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Fans and states at work: a Ghanaian fan trip to the FIFA World Cup 2010 in South Africa

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The FIFA World Cup for men (hereafter referred to as the FIFA World Cup) is possibly the biggest global media event. Winning or losing often gives rise to expressions of collective degrees of national pride or disappointment. But, it is not only the performance of the teams that is of significance in this respect; the devotion of fans to the game and their loyalty to their own national team are also an important vehicle of identity and self-affirmation as a nation. Thus, no country can afford to dispense with the travelling model of the enthusiastic fan as a representative of national identity. Through an ethnographic study of Ghana’s state-financed fan trip to the FIFA World Cup 2010 in South Africa, we will show how the actors involved (government, opposition, fans and media) negotiate national identity and representation.

Introduction

More than ever before, global sports competitions are a stage for the presentation, reinforcement and formation of national feelings. At major events like a FIFA World Cup, which is followed on television by billions of people around the globe, the performance of the national teams is important for each country’s self-perception and the way others perceive them. But equally important are the fans, whose media-transported and thus globally visible devotion and loyalty to their own team constitute an important vehicle of identity and self-affirmation as a nation, both in the domestic setting and internationally.

During the FIFA World Cup 2010 in South Africa, a group of about 200 North Korean fans were identified as ‘Chinese mercenaries’, which produced scornful remarks among commentators and football fans all over the world. The hiring of foreigners as cheering fans contradicts the popular image that true support by fans in the stadium is based on genuine enthusiasm, and that this cannot apply to support that has been bought or organized by the government. In contrast to these false fans, images of African fans enthusiastically drumming and dancing travelled around the globe on the occasion of this first FIFA World Cup in Africa. Such images were seen as evidence of the patriotism and authentic passion for football of the fans from Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon or the Ivory Coast.

What the images do not show, however, is that before the FIFA World Cup the governments of these African countries had a problem similar to that of the North Korean regime: they could not be sure that there would be enough fans in South Africa to spur on the national team, wave flags and represent the country in a

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worthy manner. Whereas, in the case of North Korea, the biggest problem was that normal citizens were not allowed to leave the country, the responsible authorities in Ghana feared that very few would be able to afford to travel to South Africa. This worry was justified: a few months before the event, the tickets ordered by many national organized fan clubs like the Ghana National Supporters Union (GHANSU), the Millennium Supporters Union, the Nationwide Supporters Union and the Supporters’ Union of Ghana (SUGHA) were cancelled by FIFA, after several deadlines for payment had not been met.

Thereupon, the Ghanaian government decided to finance the journey for the fans. ‘We didn’t want a stadium with no Ghana flag’ is how Ibrahim Abass, Minister in the High Commission of Ghana in South Africa explained to us the government’s decision to pay for flights, accommodation, food and admission tickets to the matches for about 1400 Ghanaians.³

This decision made it possible for images to go around the world of Ghanaian fans in South Africa, dressed in the national colours, cheering, singing and dancing.⁴ Their national team, the Black Stars, gained the sympathy of the media and television spectators all over the world as the only African team to reach the round of 16 and the quarterfinals. At first glance, the trip was thus a great success.

Our paper aims at analysing the role of the Ghanaian state and fans who have contributed to this success. Through ethnographic fieldwork among involved state employees and supporters during the World Cup in South Africa, we intend to shed light on the actual processes and practices in the production of a Ghanaian national identity in this context.

**Following the people – our methodically approach**

Our study is primarily based on four weeks of field research during the FIFA World Cup 2010 in South Africa (11 June–11 July 2010). Our initial contacts with the Ghanaian fans took place during the qualifying round when we talked to supporters during matches at stadiums and at various FIFA fan fests in Johannesburg. After we got in regular contact with some of the financed supporters (Kojo, Kwame, Kwaku and Yaw among others), we regularly went to their fan camp in the students’ hostel at Tshwane University of Technology and joined in their everyday activities (outings, watching TV, attending matches of the Black Stars, touristic trips to Johannesburg and shopping tours). Participating in their daily life allowed us to have frequent informal conversations concerning their trip and thus to get thicker layers of ethnographic data than a sheer observation of their actual fan work in the stadiums could have provided.

In addition to this following the people approach,⁵ we conducted informal and formal interviews with state and party officials who organized the trip, and with a representative of the Ghanaian High Commission in South Africa.⁶ This phase was complemented by research in the Internet and the media before, during and after our fieldwork.⁷ Our set of methods led to various approaches in the field and secured a valid data collection among the various actors involved (mainly fans, government employees and representatives and the media).

**The conceptual framework: states at work**

Our analysis of the organization and the background of the Ghanaian fan trip to South Africa sponsored by the Ghanaian government is inspired by Thomas
Bierschenk’s notion of the *state at work* and particularly by its ethnographic emphasis. Based on this, we identify state employees and fans as key actors organizing and reinforcing national belonging and forms of national representation in order to strengthen Ghanaian national identity. By doing so, they follow, as we would like to show, a global *travelling model* of nationalism being expressed by national fan culture.

By choosing Bierschenk’s ethnographic concept of the *state at work* as our research perspective, we can regard the process of the creation and representation of national identity as a specific kind of work involving state employees and representatives, as well as the citizens of a country. During the process, or, in line with Bierschenk, the *work* of creating and affirming national identity, they use and refer to globally circulating (*travelling*) ideas, models and symbols of national belonging, normatively articulated by emphasizing a shared history and language, as well as (imagined) political and social communitarization. These models work through the creation of identificatory symbols and events for the imagined community, such as national holidays, national monuments or, as in our case study, participation in sporting events in which the nation is represented. If the work is successful, it contributes in ways described by Benedict Anderson to the creation of nationalism as an imagined community.

National identification with successful sport teams and the inherent reaffirmation of national identity, as to be analysed in our paper, can be understood as a *travelling model* (or *circulating model*) in the sense suggested by Richard Rottenburg. They are grounded in the concept of the European nation state and Euro-American notions of national communitarization by the identification with national sport teams. Travelling to global sporting events in order to support national teams or athletes is one example for this identification of citizens which has its roots in European fan culture and has been dispersed around the globe. However, practices of national communitarization vary in different social contexts and are subject to negotiations and adaptations. In order to understand the similarities and differences, or, the local adaptations of the travelling model, it is important to carry out detailed ethnographic research in the field, as in the case study presented here.

