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Football tourist trips: a new analytic for tourism studies

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the significance of touristic trips by European football fans. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork with supporters of the Turkish team Beşiktaş, I argue that journeys to watch sides play constitute an 'exceptional habit', a ritualised shot of unorthodoxy that provides structure for other practices of football support. These trips are characterized by bodily practices less common in everyday life, such as mass imitation, fighting and drinking to excess. Yet examining fans' home lives also shows how they draw on exceptional practices to prepare for and memorialise the away match experience. Tracking both everyday and exceptional aspects of football support helps rebalance tourism studies: away from disproportionate focus on the touristic moment to considering its interpolation with everyday life.

Introduction

On weekday evenings during the football season, tens of thousands of fans travel to watch their sides play in intra-European cup competitions. Top male club sides from the fifty-four member nations of UEFA, the continent's governing body, compete annually in two cup contests, the Europa League and the Champions League. The structure of the cups means that each participating side plays their rivals twice: once at their home stadium and once 'away', at the ground of their competitor. This article is concerned with these away matches, which it takes as a form of tourism with untapped theoretical potential.

Tourists' desire to see and do sport whilst travelling has grown exponentially, as evidenced by the proliferation of holidays built around undertaking a sport (Green and Chalip, 1998; Osti et al., 2018), travelling to watch others competing (Jones, 2008) or sometimes both (Fairley et al., 2018). The increase has prompted an expansion in the field of sports tourism studies, which has grown from a small group producing mostly industry-focused publications into a multidisciplinary endeavour with specialist journals. Scholars explore phenomena as diffuse as the social impact of sports events (Chalip, 2006), consumption amongst travelling sports fans (Smith and Stewart, 2007) or the motivations driving sports tourism (McCartney, 2005; Weed, 2012).

Much of this work looks to position sports tourism as a subset of leisure and tourism studies (Weed, 2005). Whilst useful for drawing out similarities between sports and other leisure pursuits, this conceptualisation of the field unwittingly overshadows links between sports tourism and sports studies, in particular works on the sociology of sport. Sport has been shown to be a productive engine of theory for topics as diffuse as gender (Connell, 2005), class (Bourdieu, 1978), globalisation/cosmopolitanism (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2007; Petersen-Wagner, 2017b) and nationalism (Appadurai, 1996). Given the potential, it is curious how few studies of tourism draw on sport sociology's intellectual vitality and depth to enhance extant debate. Based on ethnographic research with travelling fans for the Turkish football team Beşiktaş, this article attempts such an intervention. Witnessing how fans negotiate personal conceptions of fandom within the group activity of going 'away' can help us reflect on a deeper mediation all tourists must undergo – between the everyday and the extraordinary of the tourist experience.

What type of tourists are these fans who travel with their teams? The common notion is that they are 'fanatics', a view shaped by a

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popular culture in love with the stories of the obsessed (Hornby, 1992) and reinforced by a first wave of fan studies that saw its role to legitimise 'the fan' and their practices as thoughtful and creative (Fiske, 1989; Jenkins, 1992). Whilst validating fan practices and identifications as 'serious', the portrayal of communities as 'subcultures' or otherwise apart from mainstream society closed down consideration of fandom's interpolation with everyday life – a circumstance that it is increasingly important to understand given the encroaching ubiquity of sport and 'celebrity culture' globally (Marcus, 2019; Sandvoss, 2005).

The casual observer could come away with widely contrasting ideas about the nature of the away match for supporters depending on what parts of it they witnessed. Seeing fans in a town square or bar they might think the experience one of superficial male hedonism. A 'carnival' of drinking and chanting unfolds, from which women are either excluded or included on highly qualified terms, akin to another male-dominated tourist experience, the 'stag weekend' (Thurnell-Read, 2012). Glimpse the same supporters in the stadium, however, and a different image emerges. Dressed in team colours, they stand arm-in-arm; they sing and move in time, they scream, they shout – sometimes cry. The experience clearly contains great symbolic and emotional power. At these moments, its closest analogue seems to be the religious pilgrimage, the devoted believer on a quest.

We of course do not have to choose one of these views over the other. The pilgrim/tourist dichotomy was collapsed many decades ago, under the weight of much research showing the terms are not conceptual opposites but tightly imbricated in context-specific ways (Coleman and Eade, 2004; Nolan and Nolan, 1992). Likewise, enough research exists to warn against viewing fandom as either solely a 'serious', life or death matter or a detached, flâneur-like identification (Giulianotti, 2002; Sandvoss, 2003). Even for the self-selecting fans who are willing to travel, sports fandom has been shown to be best conceived as a process through which individuals wax and wane in their interest, rather than a static category of belonging (McManus, 2015).

Indeed, it is precisely the combination in the away match experience of contradictory behaviours – of the exceptional and the everyday, the important and the trivial – that provides a spur to reconsider established paradigms in tourism studies more broadly. Fans' involvement in what I call the 'exceptional habit' of away match attendance – their comportment, words, even media use – helps us rethink wider questions of the touristic moment, how it is generated and its relation to everyday life.

Sports tourism: from mega events to bodily habits

The study of the touristic practices of sports fans has overwhelmingly concentrated on 'mega events', large-scale temporary occasions such as the Olympic Games or FIFA World Cup which are dramatic in character, contain mass appeal and are internationally significant (Horne and Manzenreiter, 2006; Millward, 2012; Roche, 2000). What unites studies of sporting mega events is their preoccupation with the exceptional moment. Mega events stand as a point out of time – a temporary suspension of normal routine. It is, then, not surprising that researchers wanting to understand these events have frequently turned to scholarship concerned with exceptional communal events. Drawing on theorists such as Émile Durkheim ([1912] 2001), Victor Turner ([1969] 2007) and Mikhail Bakhtin (1984), scholars of sporting mega events have argued persuasively that these occasions provide the materials that contemporary societies use to reflect on who they are and what they stand for – from spectators engaging in a 'vanity fair' (Alpan et al., 2015) or 'carnivalesque' transgression (Giulianotti, 1995; Pearson, 2012) to host nations using their organisation of the event to prove economic or diplomatic might (Brownell et al., 2018; Kelly and Brownell, 2011).

