generally own more than one. Commemorative t-shirts, such as the 2008 Champions League triumph, are proudly displayed, along with a United branded novelty bottle opener. These football commodities signal that 'we're real fans here', a MUSCSA member told me.[48] Giulianotti differentiates between 'supporters' and 'fans', the latter being 'authenticated most readily through the consumption of related products'.[49] Not all members wholly buy into the commodification of football. Generally, the older members that have supported the club for the longest have experienced following the pre-commodified game, some harking back to the days 'when football was football'.[50] While they may own the latest replica jersey, it is not always on display. Occasionally, even the younger members reveal discontentment with corporate football and constant consumption of the brand, with one fan complaining that 'I for one get well peeved off with the commercial giant that is Manchester United PLC'.[51] The commodification dynamic plays out differently with the Chiefs fans. While domestic replica shirts are cheaper than European shirts, these prices are still beyond the reach of the ordinary fan. Those with better jobs can afford the current shirt, while others have to make do with shirts from seasons past, or ingenious homemade uniforms made from old boiler suits and fabric remnants. This distinction between South African fans of United and Kaizer Chiefs calls attention to Swain's observation that in today's game, 'Paying for season tickets, paying for satellite television access, paying for expensive team shirts, all mean that football is no longer for poor people'.[52]

It is cheaper for Chiefs fans to support Chiefs rather than United, and for those who also follow English club sides, limited material resources restrict the manner in which they support that overseas team. While race and class are often closely correlated, they are not one and the same. For instance, black members of MUSCSA are financially better off than most of the Chiefs members. One black respondent in the real estate sector makes the journey from Soweto to the northern suburbs each month for MUSCSA's monthly meetings.[53]

While class remains an influential factor in football support, understanding South African fandom purely as a process of class and consumption is misleading. As was mentioned earlier, the imagining of domestic football as a 'black' arena is an exclusionary process. Referring to the domestic game as 'ours', black fans are claiming ownership. For many, it is a surprise when a white person is in the stands. During the minibus taxi journey to Cape Town which gives this essay its title, Chiefs fans whom I had never met before automatically assumed that I was going to support Manchester United. Revealing my Chiefs shirt created much surprise and I was 'claimed' as Chiefs' white fan.[54] The presence of a white spectator at local matches can be construed as an abnormality, one which many fans want to capture on camera. Being caught up in crowd trouble at the Chiefs – Sundowns fixture in January 2009 – I realized that my camera had been stolen. The white policeman that I first reported it to replied, 'Why didn't you stay at home and watch it on TV or get VIP tickets'.[55] This constructed football as a space where I, as a white man, did not belong.

It is easy to fall into the trap of viewing South African football support purely as a black/white dichotomy, but Coloured and Indian fans need to be taken into account. When the club requested demographic information from all Chiefs supporters' club branches, committee members of Malvern branch debated whether a recent member was Indian or Coloured. Notably, a consensus was not reached but there was a general sense of pride that the branch had two non-black members (including me),[56] which is revealing of the rarity

of this phenomenon in the domestic football arena. This perception of the South African football stadium as a black space can be extended to the transport to and from the grounds. This *kwaito* music and Afro-pop pulsating in the minibus taxis are signifiers of a 'black' cultural space. As Steingo has pointed out, *kwaito* music is associated with black youth,[57] although it now has a more multiracial youth following.[58] Even the mode of transport is significant, as very few white people will use minibus taxis, questioning the safety and reliability of the vehicle as well as the 'erratic' driving style of the taxi drivers. The location of the stadia also plays a role in keeping white fans away. Tomlinson, Beauregard, Bremner and Mangcu argue that, 'From the perspective of whites, particularly those who have moved to the northern suburbs, Johannesburg has gone from the citadel of white dominance to the declining inner city of crime and grime'.[59] For example, Orlando Stadium and Soccer City are in and around Soweto, the enormous black township outside Johannesburg, and even Ellis Park is situated in run-down (and increasingly black) Doornfontein, just east of the city centre.

In contrast to the local stadia, the bars where United matches are watched and consumed are primarily white spaces. Firstly, the bars frequented are generally located in the white-dominated northern suburbs of the city. Inside the bar, the clientele is predominantly white but, more importantly, the way in which the United fans engage with supporting their team revealed key differences with those of the Chiefs fans. Rather than the *vuuzelas* (plastic horns) and the dancing experienced at PSL games, the atmosphere in the bar is akin to watching a Premiership game in an English pub. Chants that one would hear in Old Trafford are replicated in the bar environment, for example: 'Build a bonfire, build a bonfire, put the Scousers on the top, put the City in the middle and lets burn the f***ing lot!'[60] As Robert Morrell has highlighted, there is a rich history of English-speaking whites (especially in colonial Natal) reaffirming their 'Englishness' through rugby.[61] For the British ex-pat members of MUSCSA, supporting United is a way to reaffirm their ties to home. For instance, one member claimed that he was 'a proud Ulsterman', while another still identifies himself as Scottish. Furthermore, some of the South African-born members have dual South African/British citizenship. Other members have disassociated themselves from England by teasing me when an English national team loses.[62] While devoted United fans, these men remain the South African Manchester United supporters club. Some of them follow England rather than Bafana Bafana, yet this has more to do with the number of United players in the team rather than ideas of national belonging. Perhaps this is an example of how 'cultural relativisation turns the global game into the "glocal game"' in the words of sociologists Richard Giulianotti and Roland Robertson.[63]