Processes of creating national identities are particularly intense in the former colonies of Africa, even five decades after independence, since these fragile democratic states have to struggle with ethnic diversity and regional differences, as well as with the blatantly unequal distribution of resources, education, social participation and material wealth. Thus, it cannot automatically be expected that the people will identify themselves with their nation and their state.

The citizens of the African states are not only passive subjects in the creation of nationality, but play an active role in the processes, whether by supporting them, taking part in them, rejecting them or using them for their own purposes.

Kelly Askew probably had similar ideas in mind with her criticism of research on nationalism in Africa, which has over-emphasized the role of the elites. Following Askew’s arguments, any discussion of nation building must take greater account of those who are exposed to the policies of the elites. As residents of the construction site where the nation is being built, citizens can play a role in the construction of nationalisms by appropriating them and adapting them to their own interest, or by opposing them, or by behaving neutrally with respect to them. But, recognizing that a construction site exists, and even profiting from it, is not the same as identifying oneself with the architect’s blueprint.
In this article, we will examine the nation-building work of the state as carried
out by the state actors (politicians, civil servants, etc.), in order to show what ‘states
do when they are working’\(^{16}\), and, in this concrete case, when they create a national
fan culture. But, to modify Bierschenk’s approach, we will also show what citizens
do when states are working.

**Sport und national identity**

The close relationship between sports and national identity is not accidental. The
establishment of modern sports associations coincided in Europe with the institutional-
ization of the idea of the nation state after the French Revolution and the Napole-
onic wars. While sporting competitions were mainly held within a national
framework, the resulting national encoding of sporting performances encouraged
international comparison. Thus, sports not only contributed implicitly to the creation
of national identities, but also explicitly played a role in international comparisons
of performance.\(^ {17}\) Since the end of the nineteenth century and the holding of the first
Olympic Games of the modern era, international sporting events have institutional-
ized rivalry between nations, so that sports in general, and global major sporting
events such as the FIFA World Cup or the Olympic Games in particular have
become more and more important arenas in which national identity can be repre-
sented.\(^ {18}\) National belonging is here negotiated, constructed and – in the case of a
sporting victory – acclaimed.\(^ {19}\)

Richard Giulianotti thus rightly concludes that ‘it is now a sociological truism
that sport has a crucial impact upon the construction of particular senses of social
identity and nationhood’.\(^ {20}\)

This is particularly true of football in Africa, for from the beginning football was
associated with the history of (colonial and post-colonial) statehood. European
settlers, soldiers and seamen began to introduce the game across the continent since
the 1860s. At the turn of the century, while African men played football for means
of pleasure or to gain prestige, whites-only clubs (and leagues) had been established
and the first matches against native African teams had been organized. Thus, the
political and ethnical exploitation of football became visible. From the 1920s,
colonial officers and Christian missionaries used football as a means of training and
instilling discipline in the local male population. In the period around Second World
War, it was used by the emergent Pan-African movement as a means of collective
political mobilization. Thus, from being an instrument of colonial suppression to a
great extent, football became an engine of political attempts to create national unity,
while remaining closely connected with the statehood transformation process. This
continued in the 1960s, when most of the ethnically heterogeneous states became
independent and formed their own national football teams.\(^ {21}\)

In the case of Ghana, the first president after gaining independency, Kwame Nkru-
mah, used football as a means of promoting the image of the *new African man* as a
counterpart to colonial values. Integrity and the dedication to serving the nation
became the characteristics of the new and authentic African man. The Ghanaian
national team was used as a vehicle to express this philosophy.\(^ {22}\) Specific playing
styles with an emphasis on intelligence and technique were one important feature to
create an explicit counter-model to the colonial idea of a natural, powerful, but
unsophisticated African style.\(^ {23}\) Thus, in Ghana, as in many African countries,
governments were eager to promote football as a tool of emancipation from colonial values and of creating national identity.

Global sport tournaments play a crucial role in this context. In Ghana, as in many African countries, taking part in major football and other sporting events was, and still is, bound up with the hope that sporting achievements might distract the people from economic and social problems, or even serve to put an end to violent civil conflicts. Thus, the South African government’s attempts at realizing its dream of a rainbow nation by hosting major sporting events after the end of apartheid (Rugby World Cup 1995, Africa Cup of Nations 1996 and FIFA World Cup 2010), and by the successful performances of its own teams at those events in the 1990s, can be interpreted in this sense. In addition, the instrumentalization of the success of the Ivory Coast national team in the 2006 Africa Cup of Nations during the peace negotiations following the civil war in that country may serve as another example.

In the context of Ghana, co-hosting the 2008 African Cup of Nations, the ruling NPP government at that time encouraged Ghanaian fans to engage in the tournament as enthusiastic and patriotic supporters in order to celebrate the government’s economic and social achievements in recent years and ‘to show the “world what Ghana has to offer”’. In this respect, the tournament and the participation of the fans were ‘central to the unfinished project of Ghanaian nation-building’.

On the other hand, poor performance by a national team can amount to a national disgrace. Thus, the Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan temporarily suspended the national team out of disappointment following its defeat in the first round of the 2010 FIFA World Cup – and intensified the support of the women national football team, including financial support for supporters travelling to the FIFA Women’s World Cup in Germany 2011.

Sporting successes and failures are a source of national pride or collective disappointment, but they are also significant in ways that go beyond the nation’s own image of itself. ‘Football and particularly the World Cup that confronts national teams is of course – at a worldwide level – an opportunity to display, live, reinforce, and challenge patriotism,’ is how Andreas Mehler analyses the significance of a major sporting event as a global stage for the negotiation of national identity. The way a nation performs, and thus constructs a public image, is an important component of this negotiation process and essential for the country’s self-affirmation as a nation. France’s multi-cultural triumph in 1998 and Germany’s fairy-tale summer in 2006, when these two countries, respectively, hosted the FIFA World Cup, transported images of hospitable and open societies, which helped to counteract less favourable images both at home and abroad. A similar mediately charged public image was created by the first FIFA World Cup to be held on the African continent in 2010, the image of a modern, peaceful and united Africa.