The phenomenon addressed here – away match trips for club sides – should not be confused with these mega events. Whilst sharing some qualities, notably the sense of being a moment out of time, they are different in important ways. Temporally, the club away match is more regular; there may be as many as a dozen in a calendar year compared to the biannual or four-yearly interval of a mega event. The cost of attending an away match, too, is ordinarily far cheaper, typically allowing for a broader demographic to attend. Perhaps most importantly, allegiance to a club side complicates ideas of nationality – the common lens through which spectators at mega events are considered. Whilst club teams often stand in for a nation, they have the ability represent other identities, most obviously at the regional and the pan-European or global level (see King, 2000; Hognestad, 2009; Millward, 2011, 76–93; Petersen-Wagner, 2017a).

These differences point to a deep distinction between fans of national and club football teams in Europe – the practice of supporting the latter is more 'habitual'. The idea of sports fandom as an everyday habit has gained ground in recent decades, a response to the increasing presence of sports in everyday interactions, from television viewing to social media practices (Buffington, 2017; Gibbons and Dixon, 2010). Consequently, there has been a drift by scholars away from conceptualising fandom as exceptional subculture – the dominant framework in the 1960s and 70s when fan studies first emerged (Hebdige, 1979) – to viewing it as part of the everyday. A concomitant shift can be discerned in the theories adopted, away from collective performances and towards individual practices (Crawford, 2004; Gray et al., 2017). Central to much of this work is various iterations of 'practice theory', the belief that the social system of meaning comes through the researcher assessing the routines of mundane life, the 'habitus' inscribed into the body through repetition (Bourdieu, 1977 1993).

There are of course non-corporeal forms of travel (Elliot et al., 2017) and numerous ways of being a football fan at a distance (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2006; Lawrence and Crawford, 2020). Nevertheless, across the globe, football fans seem to place a premium on being physically close to other fans, even if that physicality has to occur in a pub or café rather than the stadium (Akindes, 2011; Weed, 2007). This 'compulsion of proximity' (Boden and Molotch, 1994) reminds us that being a football fan is a profoundly corporeal experience – from hugging others in celebration of a goal to ingesting substances which transform the body from its normal state.

After a slow start (Veijola and Jokinen, 1994), the role of the body in tourism has been increasingly well-explored, especially in relation to issues of gender and disability (Andrews and Palmer, 2020; Pritchard et al., 2007; Small et al., 2012). Yet researchers often focus exclusively on bodily experiences within the tourist moment. Though helpful for understanding the variegated performances of

bodies whilst 'away', the focus leaves unanswered questions about how these practices are reconciled, or deliberately set apart from, bodily praxis 'at home'. A more Bordieuan focus on bodies as things that generate touristic *habits* that repeat elsewhere, allied with research methods that track across the binary division of 'away' and 'home', better equips us to understand lesser-known practices, such as how the body is used to prepare for trips or memorialise them afterwards.

The theoretical potential of football touristic trips lies in their ability to draw together these disparate threads. Football trips occupy an ontological space between the 'everyday' practices of fandom and the rare 'exceptional' experiences of mega events. I argue that these European away matches are an 'exceptional habit' – an essential, periodically-occurring shot of unorthodoxy around which the habits of football support can be structured. Tourism researchers need foci like the away match, and methodologies such as long-term ethnographic fieldwork, to ensure they cover both the exceptional and the everyday of tourism and hence better understand its motivations and purposes.

Study methods

This paper is based on ethnographic fieldwork from 2009 to 2014 with one particular group of fans, Europe-based supporters for the Turkish football team Beşiktaş. Beşiktaş is one of Turkey's largest football clubs. Based in Istanbul, it has millions of fans in Turkey. But it also has hundreds of thousands of supporters from Turkish-speaking diaspora communities across Europe – a diverse, distributed group of approximately 4–6 million individuals (Abadan-Unat, 2011). Amongst those who call themselves 'Beşiktaş fans' is one particular supporters group named Çarşı Berlin. Formed in 2003 by a handful of Beşiktaş fans in the German capital, the group has since grown to number 600–700 people. Çarşı Berlin, despite its name, is now a transnational European fan club with branches from London to Vienna. Fans meet up regularly in their home cities to watch games on TV in pubs and cafes. They post on a private, password-protected online messageboard, and interact on Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter. Yet they also attend away matches, where they drink, chant and support the team.

Much of Çarşı Berlin's behaviour is 'typical' across football fans of other teams and nations, as evidenced by the increase focus on social media within sports scholarship (Lawrence and Crawford, 2020) and of ideas of 'carnival' and 'ritual' within other ethnographies of European away matches (King, 2003; Pearson, 2012). Yet like all ethnographic study, my findings inevitably include behaviours specific to the particular research milieu, in particular its Turkish-language and diasporic framing. Where obvious, I highlight the similarities and draw distinctions. Yet on its own this study does not have the capacity for comparative ethnography. Rather, its aim is to stand as an open invitation to others to use the findings in a comparative manner, furthering inquiry into what remains an underexplored tourism practice.