While the domestic game in South Africa is constructed and perceived as a game for black fans, this has not always been the case. Some of the older members of MUSCSA used to attend local matches in the 1970s and 1980s. The most popular domestic club for these members was Highlands Park. Playing on the site where MUSCSA monthly meetings are now held, Highlands Park used to play in the same colours as Manchester United. For one United supporter, the colour of the kit was enough for him to start following United,[64] while another respondent was the treasurer of the Highlands Park supporters club.[65] Yet now, these former Highlands Park supporters are unwilling to attend local games. This has to do with the perception of the South African game as a criminalized, unsafe space. Addressing a MUSCSA monthly meeting, when asked why they did not attend local games, one of the recurring themes was that they did not feel comfortable in such an environment as they felt that they would be targets for pickpockets and their cars would get stolen.[66] One respondent was a victim of crime during a game at Ellis Park when his wallet was stolen. Fortunately his wife caught the criminal, but as soon as the wallet was recovered, she

feared he might have a knife.[67] Underneath this crime discourse can lay 'a racial causality'.[68] Referring to criminals usually implies *black* criminals. Yet even the black Chiefs fans admit that there is a crime problem at matches. Several members of Malvern branch have told me that they keep a close eye on me when at matches, especially my pockets.[69] One member in particular told me that because of the colour of my skin, I was a particular target.[70] It has to be said though that I have had very few problems at matches during my fieldwork.

The domestic league is also perceived as disorganized and many United fans refuse to go because they see match day as chaotic. With reference to the final game between Manchester United and Kaizer Chiefs, some MUSCSA members complained about the stewarding and the problems they experienced in trying to find their seats.[71] The PSL was often referred to by United fans as corrupt. One fan claimed that he was privy to information regarding a PSL team allegedly throwing a match.[72] Although this was probably speculation, the perception that they cannot trust the final score of PSL match to be a fair result has deterred many United fans from watching the local game. Regardless of whether it is true or not, entrenched perceptions of the local game as a dangerous, disorganized and corrupt spectacle are likely to continue to dissuade the majority of white football fans from attending PSL matches unless, of course, these perceptions can be successfully challenged.

Bidvest Wits

Racial boundaries in South African football culture exist but they are also permeable. There is evidence that supports a cautiously optimistic outlook with regards to the future transformation of football crowds. Members of Malvern branch, for example, are desperate to show that that the domestic game is a safe place for all fans. I have been told that should anything happen to me, the culprit 'would be in the mortuary tomorrow! We will kill them!'[73] (It was later explained to me that the culprit would be beaten and not actually murdered.) Also, there were a few white spectators with Chiefs shirts and flags at both of the United games that I had attended. While at times I have been the only white man in the crowd, at other games there have been handfuls of fans at PSL matches who were not black. Even the occasional family can be seen, although this is more typical in smaller cities and towns.[74] A few of the United fans have experienced these matches, especially the Soweto Derby between Chiefs and Pirates. Yet these are rare occurrences.

However, the case of Bidvest Wits provides a different perspective. While a tourist could attend most PSL matches and not see any white fans there, the same tourist would instantly notice the large minority of white fans at Wits matches. Certainly, the club often only gets 1,000–2,000 people in attendance (unless the opposition is one of the big three of Chiefs, Orlando Pirates or Mamelodi Sundowns), which makes these fans unrepresentative of wider attitudes of white South Africans towards football. However, there is a level of symbolic importance that needs to be explored. As the CEO of the club pointed out, 'it's a natural transformation; nobody's forcing these people to go to the stadium'.[75]

Many of the Wits sporting heroes are white. It is not uncommon to see explayers and their children at Wits games today. Yet, while the history of the club is a factor in its fan base, what is more significant is the location of the ground. Bidvest Stadium is located within the grounds of the University of the Witwatersrand, a relatively safe environment with a visible security presence and secure parking. By being within University grounds, it largely addresses fears of crime and insecurity that many of the MUSCSA members associate with the domestic game. Its location within the city makes the small stadium more inviting to some fans. Rather than travelling to Orlando Stadium and Soccer City, situated in and around black Soweto, the university and the stadium are situated just north of the city's

central business district and easily accessible from the freeway. So instead of having to venture into the black townships on weekends or at night, white football fans find Wits a viable and 'safe' alternative. Furthermore, rather than the imposing structures of these stadia, Bidvest Stadium is a compact ground, with a capacity of approximately 5,000 people. There is only one 'grandstand' on the west side, the planetarium is incorporated into the south stand and has no roof to obscure the view of the CBD skyline. Especially when the team draw only 600–700 spectators to some games, the atmosphere is far more relaxed and less threatening than at other PSL games.