In this, fans play a special role, whether in the stadium or in public live broadcasts. They are on the stage, actors rather than spectators in the drama of negotiating national identity. The identification with nationalism among fans is more complex and ambivalent than the eye-catching display of national symbols such as flags and the singing of anthems would imply, and attempts by government authorities or by the football association to channel this identification, so as to generate a positive image of the country in the world, are common practice at major sporting events.
Constitutional features of the fan trip

The engagement of the Ghanaian state in organizing the fan trip is based on three fundamental constitutional features. Firstly, the very existence of the trip documents that the Ghanaian state is concerned about the way the nation is represented at the FIFA World Cup, not only by its national team but also by fans, and is thus interested in supporting the process of national identity formation, not only by encouraging a national team but also by giving support to national fans who will attract the attention of the media. Not least, this is intended to demonstrate to the global public that people in a rather poor but aspiring country like Ghana identify themselves with their national team and that the state is prepared to spend money in order to support it.

Secondly, the fan trip is financed – according to official figures it cost approximately 4.5 million US dollars – by a state that has limited resources and depends to a high degree on transfer payments in the context of development cooperation. This means that even economically rather weak states like Ghana are prepared to spend considerable resources in order to ensure they are adequately represented at global sporting events.

Thirdly, the officials in Ghana’s Ministry of Sport who were responsible for organizing the trip ensured that the fans to be financed reflected the regional and social mix of Ghana’s population as a whole. This heterogeneous group is better described as the ‘Ghanaian nation in miniature’ than as a homogeneous group of veteran fans. The real reason for the trip, the FIFA World Cup, seems to have receded into the background, for not all members of the group did necessarily identify themselves equally with football and fan culture; this is something which requires special comment.

Fan culture itself can also be understood as a travelling model, for it – in the context of various and distinctive local expressions – largely follows the conceptions and choreographies of national European fan cultures, in which the fans display their identification with their national team before, during and after football matches, and render this identification visible through their dress and by singing and chanting in support of their team. In the following, we will investigate how this model was appropriated and negotiated in the concrete case of the Ghanaian fans.

Plans and preparations for the trip

In the beginning, the Ghana Football Association (GFA) assumed that in South Africa it could rely on the fan clubs to organize support for its national team. At the beginning of December 2009, FIFA offered the GFA 2700 tickets for each match in which Ghana was playing. The GFA assumed there would be a rush by fans for the tickets, which would soon be sold out, and they invited registered fan groups of the Black Stars to apply for tickets on the Association’s website.

National fan clubs then ordered hundreds of tickets for their members. But when the tickets had not been paid for by mid-March, following several deadline extensions, FIFA cancelled the ticket reservations of the Ghanaian fan clubs.

Abraham Boakye, President of the GHANSU, explained the difficulties of the fan clubs: ‘It goes beyond just buying game tickets. It needs a lot of money. We need to plan for our air fare, accommodation and chop [pocket] money. We can’t buy tickets when all these things are not in place’. The prospect of not being able to rely on more than just a few hundred Ghanaian fans in South Africa finally
caused the Ministry of Youth and Sport to order tickets from FIFA itself and to plan a fan trip of its own. In addition to the fan clubs, it would also include members of other social groups. The original plan was to send a group of 450 people. Apart from fan clubs, these were to include members of parliament and members of different political parties, civil servants and representatives of religious organizations. After Ghana won second place in the Africa Cup of Nations in Angola in February 2010, the wave of support for its national team inspired not only the football fans in the country, but also the government (and the opposition). The National Planning Committee (NPC) established by the government specially for the organization of the FIFA World Cup therefore planned to raise more funds in order to be able to send a still greater number of fans to South Africa. The Ghanaian government announced that 2600 football fans would be sponsored.

The NPC now called upon a broad selection of associations, institutions and organizations to apply to the NPC for places on the fan trip. Although the plan was still subject to reservations regarding funding, the NPC proceeded to allocate between 10 and 40 places to selected groups, which then had to submit lists of names. Criticism by the opposition concerned not the trip as such, but only the manner of selecting the participants.

In this process, the governing National Democratic Congress (NDC) tried to use its powerful position by reserving a large number of the available places for its own members. It selected 623 members from all parts of the country and presented the list of names to the NPC, as we were told by Samuel Mensah, who is an NDC functionary and a member of the NPC.

A few weeks before the beginning of the World Cup in South Africa, the NPC announced that the number of fans to be sponsored must be limited to 1000. This put the governing party, the NDC, in a predicament. It was clear that the government could not sponsor 1000 fans, two-thirds of which were members of the government party, said Samuel Mensah. This would be injurious to the party’s image in the eyes of the Ghanaian public, in view of the fact that the award or acceptance of benefits by party members and sympathizers is a constant accusation levelled against the government by the opposition with regard to the distribution of public funds.

On the other hand, over 600 NDC members were counting on having their trip to South Africa sponsored: ‘It was impossible to tell our people that they could not go’, commented Samuel Mensah. As a responsible party, there was no choice but to seek other sources of funding, as a representative of the governing party put it. While the NPC invited around 1000 fans – including about 200 of the 623 NDC members – to come to Accra at the end of May in order to carry out the necessary travel formalities, NDC officials were busy raising funds for the other party members, numbering more than 400. These members were also told by the governing party to come to Accra, and so, despite the uncertainty of the funding situation, they travelled to the capital from all over the country. Around 1400 fans gathered there at the beginning of June to carry out the formalities and to await their departure for Johannesburg.

Camping in El-Wak
While some of the fans were residents of Accra and nearby areas, and others were accommodated by friends and relatives, it was necessary to accommodate hundreds of fans from all parts of the country in the capital’s central El-Wak stadium, where
they camped on the football field. Ibrahim Abass, whom we have mentioned above, told us that accommodating people in the stadium in this way is a common and necessary means of dealing with large crowds waiting to travel, as for instance in the case of pilgrims going to Mecca.

Due to this gathering of the fans in Accra, most of the 1000 fans on the NPC’s list arrived in South Africa in time for Ghana’s first match. But back in Ghana, around 400 fans were still waiting to depart. Most of them were NDC members who had not been on the NPC’s list. While the NDC was still raising funds to finance their trip, Nii Nortey Dua, Deputy Minister of Youth and Sport and a member of the NPC, announced that there would be no further fan flights to South Africa, and the remaining fans should leave the stadium and return home.44

Despite this, most of them stayed, becoming impatient and complaining about the bad situation: ‘We were at El-Wak for nine days without food’, said Kwaku and Yaw, members of the Supporters’ Union of Ghana (SUGHA), who, like many others, ran out of money to feed themselves.