My access to Çarşı Berlin emerged through contacts during previous fieldwork undertaken with Beşiktaş fans in Turkey (McManus, 2013). Prior to that project, I had no connection to Beşiktaş, but I built a network of contacts in Turkey and later the Turkish-speaking diaspora that enabled me to do the research. Attending matches and interacting with Beşiktaş fans on a daily basis rendered it impossible to maintain an impartial position as to whether or not I was a 'fan'. The sheer number of hours spent with supporters meant that the group began to view me (and I myself) *as* a Beşiktaş fan. This was not in itself a terrible thing: being seen as an outsider would have limited my access to individuals. In many ways, research with football fans simply renders explicit the inherent dilemma on 'taking sides' intrinsic to ethnographic projects (Armbruster and Laerke, 2010). Nevertheless, research from the position of insider or participant naturally comes with the ethical responsibility to reorient to become an ethnographer within a familiar field (Abu-Lughod, 1988). I foregrounded my status as a researcher by explaining to all fans I met that I was undertaking a research project on the group. In addition to ethnographic fieldwork, I conducted 19 life story interviews with particular fans – a useful reminder that I was not simply there to watch games. On the messageboard and other online spaces, I highlighted my researcher status but also participated in line with other members – overtly contributing to organisation of games, gossiping about transfers and other footballing stories and logging in to see what others had written. The language of interaction was Turkish with occasional English. As with all ethnographic research, names have been anonymised to protect participants' privacy.

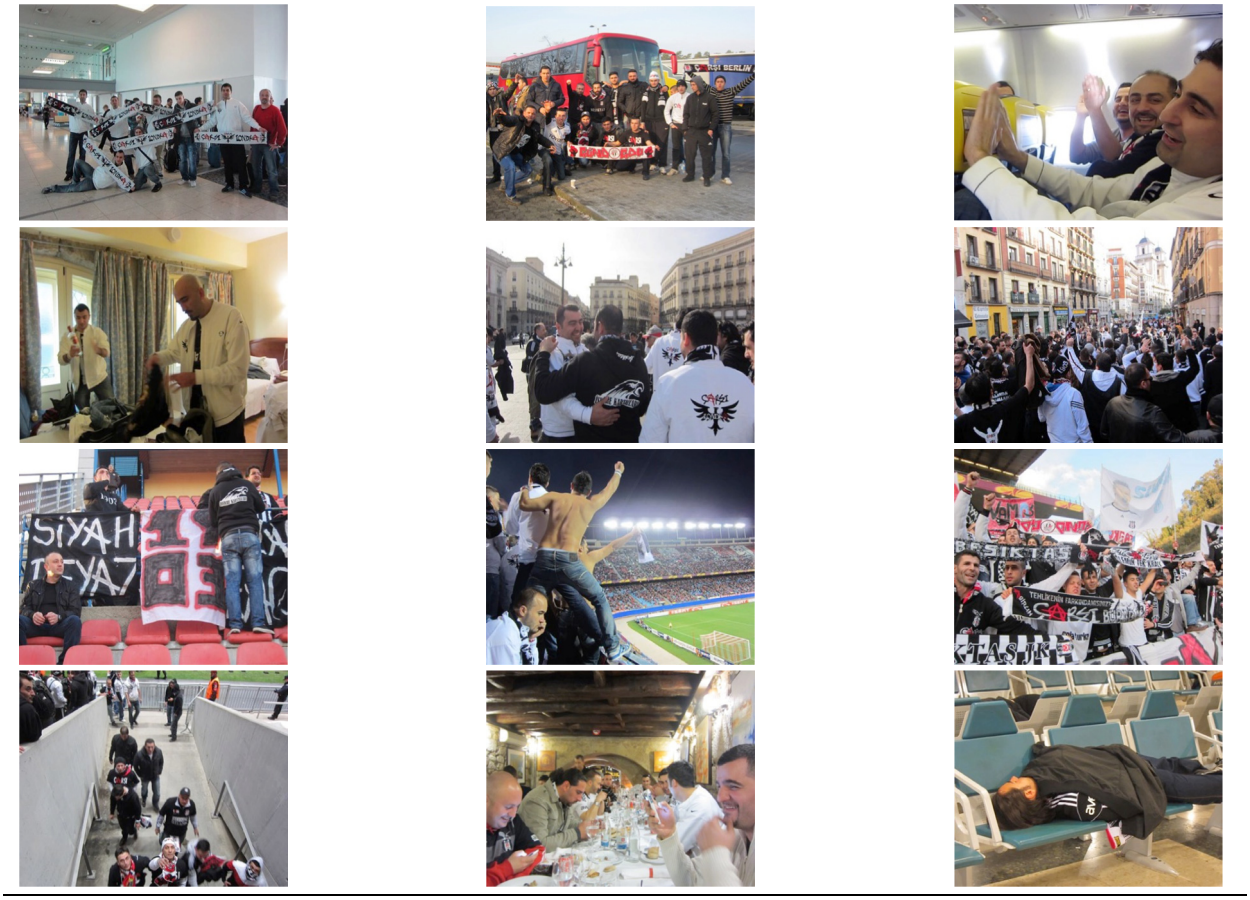
European football cup competitions are structured so that opponents can come from any of UEFA's participating nations. During my fieldwork I attended Beşiktaş matches in Portugal, Germany, Israel, the UK, Spain, Ukraine, Lithuania and Turkey. Location of course has some bearing on the experience. Visa availability and travel costs meant that Beşiktaş games in Israel were more sparsely attended than fixtures in Germany, for instance. Yet despite the variations in location, crowd size and match result, there was a strong sense of repetition in the journeys and the pre- and post-match conduct of supporters. It became clear that the acts I was witnessing were the means by which fans were ritualizing their membership of the Çarşı Berlin community. I consequently devote the first section of this article to considering how anthropological theories of ritual can help us understand the construction of the away match as an 'exceptional' moment.

