

# CONSTRUCTION AND REPRESENTATION OF IDENTITIES IN FOOTBALL MUSEUMS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
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# **Construction and Representation of Identities in Football Museums: A Comparative Study**

**Jing Yang**



University of  
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of

PhD

at the

University of St Andrews

24 October 2014

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# Abstract

This thesis aims at providing a cross-cultural study of how football museums represent and construct identities, both collective and personal. The research is based on a multi-sited ethnography at selected football museums in the UK, Germany, and China, employing participant observation, photographic recording and online research methods.

Conveying institutionalized authority and the materiality of history, museums furnish venues that compress time and space, and provoke memories. In recent years an increasing number of museums of aspects of popular culture have emerged. The portrayal of popular culture, which penetrates into everyday life experiences, has linked museums more closely with everyday projections of identity. Engaging with one of world's most popular sports, football museums process the possibilities to reach a wide public and to provide forums in which issues of identity might be publicly addressed.

This investigation sharpens an anthropological awareness of constructions of multiple layered identities by examining football museums' exhibiting practices and activity programmes, as well as their built environments and cultural settings. The research also offers a perspective on museum visitors, who consume football museums with diverse personal and collective identity claims.

Looking into the largely under-explored terrain of football museums, this thesis joins continuing anthropological efforts to understand identity work while also exploring continuing tensions inherent in a marriage between museums and football. The thesis contributes to the research field of football/sports museums with an ethnographic emphasis and a cross-cultural range.



# Acknowledgement

The time frame (2010-2014) of my research project coincides with the four-year cycle of the World Cup. Over four years' time, I feel fortunate to have met my 'favourite team'.

The 'head coach' is my supervisor, Professor Nigel Rapport. I would first like to express my immense gratitude to Nigel for his support and guidance. I have been graced to learn from intellectual insights he offered on my research as well as his inspiring projects and monographs. He also encouraged and supported me to network with a wider academic circle to widen my research horizons, from which I benefited hugely. I have been a trouble maker over the years, with a burnt hand, a sore throat, a crashed laptop and a complicated research plan. Nigel has been extremely supportive during my painstaking multiple-site fieldwork as well as those personal hardships in my life, for which I am extremely grateful.

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The 'strikers' of the team are the staff members of the football museums and institutions I worked with. I would like to thank, all the Back of House staff at the National Football Museum, especially Helen, Denise, Peter and Maria; Mr. Ehrenteit and Tina at the Schalke Museum; Mr. Ma of Linzi Football Museum and Mr. Chang of Linzi Tourism Bureau; Dr. Klessmann and his assistant of Triad Berlin; Kalle Voolaid of Eesti Spordimuuseum; finally and especially, Katharina of Brosseum in Dortmund, who supported my research regardless of the fact that I am a fan of her club's biggest rival.

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For, to speak out once for all, man only plays when in the full meaning of the word he is a man, and he is only completely a man when he plays.

Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, *Letters Upon the Aesthetic Education of Man*

I have learned things from the game. Much of my knowledge of locations in Britain and Europe comes not from school, but from away games or the sports pages, and hooliganism has given me both a taste for sociology and a degree of fieldwork experience. I have learned the value of investing time and emotion in things I cannot control, and of belonging to a community whose aspirations I share completely and uncritically.

Nick Hornby, *Fever Pitch*

The power of things inheres in the memories they gather up inside them, and also in the vicissitudes of our imagination, and our memory—of this there is no doubt.

Orhan Pamuk, *The Museum of Innocence*

# Chapter 1 Introduction: time to kick-off

## 1.1 Motivation

This research project is rooted in my love for the sport of football<sup>1</sup> and my love for museums. Being a football supporter as well as a museum lover is essential to my identity.

I started my football fan career in 1998, and witnessed the Chinese national team's first and thus far only appearance in the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup in 2002. Thanks to the TV coverage of major European football leagues in China, since 2005, I have been following the Bundesliga (the top division of the German football league system) games, and have gradually grown into a fan of FC Schalke 04. Giulianotti (1999: xi) notes, 'no other form of popular culture engenders football's huge and participatory passion among its devotees'. Communicating online and in person with Schalke fans over nine years, I have been tremendously impressed by their (local supporters' and distant supporters' as well) commitment to the team's ethos and have recognised how being Schalke fans is significant to their identities. As an anthropology student, my enquiry comes to this: In the flows of this ever-changing game, how are football supporters' identities being represented and expressed?