Reports about the intolerable conditions in the stadium appeared in the national media: ‘There are no toilet facilities, no bath facilities, but there are mosquitoes taking a bite at will on the bodies of the stranded supporters’.45 Dua believed that the real problem for the stranded fans was neither the conditions in the stadium, nor the fact that they would not be present at the World Cup, but the fact that they felt too ashamed to face their friends and relatives, of whom they had taken leave and who imagined they were already in South Africa. He therefore advised them to find accommodation and to stay in Accra during the World Cup, so that afterwards they could tell their people at home that they had been in South Africa.46

For the stranded fans, and fortunately also for the Deputy Minister himself, an opportunity to travel to South Africa arose at the last moment. A few days before the Ghanaian team’s second qualifying match, the NDC announced that private sponsors would finance the trip for the remaining 400 fans.47 On 17 June a chartered plane carrying 345 fans flew to Johannesburg, and one day later the last of the fans camping in El-Wak were flown to South Africa.48 Opposition politicians criticized this decision, demanding that the names of the sponsors be published and suspecting that tax money had been used; the government denied this.49 In the course of this conflict, certain private persons and NDC functionaries boasted that they had enabled the stranded fans to travel. Rumours about two brothers and members of the NDC who contributed approximately 1.5 million US dollar to the trip became more tangible. Whether their payment was one of the several loans that the government took out in order to finance the trip of supporters remained unclear.50

In South Africa, the fans were not interested in the political arguments about the financing of their trip. Far away from the debates in Ghana, most of them were only concerned to cheer on their team and thus to fulfil their mission for the government. However, this sometimes turned out to be more difficult than expected.

Ke Nako51 – high time to cheer on the Black Stars

‘I want to go home. I can’t celebrate here like in Ghana’, said Kwaku disappointedly on the day after Ghana’s second qualifying match. His frustration was not due to the Black Stars’ bad performance, for at that time Ghana was top of the table in its group. But Kwaku had not yet seen much of the team. He had arrived a few days after Ghana’s first match in South Africa. He had then feverishly looked forward to
the second match against Australia in Rustenburg, together with the other fans in their accommodation, a student hostel on the campus of Tshwane University of Technology in Pretoria. On the day before the match, they were told that the tickets would be distributed next day, before the two-hour bus journey to Rustenburg. On the day, some of the fans were actually given their tickets. Others, like Kwaku and his friend Yaw, were told not to worry, they would get theirs later. The tickets would be handed out when they got to the stadium, they were told by the Ghanaian officials in the fan camp. Kwaku and Yaw therefore boarded one of the buses that had been chartered to take the fans to the stadium without their tickets. The buses were late in setting off and on the roads the traffic coming from the big cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria was congested.

Meanwhile, tumults broke out at Muzinda Residence, the other hostel where 1000 Ghanaian fans were staying, also in Pretoria. Here, officials told the fans that there were only 600 tickets available, which had been distributed according to unexplained principles. While those who were lucky enough to have been given tickets left by bus for Rustenburg, some of the fans left behind vented their anger. The South African press reported that about 200 disappointed Ghanaians protested in the road in front of the residence. In the Ghanaian media, the protest was described in more drastic terms: enraged fans had blocked the road in front of the residence and the police had turned up in large numbers before they could be calmed down, reported the Daily Guide. It was said that Ghana’s reputation had been damaged by this incident, in which a member of the organizing committee had nearly been killed.

We met Kwaku and Yaw for the first time on the footpath from the bus park to the stadium in Rustenburg. At the side of the path they had spread out a cloth and were offering vuvuzelas, scarves and caps for sale to the passing fans. There was a great demand for warm clothes and fan articles in the Ghanaian national colours, but they had to compete with many petty traders, all offering practically identical articles along the path which was several hundred metres long. Kwaku said that business could be better but he couldn’t complain; in any case, he was only selling the articles for an older woman from the fan camp, who preferred to stay there and watch the match on television because she didn’t like the cold weather. He was really much more interested in whether he would get a ticket for the match, but he wasn’t very hopeful. He said that a few weeks before the beginning of the World Cup, many new members had joined his fan club. At that time, it was already clear that SUGHA was one of the organizations sending fans to South Africa under government sponsorship. These people had joined in order to be able to travel to South Africa as members of the fan club, but ‘two weeks after the Cup you will not see them again’, said Kwaku and prophesied a rapid decline in the number of SUGHA members after the end of the World Cup. These people, he said, had already been given tickets for that day’s match. Moreover, some fan club officials had sold tickets to non-members.

Kwaku was not the only one to make accusations of corruption against the Ghanaian organizers. The South African Times quoted Kwabena, a Ghanaian supporter, who was interviewed on the occasion of the match between Ghana and Australia in Rustenburg: members of the Ghanaian organizing committee had sold hundreds of tickets meant for the fans on the black market, or given them to their girlfriends and wives. As a result, there were only about 600 available for the 1400 fans, said Kwabena.
Kwame and Kojo, two other Ghanaian fans whom we also met at the match in Rustenburg, went to the stadium despite not being certain whether they would get tickets. When their bus arrived there, a good half-hour before the beginning of the match, they were disappointed. The organizers responsible told the new arrivals that – despite every effort on the part of the organizing committee – there would be no tickets for them that day. It was very difficult to calm the angry fans down, and the situation was in danger of escalating: ‘Somebody brought about 20 tickets, threw them in the air, and everyone would just scramble – just like survival of the fittest,’ is how the South African Times described the tumults. Kwame and Kojo told us later that the presence of the South African police in large numbers prevented a worse conflict between fans and officials. Most of the fans who did not get tickets went to nearby bars in order to watch the match on television, or they simply waited in front of the stadium for the match to end, so that they could travel back to the fan camp. But during the match, the officials still distributed a few tickets. Kwame was lucky enough to get one and to see the second half of the match in the stadium. Kojo reported that he was given a ticket just five minutes before the end of the match, but that he didn’t think it was worth going in to see the end of the game live. He suspected that the tickets given out when the match was almost over were those that the organizers had been unable to sell on the black market.

These and other similar accusations of corruption were reported in Ghanaian and South African media, so that representatives of the government were obliged to rebut them. The Ghanaian High Commissioner, Lee Ocran, denied the accusations of corruption against members of the organizing committee, and claimed that the conflicts were due to certain fans whom he described as ‘troublemakers’. Even Vice-President John Mahama contributed to the debate. He admitted there had been problems with the distribution of tickets, but said that it had been possible to provide a further 500 tickets. For this reason, he disapproved of the behaviour of certain fans, as he explained in Accra after his visit to South Africa. Samuel Mensah also admitted that there had been difficulties regarding the tickets. But although he knew about the accusations of corruption, he could not confirm them. Rather, the committee had not been given enough tickets by the GFA, because things had not been planned in time, as he explained to us at a meeting a few days after the match.