But theories of ritual tend to flatten out differences amongst participants. I came to realise that fans' support was also expressed in the form of a diverse array of habitual practices. Consequently, the second section looks in more detail at how the away match as an experience is folded into everyday habits and routines of football fandom – from organisational technology to the idioms used to describe the collective. Across both the 'exceptional' and 'everyday' of the Çarşı Berlin fan experience was a constant importance placed on the body in the ongoing enactment of belonging to the collective. The final section explores in more detail the significance of bodies in the context of away match tourism, arguing that sport studies' particular sensitivity to practices of embodiment can be a useful heuristic for tourism studies more broadly. In witnessing through ethnographic fieldwork how actors conduct and describe bodily mediations, tourism studies can hone the analytic through which it understands the 'exceptional habit' of tourism more broadly.

The away match as exceptional

An away match trip for Çarşı Berlin usually begins with congregating at an airport or, if the journey is short, a coach station or car park. Fans will be normally be dressed in their side's black and white colours. They will embark on their journey to where the match is to be played – socializing en route, often through singing and drinking alcohol. Once they arrive, they check into hotels, normally 3 or 4 people to a room. They change, rest, prepare banners and then head out to meet with other fans. Supporters congregate in large numbers in public places. They chat, chant and drink – often to excess. This may result in tension or clashes with fans of the rival team, locals or the police. As kick-off approaches, fans head to the stadium. Once inside, they hang up their banners and arrange themselves in position on the terrace, often assigning a terrace leader to conduct the chants. When the game starts, they sing, dance, move and support the side by shouting encouragement. The match result has little effect on post-game behaviour: win, lose or draw, fans would go for food or more beers, eschewing talk of the team for an evaluation of their own performances – who sang well, who got into trouble, were there any intra-group tensions or amusements? Some stay up all night, clubbing and drinking. The next day, depending on the time of the flight, there might be some tired, cursory sight-seeing before heading home.

Visual vignettes of the away match experience, from trips 2009–2014 (all author's photos)



The romance of the away match is captured in popular fan songs sung by Çarşı Berlin in Turkish. In these songs, Beşiktaş is invoked as a lover that must be visited (*Bölünür senin için uykular / Gidilecek çok deplasman var* 'For you I'm kept from sleep / there are lots of away matches to go on'). The experience's significance is also underlined by the intricate documentation of the away match: fans will hold cameras or phones aloft at every stage of the experience, recording proceedings on the plane travelling to the destination, in bars once there, and in the stadium (Figs. 1-3). These media act as 'affective storage' (Elliott and Urry, 2010), to be accessed at later points through the circulation of a video or photograph.

What is it about the away match that makes involvement so compelling? Many of the justifications for attending can be linked to the experience's ostentation and separateness from ordinary life. Circumstances or practices that are exceptional have commonly been explored by social scientists through the paradigm of ritual. Rituals have been conceptualised as providing a glimpse into the important values and 'inner workings' of the groups or individuals taking part. Some of the earliest anthropological works reflect this elementary idea in their schema (Radcliffe-Brown, 1922 2013; Frazer, 1909 2007, 190). Nowadays, rituals are discussed more

Fig. 1. Fan taking a picture on a digital camera on the way to a game, Braga, Portugal, 14 February 2012 (author's photo).

Fig. 2. Çarşı Berlin member recording video on his phone at a match, Stoke-on-Trent, England, 29 September 2011 (author's photo).

Fig. 3. Beşiktaş fan photographing another supporter holding a placard in the stadium, Tel Aviv, Israel, 1 December 2011 (author's photo).

commonly as a practice and performance rather than an ideal or fixed state. Yet even the subsequent process of 'ritualisation' (Bell, 2009) is defined most often in terms of practices that give special value to actions, what Stewart and Strathern call 'intensifying strategies' (Stewart and Strathern, 2014, 2). There are two particular concepts from this literature that I feel are pertinent to unpicking the away match experience: notions of liminality and imitation.

Liminality

Perhaps the most well-known investigation of liminality is Victor Turner's book on 'The Ritual Process' (Turner, 1969 2007). Building on the work of Arnold Van Gennep (1961), Turner argues that all rites of passage are marked by three symbolic phases: separation, margin (limen) and aggregation. Freed from the constraints of the everyday environment, which Turner labels 'social structure', the participant passes into a liminal state that opens up creative possibilities. In this 'anti-structure', new types of behaviour are possible, such as the formation of egalitarian social bonds labelled 'communitas'. Communitas is 'a transformative experience that goes to the root of each person's being and finds in that root something profoundly communal and shared' (Turner, 1969 2007, 138). In its purest form it is existential and spontaneous, although Turner concedes it often suffers a 'fall' into a more normative configuration typified by hierarchy and organisation. Once the ritual subject has experienced the transformative effects of communitas, they pass to the final stage, returning to their 'stable state' with new rights, obligations and responsibilities.

This schema bears more than a passing resemblance to the arc of the away match. In travelling to games, European Beşiktaş fans put hundreds of miles between them and their normal set of cultural conditions. They spend their time in a liminal state, wandering around foreign cities, unable to speak the language, part of 'a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state' (Turner, 1969 2007, 94). At its heart is an event of pure synchronic communitas as fans gather in a purpose-built venue, separated from the 'home' fans, and spend 90 minutes enacting behaviours and states that are not easily obtainable in everyday life – shouting, singing, hugging or crying with others. Upon their return, a fan's status is enhanced, memorialized in photographic evidence, recalled and revoked in 'banter' amongst a select group who also went through the same experience. Others have made the case for viewing the tourist experience in general as inherently ritualistic (MacCannell, 1976 1999; Urry and Larsen, 2011). There is also the question of how technological developments, such as social media, enhance or undermine the wonder of the experience (McManus, 2018). For the purposes of the current argument, I wish merely to highlight liminality as an important underlying element of sports away match attendance, and for sports tourism more generally to be viewed as capable of being ritualistic.