Greatly inspired by Kevin Moore's (1997) monograph on museum and popular culture, especially his interpretations of the cultural meanings of the ball used in the 1966 World Cup final between England and Germany (now a key exhibit at the National Football Museum in Manchester), I became aware of the roles of material culture and football museums in defining identities. During my research period, the National Football Museum relocated and reopened in

---

<sup>1</sup> The word 'football' refers to modern association football, or say soccer. The ancient, Chinese version of the game will also be introduced.

Manchester, the German National Football Museum building was completed in Dortmund, the new Linzi Football Museum was built in Linzi, the Manchester United Museum was renovated, and many club museums as well as the FIFA football museum project that was initiated. The family of football museums is ever flourishing. It evidences the growing significance of football museums where more research is needed.

## **1.2 Research question and objectives**

In recent years an increasing number of museums have been engaging with popular culture. As a marriage of football and museum, football museums touch and engage many aspects of personal and shared identities. This research project endeavours to explore and understand football museums' roles in identity processes. On the one hand, how do football museums, as public orchestrations of symbols, articulate and interpret their collections in the transmission of meanings? On the other hand, as contested sites of collective memory and social relations, how do football museums communicate and negotiate with their visitors and the wider world?

My primary research question is: How do the football museums represent and construct identities? Specific objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate the representations and interpretations of multiple layered identities in selected football museums of different geographical scopes;
2. To analyse the process of establishing a sense of identity in relation to activities and social practices within, and generated by, selected football museums;
4. To examine the cultural settings of selected football museums and their interactions with the wider museum and football world;
3. To effect a cross-cultural perspective and a comparative approach, drawing upon the interrelations between football museums, within the context of the



global game of football and the globalised world.

### 1.3 Theoretical and methodological position

The book *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986) and cultural theorist Stuart Hall have played key roles in my intellectual development within and beyond this project. Having inherited the tradition of Geertz's interpretive anthropology (1973, 1983), the authors of *Writing Culture* question the ethnographic authenticity and authority, and claim that truths are 'partial, committed, incomplete' (Clifford 1986: 7) and tied to cultural settings; and they encourage a diversity of representations and possibilities of interpretations. Hall's (1973, 1997, and 2003) theoretical framework of cultural representation, signifying practice and cultural identity, develops the Writing Culture tradition. He viewed culture as shared meanings given by participants in a group (Hall 1997) and he studied the role of symbols in everyday life. Reflecting his roots in the Birmingham School, Hall brought popular culture and consumerism into the study of social practice and social change. He introduced an 'encoding-decoding' model, within which meanings are not fixed and transparent; rather, they are shaped by the collaboration of message sender and the message consumers.

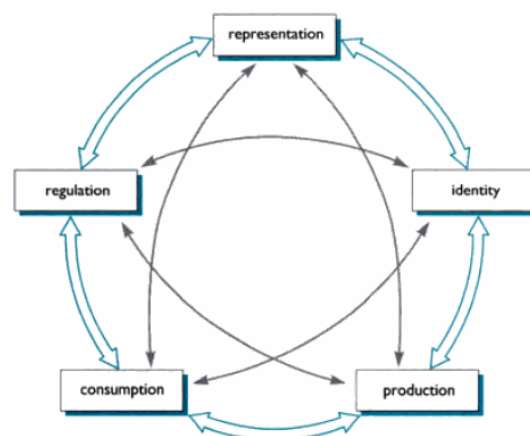


Figure 1.1 Circuit of Culture (Du Gay, Hall, et al. 1997: 3).

The model was further developed as the 'Circuit of Culture' (Figure 1.1, Du Gay, Hall, et al. 1997: 3-4), where cultural products are constructed by passing five interrelated processes of 'representation', 'identity', 'production', 'consumption' and 'regulation'.