The accusations of corruption are difficult to verify in every case, but are not entirely unfounded. In the fan camp in Pretoria, the dubious distribution of tickets was a major topic of conversation after the match against Australia. A few days later, on the day of the third qualifying match, this time against Germany, we were sitting in front of the hostel in the wintry sunshine, discussing Ghana’s prospects in the World Cup with Kwaku, Yaw, Kwame, Kojo and other fans. Some of them lamented the disappointing draw against Australia, while others listened to accounts of the match for which they had not been able to get tickets. In some cases, it was obvious that they still felt angry about this, and this anger was aggravated by what they heard from their colleagues.

On this particular morning we met General Kofi, a high-ranking member of the Ghanaian army, who formed a contrast to Kojo and Kwame. He was much better dressed than them and obviously had much better connections with the organizers of the trip. When we asked him whether he had obtained a ticket and been able to watch the match in the stadium, he said that in the night before the match a ticket had been pushed under his door. He said that since he was occupying a single room and the organizers knew who was in which room, he could only assume that the
ticket was meant for him personally. But, he had not paid extra money or anything like that in order to be sure of getting a ticket.

Kwesi, another young fan and student, when asked by us how he had come to join the fan trip, said that a few weeks before the World Cup he had asked a friend in the organizing committee to get him put on the list of fans to be sponsored. His friend had obliged by adding his name to the list of a fan club. Now he was here and up to now he had always been given tickets for the matches in advance. Kwaku, who was sitting next to him, asked how that was possible. Kwesi said that he was the nephew of a minister, which might explain his special treatment.

Kwaku, Yaw, Kwame and Kojo shrugged their shoulders at these differences, which simply confirmed what they already suspected about the way the institutions of the Ghanaian state function: anyone who had close personal relations with members of the organizing committee or with political decision-makers, or who had a high-ranking position, could go on the fan trip by manipulating the list of participants, and anyone who had connections with the functionaries would have no trouble in obtaining one of the coveted tickets in South Africa.

From the point of view of the people we talked to, the fan trip to South Africa organized by the Ghanaian government reproduced the situation in the Ghanaian state: the governing party was always dominant and had privileged access to resources. Among the fans, there was no equality. At the end of the day, who got into the stadium and who didn’t was a question of having the right connections or an influential social position.

The social heterogeneity of the fan group on this day was conspicuous, just as it was during our other daily visits to the two Ghanaian fan camps. The external conditions during the fan trip were the same for all participants, in so far as they all ate the same food in the same canteen, were accommodated in the same single or double rooms in the student hostels, and travelled in the same buses to the matches and on a sightseeing tour. Only the official organizers of the Ghanaian fan delegation were lodged in hotels in Pretoria. But the fans came from very different social backgrounds. They represented the broad spectrum of Ghanaian society, with such different occupations as street trader, teacher, pastor, Member of Parliament or business woman. And communication in the fan camp also made a heterogeneous impression on us. On the campus, one could identify small groups of people communicating with each other, each group being relatively homogeneous in terms of social background. People with a similar social background but who did not know each other beforehand, such as Kojo and Kwame, became friends and experienced the adventure of the fan trip together, but spoke only rarely to people who obviously belonged to other social classes and other groups on the campus. Kojo and Kwame occupied a low position in the social hierarchy. They usually chose to board buses that were parked further away and to sit at the back of the bus, in order to allow the functionaries and ‘important people’ to be at the front, as Kwame explained to us.

This social heterogeneity was noticeable in the fan camp mainly through different modes of access to the coveted tickets, and through very different levels of knowledge concerning the programme, the travel arrangements or the date of the return flight. Although all fans ate the same food in the same student canteen, fans like Kojo and Kwame did not know, for instance, when they were to travel back to Ghana, or even exactly what the programme was for the next few days. They did not attempt to talk to the officials, but they did point out to us people who they thought were officials, when we asked them for contacts. Hardly any ordinary fan
could explain to us the organizational structure of the group, the general conditions of the trip or even the programme. There was a general atmosphere of idleness, and endless discussions about the food or the cold weather, and about logistical questions, what would happen next, where the next match would take place, whether one could get tickets for it or at what time the buses would depart for the stadium.

On that same afternoon, when we met General Kofi, we were able to experience for ourselves the corrupt practices surrounding the distribution of tickets. The departure time for Ghana’s decisive qualifying match against Germany was slowly approaching, and different opinions were expressed as to what time the buses would actually leave. In the morning, some fans had again found tickets on the floor of their rooms. But up to midday no other tickets were given out, and we already feared that Kwame, Kojo, Kwaku and Yaw would again be disappointed.

But then a rather elderly and wealthy-looking fan offered to sell us a ticket. The reason he gave for wanting to sell his own ticket was that last time he had found it too cold in the stadium, and at his age he had to be careful. We bought the ticket from him for the equivalent of 10 euros, an amount far below its real price, considering it as evidence of the black market in entrance tickets – and as at least one ticket for our friends. He offered to supply us with further tickets, and we said we would be interested.

While everyone was waiting for the bus to take them to the stadium in Johannesburg, members of the governing party, the NDC, arrived and gave tickets for the match to those fans who had flown to South Africa on their list. Kwame and Kojo were among the lucky ones, while Kwaku and Yaw were not. Despite this, they also travelled to the stadium on the bus with the hope that, in addition to the first ticket bought by us unofficially, we would be able to buy another ticket for them from the same elderly fan. It did not occur to them to communicate with him directly, even though they were angry that he was illegally selling tickets that were meant for the fans.

The elderly fan who had sold us the ticket was in the bus and wanted to watch the match in a bar in front of the stadium. During the journey, he often winked or nodded at us and repeatedly made gestures signalizing that we should not worry about the extra ticket. But when we arrived in Johannesburg, he got off the bus and lost himself in the crowd moving towards the stadium so quickly that the promised deal fell through. But our friends were in luck. Yaw managed to buy an affordable ticket at the stadium and, together with Kwaku, he was thus able to fulfil his real mission, to support the Black Stars, at least this one time.

During the match, Kwame and Kojo were able to fulfil this mission only to a limited extent. When we met them in front of the entrance to the stadium after the match, they made a strangely apathetic impression. They had hardly seen anything of the match, explained Kwame. They had been given VIP tickets, and so they sat in seats reserved for association functionaries. In the VIP box there was a free buffet and alcoholic drinks, which they had taken full advantage of, with the result that they were scarcely able to devote themselves to the match and their work as fans.