Imitation

The second idea I wish to introduce is the importance of imitation to acts of ritualisation. There is a multi-disciplinary array of arguments for taking seriously the role of imitation in social processes (Tarde, 1903 2009; Mazzarella, 2010). Michael Taussig's study of replication within 'first contact' in nineteenth century Latin America, which argues that mimesis is seen as possessing magical and enchanting qualities, resonates particularly strongly with the away match experience (Taussig, 1993). The repetitions on display at a football match do frequently 'enchant' those who take part in them (McManus, 2018). Many Beşiktaş songs take the form of call and response that normally see the crowd divide into two groupings; one of which contains the 'self', the second of which is 'othered'. The replication between groups is multi-sensory, the oral sounds, such as '*Kartal gol gol gol*!', Eagle goal goal goal! (the eagle is the team symbol for Beşiktaş) are accompanied by arm movements in the direction of the other group, tying in with Taussig's notion of mimesis as a two-stage affair: first copying, then contact, 'a palpable, sensuous, connection between the very body of the perceiver and the perceived' (Taussig, 1993, 21). Imitation is not specific to Turkish fans. In English grounds the chanting is often directed at different sections of the crowd in turn ('The right stand, the right stand, give us a wave!'). A global example is the 'Mexican wave', where fans coordinate to rise out of their seats with their arms aloft, producing a 'wave' effect around the stands.

Being in a condition of liminality allows notions of equality and communitas to be espoused more readily. Before a Beşiktaş match in Bamberg, Germany, a fan from Çarşı Berlin jumped on a picnic table and reminded the 400 or so congregating fans that, 'everyone is a commander here, nobody's a soldier'. The message of fandom-as-equality arguably derives its strength not only from such discursive acts but also from its tight entwinement with acts of bodily imitation. I return to the importance of the body in fandom in the final section.

The away match as habitual

For all their exceptionality, these away matches also form an important part of the everyday routines of fans. I already mentioned how the photographic and video traces of past away matches are circulated and replayed, part of the nostalgic reminiscing and display of commitment post-trip. But planning for future away matches also intrudes insistently on the everyday of Çarşı Berlin, as illustrated by an explanation given by two fans of how they organize a trip:

Ferhat: we sit in front of the television-

Naci: -or on the internet. The draw [for who Beşiktaş will play] is being undertaken. For example, they draw Stoke City. As soon as it's done, immediately we're looking on the internet for the cheapest flight ticket to Stoke.

F: Ryanair, for example-

N: -what time is the flight?

F: -buy it immediately!

N: we immediately do things to get the tickets… in some workplaces they know the timings. Because it's a Beşiktaş thing, they say 'there's an away match, I want to attend' and according to the time off we're given we begin to arrange.

The prospect of fulfilling the archetypal fan obligation – cheering the team on in the flesh – kickstarts a frenzy of increased interest in *being* a fan: what games to attend? How to get there? What to wear? Sing? Do? Fans are helped in this organisation by the group's online messageboard. On the board, lists are assembled for each facet of the trip: from the names of those who have bought flight

tickets to lists of the banners each will bring. These lists are cultivated on a daily, sometimes hourly, basis: updated, sifted, with members added or subtracted. Habitual involvement in the planning is an important practice for the successful enactment of the away match ritual – both from a practical perspective (it is reliant on a complicated and long set of logistics) but also symbolic, allowing fans to show themselves as committed and involved in the upcoming experience.

Another important means by which away match tourism becomes entwined with the everyday is through balancing commitment to Çarşı Berlin with work or school. Because away matches are mostly on weekday evenings, attendance requires taking time off from work or study. A great deal of conversation amongst fans focuses on how to negotiate this potentially tricky task. Closely allied to this experience is one of negotiating familial responses to away match travel. Some family members are happy for relatives to go to trips. Others forbid it, worried about the possibility of danger or the cost. Fans would also frequently define their involvement in Çarşı Berlin in familial terms:

Cengiz, Cologne, Germany

We just wanted a big community where we all can arrange a game together, arrange an away match and be together and celebrate together… I dunno– if we have to fight then we fight together! [Chuckles]…it's like a hobby, you know? It's kind of like a family, I would say.

Zeynep, Cologne, Germany

It was really cool [attending a match] in Manchester It was really cool 'cause every time it's getting us together and it's – I don't know how to say… the relation that we nurse is getting stronger every time and that's why I… it's more than Beşiktaş for me right now – it's a family. I cannot describe it but it's a family for me.

Ömer, Mannheim, Germany

When I go there [to Turkey, to Beşiktaş games] I'm relaxed. I'm relaxed because there is a big family. A big family. But in that family [it is] just like they are your brothers, other brothers, cousins, everyone with different thoughts.

These utterances all borrow the idiom of that most mundane form of human relationality – the family – and apply it to a fan group. That fans readily adopt this trope to describe away match tourism underlines the danger of understanding this phenomenon as solely 'exceptional'. What is important for fans, in Çarşı Berlin at least, is the sense of closeness that the experience of away match tourism helps generate in their everyday lives. The sense of family is deepened by a wider cultural practice amongst Turkish speakers of addressing strangers and friends by familial epithets. It would not be unusual for a Turkish-speaker in his forties to address his elderly shopkeeper as 'older brother' (*ağabey*), his young hairdresser as 'daughter' (*kız*) and the retired neighbour as 'aunt' (*teyze*). An interesting line of comparative research would be whether fans from cultures without this practice also cast fan group relations in familial idioms.