The stadium is also unusual in that it creates a culturally fused space for supporters. This phenomenon is quite different from both the Africanized space of the minibus taxi of the Chiefs fans with its kwaito and Afro-pop blaring and the Anglophile space carved out by United fans belching Old Trafford chants at suburban pubs. Informal traders sell the ubiquitous *pap* and steak[76] at Bidvest Stadium, widely sold by vendors at virtually all PSL matches. Yet the official Wits snack bar sells *boerwors* rolls (akin to hotdogs) – food more readily associated with the white dominated arenas of rugby and cricket spectatorship rather than football. Only at Cape Town's Athlone Stadium (Ajax and Santos games) and Newlands Stadium (Bafana Bafana games), in a city where roughly half of the population is Coloured, have I encountered vendors selling *boerwors* at football matches. Some white fans appropriate elements of local football culture by attempting to blow a *vuuzela*. However, many do fail as it takes practice. Amusingly, one fan in particular has adapted the *vuuzela* and claims that 'there's more ideas in the pipeline' for 2010.[77] While some white, Coloured and Indian fans are there simply to 'try it out', equally there are those who regularly attend games and show an active knowledge of the team.

While Wits can be seen as an example of social integration in the sporting environment, closer examination reveals a slightly different reality. On match day, white, African, Coloured and Indian fans fill the stands, but the majority sit in clusters of people of their own racial group. Tellingly, the VIP section of the grandstand is usually dominated by white spectators. The example of a black fan asking his white student friends at a Wits–Chiefs fixture 'what are you doing in a place like this?'[78] highlights the extent to which the notion of the domestic game as a 'black' game still resonates, even in the racially mixed environment of Wits.

Conclusion

Discourses of race that emerged from the 2008 visit of Manchester United to South Africa highlighted entrenched racial divisions among local football supporters. White fans overwhelmingly expressed their loyalty to the visiting English team, while most black South African fans supported local teams. The manner in which fans expressed their support differed dramatically, as seen in local whites' appropriation of chants from English stadia and the 'Africanized' spaces of black football culture. Class and the material capacity to 'consume' football emerged as additional factors in the fissures among local fans. The case of Wits seems to offer reason for guarded optimism as it provides a 'safe' space for all football fans, regardless of race, to experience PSL matches. Yet, as this analysis showed, this scenario is a rather unusual example, one that is not symptomatic of South African football supporters' culture as a whole.

Notes

1. Author conversation with Chiefs fans at Newlands, Cape Town, recorded in research diary, July 19, 2008. The author wishes to acknowledge financial support for this research by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in the United Kingdom.
2. When referring to race, the essay uses the racial categories of Black, White, Coloured and later Indian that were formalized in the Population Registration Act of 1950. Although the essay acknowledges that these were artificial constructs created by the apartheid regime, they are still in both official and everyday use. The respondents have used this terminology in both interviews and informal conversations.
3. Vidacs, 'France', 171.
4. Czeglédy, 'Villas of the Highveld', 27.
5. Jürgens *et al.*, 'Residential Dynamics', 176–7.
6. Statistics South Africa, *Census 2001: Census in Brief*, 52.
7. *Ibid.*, 56.
8. Beavon, 'Northern Johannesburg'.
9. Czeglédy, 'Villas of the Highveld', 27.
10. Tomlinson and Larsen, 'Race, Class and Space', 48.
11. Czeglédy, 'Villas of the Highveld', 28.
12. Beavon, 'Northern Johannesburg'.
13. This includes the townships of Soweto and Orange Farm.
14. Tomlinson *et al.*, 'The Postapartheid Struggle', 17.
15. Tomlinson and Larsen, 'Race, Class and Space', 49.
16. Both the team and the Chiefs fans are known as the *amakhosi* (Zulu for Chiefs).
17. The journey from Johannesburg to Mafikeng took 4 hours each way in a minibus taxi.
18. None of the Soweto teams at present play in Soweto although this may change with the recent opening of the new Orlando Stadium.
19. 'Kaizer Chiefs home page'. <http://www.kaizerchiefs.com>.
20. Author interview with Chiefs Public Relations Officer, February 9, 2009.
21. Alegi, *Laduma!*, 118.
22. Raath, *Soccer*, 212.
23. Rossouw, 'A Clever Approach'.
24. Author interview with Bidvest Wits CEO, November 17, 2008.
25. Vidacs, 'Through the Prism', 332.
26. Baller, 'Transforming Urban Landscapes'.
27. For example Vidacs, 'France'.
28. Vidacs, 'The Post-Colonial', 151.
29. Vidacs, 'Through the Prism', 331.
30. Giulianotti, *Football*, 173.
31. Armstrong, 'Like That Desmond Morris?', 28.
32. Weed, 'Sport Spectator Experience', 189.
33. Hognestad, 'The Jambo Experience', 208.
34. Kwaito is a local genre, a cross between house music and hip-hop. It usually has heavy percussive beats, which reverberate throughout the taxi.
35. Bechhofer and Paterson, *Principles of Research*, 96.
36. Author conversation with Chiefs fans at Newlands, Cape Town, recorded in research diary, July 19, 2008.
37. 'Too Many Unanswered Questions Bedevil SA Soccer'. *Sowetan*, July 24, 2008.
38. 'One on One'. *The Star (Shoot supplement)*, July 25, 2008.
39. Author interview with 'Alfred' (Chiefs), December 12, 2008.