Nevertheless Ghana qualified for the round of 16 against the United States and it seemed that the initial organizational difficulties of the fan trip had been overcome. The great majority of fans had obtained tickets for the match against Germany, even if in some cases at the last minute and at their own cost, and there were no violent conflicts with officials and the South African police. We therefore expected a mood...
of euphoria and excited anticipation in the Ghanaian fan camp, when we arrived there on the day after the match against Germany.

But to our surprise there was no sign of pleasant excitement about the coming match. While the Black Stars had been performing successfully, some Ghanaian daily papers had reported cases of rape in the fans’ hostels in Pretoria. In addition, they accused the responsible government authorities of having selected fans for the trip who were likely use it as an opportunity to stay in South Africa illegally. The foreign press also became aware of alleged incidents in the Ghanaian fan camp. The German Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) wrote about ‘vandalized hotel rooms, offensive behaviour towards the staff [of the hostel] and intensive exploration of the local prostitute scene’ by the Ghanaian fans, whom the FAZ therefore referred to as ‘hooligans’. The government tried to calm things down. “I don’t know what being a Ghanaian means to them”, said sports minister Akua Dansua to express her lack of understanding for critics of the fan trip in the face of the success of the Black Stars, and she accused them of splitting the country and jeopardizing the positive public image of Ghana created by its performance in the World Cup.

On the other hand, Vice-President Mahama criticized the behaviour of some of the fans and demanded that they behave better ‘in order to reflect the good image of their Mother Land’.

In the fan camps, there were no official announcements by the organizing committee apart from the displayed lists. Therefore, on the day before the match against the United States, there was an atmosphere of uncertainty and resignation, with the faint hope among the fans that they might perhaps be able to stay and watch the Black Stars in more matches. But many fans were anxious to return home, to put an end to this time of relative idleness and to get away from the cold weather in South Africa.

Several rumours were going around, often spread by middle-ranked NDC or NPC officials who were present at the fan camps or by Ghanaian media reports. Thus, the Ghanaian fans often received unconfirmed or second-hand information on issues such as that extra tickets had been made available for the match, that the coveted tickets would no doubt only be given to party members or that there were no tickets left at all for the round of 16 match.

On the day of the match some fans prepared themselves to attend it, faint-heartedly at first, by donning their fan gear and trying to get themselves into the right mood by drumming. We spent the morning waiting with Kwame, Kojo, Kwaku and Yaw, and the drumming became louder and more frequent. But no new information came from the officials. Time passed and in the early afternoon we began to get worried. If we didn’t set off soon, we wouldn’t arrive in Rustenburg in time for the match. As the afternoon progressed, it became clear that there would be no more buses. The fans gradually stopped drumming. They were angry and disappointed. But no one from the organizing committee came to the camp, so that there were no serious conflicts. While Ghana’s national team perfected their World Cup success with a victory over the United States, the remaining fans watched the match on television in their hostel. But why did the government stop supporting the fans?

‘When we qualified for the round of 16, we were the only remaining African team in this African World Cup. So we got an overwhelming support from almost everywhere. Our neighbouring countries, South Africans and even Japanese waved Ghana flags. We would have sent more [fans] but there was obviously no need’,
explained Ibrahim Abass. So had Ghana’s success made the sponsored fans replaceable? Or was Samuel Mensah right when he claimed: ‘Once Ghana qualified for the round of 16 some supporters assumed to stay and get tickets but that was never our plan’.

This version, namely that from the very beginning the whole fan trip was planned to cover only the group-stage matches, is confirmed by statements made by government representatives and Samuel Mensah’s colleague, Suley Obi, who was also an NDC functionary and a member of the NPC. One day after the last qualifying match, when Kojo, Kwame and others were still hoping to be able to attend another match, he explained that now the whole fan trip was as good as ended; for him and his fellow organizers, it was now only a matter of organizing the journey back home.

But why this information never reached the fans remains a mystery. Looking back, this fits our observation that not many people in the fan camp knew anything about the exact time frame and organization of their trip. Right up to the end they did not know whether or not they had a right to free match tickets paid for by the government, or whether the rumours going round on the fan campus were true, that the government had provided pocket money for them which had been embezzled. Since they had no information about the conditions of the trip, there was no way that fans like Kojo or Kwame could effectively claim benefits that had possibly been embezzled. The lack of transparency reduced their power to act, and instead there was constant speculation about embezzlement on the part of the organizers or the Ghanaian state as the sponsor of the trip. There were also discussions among the fans about whether the Ghanaian state, the governing party or private donors had paid for their trip. For most of the participants, this remained just as unclear as the question of what benefits they were really entitled to, or concrete details of the programme. At times, even the organizers seemed to be unclear about the plans. After the third and last group match, some of them hinted that maybe the trip would be extended. Others said they knew nothing about this.

The return journey of the remaining fans at work presented a final challenge for the organizing committee. Due to the fact that a number of fans refused to fly back to Ghana on the day before the match against the United States, there were additional delays with the return flights. While the organizing committee tried to charter flights for all fans still in South Africa, parts of the Ghanaian press printed reports of ‘stranded supporters’ and accused the government of leaving fans in South Africa. The Daily Guide claimed there were about 180 such supporters who were no longer being fed, while some of the women were having to prostitute themselves in order to get money for food. But this agitation soon came to an end. All fans were back home in Ghana by 29 June 2010, three days after the round of 16 match. The Black Stars won the match against the United States, so that the newspapers had something else to write about, instead of reports about fans who were prostituting themselves, starving or going into hiding. But the departure of the sponsored fans meant that the FIFA World Cup 2010 had lost one of its attractions.

Conclusion

Our account of the way the Ghanaian government organized and paid for a fan trip involving over 1000 Ghanaians to the FIFA World Cup in South Africa in June 2010 shows the importance attached by the Ghanaian government to the creation
and support of a national fan culture. This setting of priorities is remarkable in view of the country’s very limited resources. It may therefore seem surprising that there was no fundamental disagreement about whether the trip should take place. Arguments such as that the trip was unnecessary in view of the poverty in Ghana, or that there should be other priorities for the work of a government, were not audibly expressed either by the opposition parties or by the media. We see this as the reflection of a fundamental social acceptance of fan trips for the purpose of promoting the national culture, supporting the national team and creating a public image of Ghana as a modern African nation.