The generation of communitas during away match attendance directly helps to build fanaticism and togetherness within the group when back 'at home'. As Koray from London exclaimed at a meeting of the Çarşı Berlin London branch:

> If we're all separated, if we're all doing our own thing, we're gonna forget each other. I could've forgot your name over there, on the snooker table for instance [gestures at Sincan] – but I know it's Sincan because we've been away together! …We've all got to be together. You know, go [to] away games. I'd have had much more to say but the Foster's [beer] messed me up!

Koray knows another fan well and can joke with him, 'because we've been away together'. His reference to beer highlights its importance to group ritualization, a point I will return to below. I was frequently told that meeting to watch games on TV or posting on the group's messageboard was 'not enough' for fans. 'You lose the connection between away matches, you know?' one fan told me. 'Only on the away match… you get to know each other'. In utterances such as these, 'true' knowledge of another comes not from everyday interactions but from moments of being away.

These comments all point to the importance for Çarşı Berlin of the away match experience as a Turnerian 'rite of passage' (Turner, 1969 2007, 94–97). Attending matches is a way of synchronizing bodies and emotions ('You cry at the same time, you cheer at the same time. It's a nice feeling', a fan from Dublin told me) and, in turn, these 'exceptional' actions generate a buoyancy and affective power that serves two purposes: bonding the fan to others, and insulating/inoculating them from tedium of the other habitual elements of being part of a fan club.

The body

Intrinsic to both the habitual and exceptional of football fandom are bodies. Besnier and Brownell have noted how, as human pursuits go, sport is the activity *par excellence* for rendering the body an 'object of most intense scrutiny… trained, disciplined, modified, displayed, evaluated, and commodified' (Besnier and Brownell, 2012, 444). Whilst the link is commonly assumed with athletes, less attention has been given to the bodies of sporting spectators despite their clear importance, both in the exceptional experience in the stadium and more mundane ones at home.

But *how* to focus on the body? Turner argued that observing the body in ritual moments can reveal the nature and purpose of groups (Turner, 1969 2007, 147). Examining bodies during the touristic away match experience shows that they can be used to

invoke communitas and equality. Fans I interviewed would regularly describe for me the transformative effects of being part of imitative activities on the terrace. 'It was passionate… you're like going with them [the fans] in like a river flow, you know? And then they took you with them', said Cengiz, from Cologne in Germany.

Yet once we start considering the complexity of bodies at the away match – the ways they are differently articulated, labelled or positioned – their presence grates with Turner's assertion of communitas's universality or Taussig's belief that mimesis invariably leads to 'enchantment'. In the person supping his pint slowly in the corner, or the female fan whose grin seems a little forced, closer attention on fan bodily practices reveals the kinks, warps and gaps in the production of 'togetherness' amongst Çarşı Berlin.

Sports scholarship stands to feed most strongly into tourism studies through the increased nuance it brings to research on bodies. Studying forms of embodiment in touristic encounters is of course a well-established practice, yet one that often lingers on bodies within the 'exceptional' moment of the touristic experience (see Chronis, 2015; Pritchard et al., 2007). Habitual or everyday embodiment is usually only considered from the perspective of locals working in the tourism industry (Prince, 2019). A focus on Çarşı Berlin members shows the important processes by which the body is prepared for the touristic experience and how it resolves the echoes of the experience afterwards. Tracking bodily practices can act as the bridge between the everyday and exceptional – the vessel that can help us transport attention and elements of the touristic experience back into the everyday, where it clearly also resides. I finish by providing two examples of this method in practice: the consumption of alcohol and involvement in violence amongst Çarşı Berlin fans.

Alcohol

A bodily practice integral to the fan experience is the consumption of alcohol. Anthropologist Michael Dietler casts alcohol as 'embodied material culture…created specifically to be destroyed, but destroyed through the transformative process of ingestion into the human body' (Dietler, 2006, 232). Alcohol consumption puts emphasis on the body, but crucially on its ability to be transformed from its 'normal' state. Despite the proscription of alcohol in Islam, a sizeable proportion of Turkish-speakers – and the majority of those who attend Beşiktaş matches – drink. On every trip taken during fieldwork, a majority of Beşiktaş fans would be drinking: sipping beers in the sun by the river, engaging in all night sessions the day before a match, or downing a hasty vodka and Red Bull in a hotel room before heading to the game (Figs. 4-5).

Sports scholars have noted alcohol's importance at sporting events, viewing it as 'a mechanism for highlighting specific times and places where the consumption of sport takes on increased social significance' (Collins and Vamplew, 2002; Palmer, 2014). In other words, the consumption of alcohol is a key practice in marking the away match as 'exceptional'. This finding resonates with research on alcohol's importance to tourism more generally, where drinks in the morning, or imbibing to excess frequently acts as a marker of being in a 'different' realm (Jayne et al., 2012; Sönmez et al., 2006).

Yet at the same time, Çarşı Berlin members do not limit their consumption of alcohol to the away match. Drinking frequently accompanies the watching of matches 'at home', be that at home or in bars, and sometimes even simply the meeting up of fans. As shown by Weed's research on football supporters in English pubs, venues serving alcohol fulfil the same role of providing an opportunity for the physical proximity of supporters (Weed, 2006, 2007). With Çarşı Berlin, alcohol consumption in everyday life is often – but not always – more restrained. It was also more temporally acute, unfolding for perhaps 4 or 5 hours rather than the all-day (or multi-day) drinking of the away match.