40. Baines, 'Racist Hate Speech', 56.
41. Alegi, *Laduma!*, 130.
42. 'Media Distortion'. *S.A. Reds: Manchester United Supporters Club of South Africa – SA Reds Forum*. http://www.manutd.co.za/index.php?option=com_fireboard&Itemid=162&func=view&id=29644&catid=7#29644.
43. Author conversation with MUSCSA member, recorded in research diary, January 13, 2009.
44. Author interview with 'Alfred' (Chiefs), December 2, 2008.
45. Desai, 'Citizenship and Cosmopolitanism', 314.
46. 'SABC in Soccer Rights Climbdown'. *AllAfrica.com*. <http://allafrica.com/stories/200707270209.html>.
47. Statistics South Africa, *Census 2001 Key Results*.
48. Author conversation with MUSCSA member, recorded in research diary, November 8, 2008.
49. Giulianotti, 'Supporters, Followers', 37.
50. Author interview with 'Arthur' (United), January 11, 2009.
51. 'Carling Cup Final'. *S.A. Reds: Manchester United Supporters Club of South Africa – SA Reds Forum*. http://www.manutd.co.za/index.php?option=com_fireboard&Itemid==162&func=view&catid=5&id=31216&limit=20&limitstart=40#32487.
52. Swain, 'The Money's Good', 100.
53. Author conversation with MUSCSA member, recorded in research diary, January 13, 2009.
54. Author conversation with Chiefs fans at Newlands, Cape Town, recorded in research diary, July 19, 2008.
55. Author conversation with policeman at Sundowns v Chiefs, Johannesburg Stadium, recorded in research diary, January 11, 2009.
56. Author conversation with Malvern committee members, recorded in research diary, October 15, 2008.
57. Steingo, 'South African Music', 333.
58. Coplan, 'God Rock Africa', 21.
59. Tomlinson *et al.*, *Emerging Johannesburg*, xii.
60. Chanting in bar, Edenvale, Johannesburg, recorded in research diary, November 30, 2008.
61. Morrell, 'Forging a Ruling Race', 93.
62. Author conversation with MUSCSA member, recorded in research diary, February 10, 2009.
63. Giulianotti and Robertson, 'The Globalization of Football', 547.
64. Author conversation with MUSCSA member, recorded in research diary, October 7, 2008.
65. Author conversation with MUSCSA member, recorded in research diary, October 7, 2008.
66. Author addressing MUSCSA monthly meeting, recorded in research diary, November 4, 2008.
67. Author conversation with MUSCSA member, recorded in research diary, January 13, 2009.
68. Ballard, 'Middle Class Neighbourhoods?', 56.
69. Author interview with 'Robert' (Chiefs), November 30, 2008; Author conversations with Chiefs fans, recorded in research diary, November 23, 2008 and November 26, 2008.
70. Author conversation with Chiefs fan, recorded in research diary, November 23, 2008.
71. Author addressing MUSCSA monthly meeting, recorded in research diary, November 4,

- 2008.
72. Author conversation with MUSCSA member, recorded in research diary, November 8, 2008.
73. Author conversation with Chiefs fan, recorded in research diary, January 11, 2009.
74. While at the Soweto Derby in Mafikeng on November 15, 2008, I noticed a white family with a small baby in the crowd.
75. Author interview with Bidvest Wits CEO, February 18, 2009.
76. Pap is a thick, porridge-like substance made from ground maize, more often consumed by the black population. At games, it is usually accompanied with steak fried in spices.
77. Author conversation with Wits fan, recorded in research diary, November 23, 2008.
78. Conversation at Wits v Chiefs, Bidvest Stadium, Johannesburg, recorded in research diary, November 22, 2008.

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