The government and the opposition argued only about how this could best be achieved. The selection of the fans and their financing, and the actions of the government or the officials involved in organizing the trip may have been influenced by motives other than the promotion of national feelings, for instance the desire to finance a trip to South Africa for friends, to serve a clientele or to keep secret important sources of funding of the governing party. Through their critical reports, the opposition and the media tried to publicize the alleged incompetence of the government, which they claimed was not capable of carrying out this important political task. If anything, the importance of the fan trip as such was underlined by this criticism.

The development and construction of national identity is guided by the global travelling model of a functioning nation state and its forms of communitarization, but must be regarded in each case as a different construction site involving different actors. Similarly, the travelling model of the patriotic fan, which is shared by all nations participating in the World Cup, should also be seen as a blueprint for various specific kinds of support of, and identification with, national teams. Thus, the European nations, for instance, expect their fans to pay for active government support in the form of organizing communal accommodation and transfers to the matches, or guaranteeing security measures for the prevention of violence, in order to ensure peaceful relations among celebrating fans. On the other hand, poorer nations such as Ghana, Nigeria, Ivory Coast or North Korea use government funds to cover a great part or even the whole of the costs of officially organized fan trips, and thus to pay for the production of images of cheering fans.

Thus, there are fundamental differences in the actual work done by states. Despite these differences, the travelling model of the fan has become an important symbol of the production and presentation of national identity, which no nation taking part in a major sporting event can afford to dispense with. Among the different types of work carried out by states in this regard, the use of paid ‘mercenaries’, as in the case of the fans financed by the North Korean government, is only one extreme end of a continuum.

It is possible that the fan trip to South Africa opened the construction site of creating a broader football fan culture in Ghana. It is clear that only a small number of those who went on the fan trip fulfilled the popular image of supporters with a ‘hot, traditional identification’, in the sense of people who had long belonged to a fan club but couldn’t afford to pay for the trip themselves. During our field research, we repeatedly noticed that many of the fans in South Africa had very little knowledge of football, and also very little interest in watching the matches between other nations on television or at public live broadcasts events or in knowing how the World Cup was progressing. However, we cannot say whether any of these people became more interested in football as a result of the trip.
We observed different motivations on the part of the men and women who went on the fan trip. Many of them saw it as a unique opportunity to be able to undertake such a journey once in their life. They hoped for the best possible conditions and accepted that they were at the mercy of the functionaries and their relatively arbitrary decisions. They expected to get tickets for the matches, but were also satisfied if they got into a stadium just once.

In the interactions between the fans, we observed clear hierarchies, not only in respect of economic means, but also in respect of access to knowledge about the organization of the trip and access to the functionaries. The lack of transparency in the information policy on the part of the organizers helped to make it possible for money to be embezzled without anyone being able to complain to the responsible authorities, a matter which remained very obscure. Finally, the overlapping of responsibilities also caused confusion. Even party members did not always know what was paid for by the state, represented by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and what was paid for by the governing party. Thus, features of the Ghanaian state and Ghanaian society, such as the intermingling of party and government, were reflected and reproduced on this trip.

The government’s aim of demonstrating a national fan culture in South Africa was best realized where it was medially visible. The conspicuous differences in styles of dress between the social classes largely disappeared in the stadium, during the journeys to the matches, and during the occasional visits by international television teams in the fan camp. The images of the fans are dominated by colourful outfits, complicated make-up and global fan accessories such as vuvuzelas. For the cameras and television spectators all over the world, the members of the fan trip appeared as cheering fans united by a national passion for football, with no sign of social differences or knowledge hierarchies.

In the stadium, the enthusiasm shown by the fans did not suggest that their trip was an enterprise organized by the Ghanaian government. To this extent, the Ghanaian state’s investment in this construction site was worth it, even if on closer inspection other aspects of statehood in Africa, such as corruption or informal overlapping of roles, also became visible. Whether the trip really furthered the process of nation building on the domestic level is hard to say. It certainly contributed to the public representation of national identity. In the stadium, our impression was that the self-perception of the Ghanaian fans corresponded to the stereotype spread in the media of the dancing, enthusiastic African football fans. When cheering their team, the government-organized fans from Ghana were at work in the way that the government had hoped. Despite all critics and challenges that went along with this fan trip, it is noteworthy to mention that the current Ghanaian NDC-government organized a second trip and sent about 1000 supporters to the 2013 edition of the African Cup of Nations in South Africa. This time, additional funds were raised by external sponsors and the group of supporters merely included those who are active members of one of the various national supporters’ unions. Obviously, the state-financed fan trip to South Africa in 2010 was successful to the extent that it was worth to repeat it under slightly different conditions.68

To date, genuine ethnographic studies of the connection between sports and national identity, such as that by Ramachandra Guha69 on cricket as a national sport in India or Paul Nchoji Nkwi and Bea Vidacs70 on football and politics in Cameroon, have played a comparatively minor role. Investigations into the role of fans and national identity at major sporting events are also distinctly underrepresented.
Certain exceptions, such as the article by Richard Giulianotti on the negotiation of national identity among Irish fans during the 1994 FIFA World Cup in the United States, prove the value of anthropological studies in this area. However, with our paper, we hope to have shown that such studies can be particularly useful in respect of those countries (such as in post-colonial Africa) where the building of national identity is a vital concern among governments and citizens alike and where negotiations among the various actors reveal the actual processes of working on national identity and nation-building.