Alcohol is frequently a site of contestation amongst Çarşı Berlin. Since 2002, when Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's religiously conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power, the government has tried to discourage alcohol consumption through measures such as banning advertising and raising taxes. As a result, drinking practices carry the added signification of opposition to the ruling party (White, 2013, 132–33). Fans often lose out from this conflation of alcohol and politics: drinkers who are not political find their actions inflated in importance, whilst the abstinence of the small number of pious Beşiktaş fans is interpreted as tacit support for the AKP.

Fig. 4. Fans sipping beers, 13 February 2012, Porto, Portugal (author's photo).

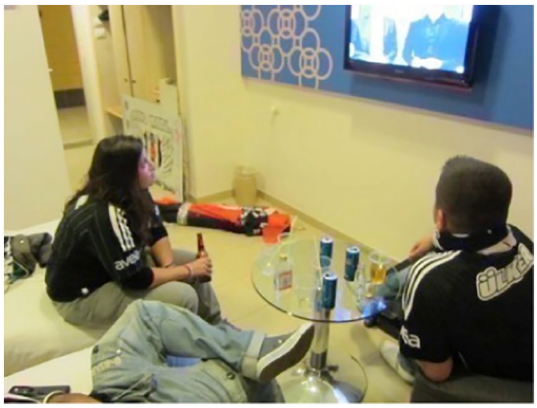


Fig. 5. Vodka and red bull in hotel room, 1 December 2011, Tel Aviv, Israel (author's photo).

Individual proclivities and abilities for alcohol ingestion vary within the group, yet the quantity of alcohol imbibed is often taken to represent importance and closeness (therefore more is better). It is also used as a reason (or excuse) to limit the inclusion of female fans. Many members of Çarşı Berlin see the presence of women – both at away matches and smaller gatherings at home – as an unwelcome intrusion into 'their' space. 'Girls, please don't join the crew [*tayfa*],' wrote one fan on the messageboard. 'Even if you do, then please stand on the edge – don't stress people out for no reason!'. Thurnell-Read has noted how an intoxicated male body is a central trope in the performance of an 'unruly masculinity' for British men on 'stag' tours (Thurnell-Read, 2014, 51). Similarly, one way to limit female involvement in Çarşı Berlin is to drink excessive amounts of alcohol. By tying alcohol consumption to masculinity, male Beşiktaş fans accentuate their differences from women, who in Turkish-speaking communities labour under the social expectation of drinking less or abstaining completely. Yet the performance is intricate. Female fans can be respected for successfully imitating men in the amounts they can hold, and males mocked for 'not drinking like a man' (*adam gibi içmemek*), failing to mimic successfully the ringleaders and getting too drunk.

Through alcohol use, a spectrum of bodily practices is set up by Çarşı Berlin fans – the holiday touristic binge is hooked up to smaller, habitual 'shots' which accompany the gathering of fans in the pub or bar at home. Alcohol can be seen as turning the body itself into a vessel of 'affective storage,' akin to media use (Elliott and Urry, 2010). The transformation that accompanies even a small ingestion evokes the memories of other times and locations in which the body has been altered – namely, away matches. Yet while alcohol use can provide a means for the closeness of that experience to find its way back into the everyday, the diversity of ways in which fans interact with alcohol means that, for every moment where it generates a mimetic pattern of 'communitas', there is another where its presence sows discord.

Violence

Another important bodily practice for some in Çarşı Berlin is involvement in violent acts. A number of academics have shown how travelling football fans across Europe are often associated with violence and disturbance (Millward, 2009; Treadwell, 2014; Williams et al., 1989). During fieldwork, I found myself in the midst of numerous violent situations, including receiving indiscriminate truncheon blows from the Spanish police and witnessing Beşiktaş fans brawl with each other outside a pub in England (Figs. 6-7). Rather than seeing violence as something to avoid, many members of Çarşı Berlin enjoy the sense of transgression and danger

Fig. 6. Fans skirmishing with the Spanish police, Madrid, 8 March 2012 (author's photo).

Fig. 7. Tussle between Çarşı Berlin member and other Beşiktaş fan, 29 September 2011, Stoke-on-Trent, UK (author's photo).

promised by confrontation. Some actively court it.

Academic accounts of violence whilst 'away' typically form a tributary to the wider stream of research concentrating on criminal or hooligan behaviour of football fans (Armstrong, 1998; Dunning, 1999; Dunning et al., 1988; Giulianotti et al., [1994] 2005). Much of it was shaped – directly or indirectly – by Norbert Elias's work on the 'civilising process' (Elias, 1978, 1982) and views supporters through a schema that explains violence as a result of working-class alienation that fosters 'subcultures of aggressive masculinity' (Murphy et al., 1990, 12–13) or otherwise malign 'disorder' (Marsh et al., 1980).

Yet the threats of violence that Beşiktaş fans feel at away matches seems to be less about malignant acting out and more about generating social cohesion. A fan in his forties who lives in Mannheim, Germany, described to me an experience he and a friend went through at an away match against Italian side Lazio in Rome:

> After the match, there was this street and we had to run fast down it. A fan fell down and the Lazio fans came with a knife and they stabbed him… we didn't know anyone [else amongst the Beşiktaş fans]. It was the first time in my life we'd met, the first time that we saw each other… [but] we weren't scared. We went and rescued him. Courage, loyalty… I go [often] to Beşiktaş matches. I know this but I often think, 'Why is there so much brotherhood? [*kardeşlik*].

The Beşiktaş fan explicitly tied brotherhood *(kardeşlik*) and later on affection (*muhabbet*) to the experience of fighting together. In this renditioning, violence seems visceral, tied very closely to the body itself, and at the same time profoundly social – seen as the leading edge of a bond with the wider group. Recent evolutionary anthropological research seems to corroborate the idea that fan violence (or its threat) is less about disorder and more about social cohesion (Newson et al., 2018). The spectre of violence acts as a highly potent affective force, impelling those who otherwise have no connection to each other to feel close, risking their own safety to rescue others from the jaws of danger.

Of course not all forms of violence are physical (Das et al., 2000). Within Çarşı Berlin there is also the symbolic violence (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, 140–72) of excluding women from fan spaces, or forcing their participation in highly qualified terms. Like football fans the world over, there is also a great deal of injurious speech – expletive-laden chants and insults mostly aimed at rival fans but also part of the boisterous banter of being part of the group (Armstrong and Young, 1999). Nor is violence limited to liminal or exceptional moments, such as away matches. During football matches in bars in London and Germany, arguments would sometimes erupt with other people at the bar, who were annoyed at the noise the football fans would make.

Tourism studies has not engaged much with forms of violent sociality such as those displayed by Çarşı Berlin. Whilst violence and danger have been shown to be integral to the touristic experience (Andrews, 2016), the *social* role of violence is frequently denatured through a focus on topics where violence is being done to tourists, such as petty crime (Botterill et al., 2013), or terrorism (Sönmez, 1998) or folded into the expanding literature on 'dark tourism', where tourists visit sites linked to death and suffering (Lennon and Foley, 2000; Sharpley and Stone, 2009).

Reading football fans' experiences into tourism studies can help rethink violence in the touristic experience. It reminds us that, for some, the violence being sought is not historical renderings of death, such as a visit to a battlefield (Stone, 2019) or being a spectator at an agonistic contest, such as a bullfight (Cohen, 2014). Instead, it is one of participant involvement. Much like Thurnell-Read found with the frequent use of war tropes by men on stag weekends (Thurnell-Read, 2014, 49), for Çarşı Berlin, multifaceted – even mundane – involvement in violence is integral to the invocation of risk and adventure that many view as central to the away match experience. Upon the return to normal life, violent episodes are memorialized and re-hashed as part of the legend and lore of the away match. In the excitement with which Beşiktaş fans relate these stories, we see more than a glimpse of the affective pull of danger, of Turner's pronouncement that 'a touch of sin and evil seems to be necessary tinder for the fires of communitas' (Turner, 1969 2007, 183).

However, much like alcohol use, the appetite for participating in – or tolerating – violent acts varies greatly within the group. 'The guys from Germany, they're more aggressive and I feel like the guys from London they're more educated and friendlier,' Serkan from Dublin told me, when talking about who he does – and doesn't – like to associate with amongst Çarşı Berlin. '[They're] more

interested in supporting the teams, not fighting against someone else'. Observing fans and getting to know them over five years' worth of fieldwork caused me to question just how universal these perceived moments of 'violent' communitas were. I came to realise that, like Serkan, there were many in Çarşı Berlin who were uncomfortable with violence, but whose only way of signalling their unease was through rendering their bodies silent or, in some cases, staying away altogether.

Conclusion

I have shown the importance of the 'exceptional habit' of away match tourism for the fashioning of a football supporters' group. Two theoretical schools have helped in this process: the anthropology of ritual for highlighting the collective performances of liminality, imitation and communitas that make the experience exceptional, and practice theory for underlining (and undermining) how these performances are interpolated at the individual body level.

Indeed, I wish to finish with a suggestion that may appear initially contradictory: the diversity in bodily practices, be they drinking techniques or violent confrontation, are not simply something to be overcome but inherent to the affective potency of being part of Çarşı Berlin. Turner notes that whilst intimacy is a crucial ingredient for the generation of communitas, so is the 'mystery of mutual distance' (Turner, 1969 2007, 139). In other words, to ensure the communal event is profound and transformative, the usual barriers that set people apart must be invoked in order to be overcome.

A further line of enquiry is whether the diversity within Çarşı Berlin is representative or atypical when compared to supporter clubs of other professional football teams. Do the different migration histories, languages spoken and locations of Beşiktaş fans across Western Europe stand apart? Or are they as characteristic as any group can be in the transnational age of football belonging? Regardless, the diversity of fans means the away match experience is reliant on a long list of successful mediations: of travel, tourism and media infrastructures; of bodies of different shapes and sizes being brought into alignment. When it works, the result is a wondrous, even magical, sense of unity in diversity: "We went there and we saw – 'ahh!' – fans from Istanbul, fans from England, [Turkish] students in Italy. Such affection!" one fan told me when I asked him to describe his first away match experience at a game in Rome. But it should not come as a surprise that, given this diversity, more often than not perfect communitas and mimesis is not possible, meaning the touristic experience 'does not look as it should look' (Urry and Larsen, 2011, 17). The edifice of unity comes tumbling down amidst tetchy fights or mockery over how someone holds their drink.

My motivations in revealing the inner workings of this 'exceptional habit' have been twofold: filling in knowledge about a lesser-known tourist practice, but perhaps more importantly, to contribute to broader questions about where tourism studies should be looking. Tourism frequently displays its paradoxical nature: a ubiquitous, cross-cultural collective experience of going 'away', yet one that is differentially situated in an overwhelming diversity of ways. Might it enhance our understanding of this paradox if we viewed tourism more generally as an 'exceptional habit'? Adapting this analytic could perhaps ensure that the habitual and exceptional remain in dialogue – an essential element for being able to situate tourism within the wider currents of both individual and collective life. Methodologically, too, I offer this study as an example of the theoretical power of ethnographic work. In contrast to conclusions arrived through top-down theorising, there is a power to witnessing how people themselves mediate between tourism and everyday life.

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