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Notes
1. According to own statistics, FIFA estimated an overall number of 3.2 billion viewers around the globe (FIFA, ‘Almost half the world tuned in’).
2. Handelsblatt, ‘Fan-Söldner bei Nordkorea’. Translation by the authors.
3. Informal talks with representatives and fans from Nigeria and Ivory Coast revealed that these countries also financed the trip of national supporters to South Africa. Although, we assume that their number of state-financed supporters is much smaller than in the case of Ghana, it indicates that governments of various African countries had motives to secure the support of fans for their national teams during the FIFA World Cup.
4. This characterization of the members of the Ghanaian trip to South Africa would point to the ‘hot’ identity of fans and supporters in the sense of Giulianotti’s taxonomy of spectator identities (see Giulianotti, ‘Supporters, Followers, Fans, and Flaneurs’). However, although we will elaborate on the fact that the state-financed Ghanaian spectators were a heterogeneous group of people later on, we use the terms fans and supporters simultaneously in order to address their enthusiastic dedication to their team in the stadiums, may their motives of taking part in the trip be rather ‘traditional’ or ‘consumer-oriented’.
5. Marcus, ‘Ethnography in/of the World System’. Since we were not able to accompany the Ghanaian fans throughout their journey from Ghana to South Africa and back, we focused on a following the fans approach during their actual work at the FIFA World Cup when the processes of producing nationalism were crucially negotiated.
6. In addition to the Minister in the Ghanaian High Commission in South Africa, Ibrahim Abass, whom we quoted at the beginning of this paper, the formal interview partners quoted in the text are the government and party officials responsible for the organization of the trip, Sulley Obi and Samuel Mensah. Their names have been altered for reasons of confidentiality. List of formal interviews: Interview 1: Sulley Obi, 24.06.2010, Muzinda Residence, Pretoria. Interview 2: Samuel Mensah, 29.06.2010, Lulli Lulli Hotel, Pretoria. Interview 3: Ibrahim Abass, 07.07.2010, Ghana High Commission, Pretoria.
7. We are grateful to Kojo, Kwame, Kwaku and Yaw for their hospitality and friendship. The names of the fans we interviewed and accompanied have been changed.
11. See Lentz, “‘Ghana@50’”.
12. Anderson, Imagined Communities; see also Hobsbawm and Ranger, The Invention of Tradition. For our study, Anderson’s approach seems to be a good point of reference because of its explicit ethnographic focus. Nationalism is, in his viewpoint, not an abstract idea or belief, but a point of reference being created and reaffirmed by people’s actual practices and shaped by institutional settings. As Anderson shows, the specific
circumstances and conditions in which they refer to an imagined community (people who belong to a specific territory) can be analysed empirically.

14. Lentz, “Ghana@50”.
15. Askew, Performing the Nation, 12–3.
17. Müller, Fußball als Paradoxon der Moderne, 53.
19. see, for instance Ikhioya, ‘Olympic Games as instruments in fostering national identities’; Hogan, ‘Staging the Nation’; Hunter, ‘Flying the Flag’; Rowe, ‘Sport and the Repudiation of the Global’; Tomlinson and Young, National Identity and Global Sports Events; and Kersting, ‘Sport and National Identity’.
24. Künzler, Fußball in Afrika, 65–85; see also Cornelissen, ‘Scripting the nation’; and Gruber, ‘Fußball in Südafrika’.
26. Ibid., 265.
27. Women Soccer Africa, ‘Nigerian Women’s Soccer Club Owners have big plans’.
32. Crabbé, ‘“The Public Gets What the Public Wants”’, 423.
33. Ghana News Agency, ‘Close to 15 Million Dollars Spent on 2010 World Cup’.
34. Ghana News Now, ‘World Cup tickets on sale Dec 6’; and Mensah, ‘Ghana to Start Selling World Cup Tickets On December 6’.
35. Modern Ghana, ‘World Cup: Over 1300 tickets for selected groups’.
36. Ibid.
37. Mensah, ‘World Cup 2010 Exclusive’.
38. This committee consisted of 12 members, mainly representatives of the Ministry of Youth and Sport, plus other representatives of the government, the GFA and the Sports Writers Association of Ghana.
40. Gadugah, ‘CPP proposes a sports supporters’ lottery’; and Efe Mensah, ‘NDC has serious lessons to learn’.
42. When asked whether the government also sponsored fans to come to Germany for the World Cup 2006, Samuel Mensah said he assumed that the governing party at the time, the National Patriotic Party (NPP), sponsored only party members, using public money.
43. The Ghanaian Journal, ‘GCB sponsors Stranded Fans to S.A.’.
44. All Africa, ‘Ministers Clash over Stranded Footsoldiers’.
45. Gadugah, ‘Stranded supporters at El-wak turn anger on camera man’.
46. All Africa, ‘Ministers Clash over Stranded Footsoldiers’.
51. The official slogan of the FIFA World Cup 2010. It is a Sotho expression meaning ‘It is time’.
52. Samuel Mensah explained that the Ghanaian fans were accommodated not at one place but in two different places in Pretoria, because it was unclear for a long time how big the Ghanaian fan group would be. Muzinda Residence, which was the hostel first booked, could accommodate only 1000 Ghanaians.

53. Source: GhanaWeb, ‘Ghana soccer fans go mad over tickets; block road in SA’.

54. du Plessis and Chauke, ‘Ghana fans claim corruption’.

55. Ibid.

56. Chauke, MacLeod and du Plessis, ‘More accusations in Ghana tickets row’.

57. Even the international press reported that the Ghanaians had sold tickets on the black market (Tagesspiegel, ‘Nacht der Sterne’).

58. According to a statement by Ibrahim Abass, the Ghanaian authorities knew about the accusations. But no case of rape had been reported to the South African police, and no indication of sexual aggression had been found when the authorities made their own investigations in the fan camps.

59. Sarpong, ‘NDC Sent Rapists’.

60. Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, ‘Die “Black Stars”’; Translation by the authors.

61. Ibid. 


64. In this respect, Ghana’s case is unique since – due to the sheer number of state-financed supporters – the public debate over the issue was certainly a bigger media event in Ghana than in the other countries which sent smaller numbers of supporters to South Africa.


66. Obimpeh, ‘Government to Sponsor Fans’; and Atipaga, ‘Ghana’s supporters unions bent on working together’. Remarkably, however, the Ghanaian government had dashed the hopes of supporters all over the country to sponsor a trip to the Africa Cup of Nations in Gabon and Equatorial-Guinea in early 2012. According to Nii Nortey Dua, the government did not intend to make it a norm to sponsor fan trips to major sporting events (GhanaWeb, ‘No Sponsorship for supporters group to AFCON2012’). Supporters unions criticized the government’s decision by pointing on the importance of fans for the success of the Black Stars. Furthermore, since the government encouraged supporters unions to apply for visa and tickets, many fans expected to receive government support for the trip to Gabon and Equatorial-Guinea. According to spokespersons of various supporters unions, many fans had to cancel their plans to support the Black Stars during the tournament (Viwotor, ‘National Women Supporters Union Count Loss’).


68. Guha, ‘Politik im Spiel’.


70. Giulianotti, ‘Back to the Future’.

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Lentz, C. “‘Ghana@50’: Celebrating the Nation – Debating the Nation’. University of Mainz. [http://www.ifes.uni-mainz.de/workingpapers/AP120.pdf](http://www.ifes.uni-mainz.de/workingpapers/AP120.pdf).