I theoretically and methodologically hold a constructivist position. I believe meanings, representations, identities and truths are all constructed and 'subjected to changing interpretation' (Gurian 2006: 2). Also, since a global culture—such as football—can be understood through the interactions and interrelations among people from different cultural backgrounds, multiple-sited fieldwork is employed to offer a cross-cultural and comparative perspective.

## **1.4 Methodology**

### **Multiple sites fieldwork**

This project involves the National Football Museum (Manchester, England) as my primary field site, and also explores the Schalke Museum (Gelsenkirchen, Germany), the Borusseum (Dortmund, Germany), the future German Football Museum (Dortmund, with its design agency in Berlin, Germany), and Linzi Football Museum (Zibo, China). I have been fully aware that the protocol of multi-sited fieldwork has made the project risky, in terms of providing good-quality in-depth ethnographic details of each site. Thus, I would like to state that this choice was dependent on thorough consideration, not only of my personal ambitions.

The decision was made for two main reasons. Firstly, by dividing fieldwork into three phases, the research plan was fitted into different sporting events (such as the Olympic Games held in the UK in 2012) and different conditions of football museums (the English National Football Museum in preparation for reopening; the German National Football Museum in planning; three football museums in normal, everyday opening circumstances), which opened various

angles for looking into museum activities and museum organisations. A long-term fieldwork was conducted at the National Football Museum in Manchester, together with short-term field research at football museums in Germany and China. Secondly, to cut to the heart of this methodological concern, as Marcus once argued (1995: 95):

‘...an emergent methodological trend in anthropological research that concerns the adaptation of long-standing modes of ethnographic practices to more complex objects of study. Ethnography moves from its conventional single-site location, contextualized by macro-constructions of a larger social order, such as the capitalist world system, to multiple sites of observation and participation that cross-cut dichotomies such as the “local” and the “global,” the “lifeworld” and the “system”.’

It is from multiple sites that this project self-consciously embodied a global scope and was designed as a comparative study. Precisely, it involved many relationships and related identities: local, regional (Gelsenkirchen-Dortmund in Ruhr Valley), regional-national (Manchester-England, Linzi-China), and international (Germany-England-China). The interrelations of football museums allow a comparative study in the global flux.

### **Participant observation and observation**

The participant observation I adopted in this project is the distinctive method in socio-cultural anthropology, and the core of my fieldwork research. At the same time, the observation itself varies in skill and function (Bernard 2006). What I did in the field was a combination of observations and participant observations. At four museum sites, with museum staff members and museum visitors as my informants, I was a ‘visible’ anthropologist; while, to many other museum visitors, I was more unobtrusive, strolling around museum galleries among them.

A total of 197 short, semi-structured interviews with museum visitors were carried out at four museum sites (see Appendix for the outline of interviews). Ethnographic details through participant observations were also collected through communications with museum officers ‘backstage’, in order to explore museum strategies and their negotiations with the wider world.

## **Online Research**

Online research methods were also employed in this project. Museum news released on official web sites, as well as posts on official social network accounts (National Football Museum, Manchester), and online virtual museum tour and podcast service (Borusseum), were identified. Also, based on my previous exploration of online interviewing methods (Yang 2010a), I communicated with two of my key informants in Linzi, beyond my fieldwork in China, via a free instant messaging software application called QQ.

I hugely benefited from online research methods in this multi-sited project, as they helped me in overcoming difficulties arising out of long distance and different time zones (Mann and Stewart 2000, Coombes 2001) and in enhancing the depth and richness of ethnographic data.

## **Pictures: a visual dimension**

‘A picture is worth a thousand words’. Heider, in *Seeing Anthropology* (2001), insists on the power of visual materials used in anthropological research. Anthropological interests have been developed in studying visual culture and in adopting visual forms as a research approach (Banks and Ruby 2011, Bouquet 2012). As a museum itself is greatly involved in visual practices, I endeavoured to add a visual dimension to this thesis, offering a wide range of photos of exhibitions and activities, as well as the building environment of museums in Manchester, Schalke and Dortmund. Pictures are limited in the chapter on Linzi Football Museum, as photography was prohibited when I was conducting research there.

## **1.5 Limitation and potential**

Due to limited language skill, time and funding, I only investigated selected football museums in the UK, Germany and China. It is beyond an individual’s capacity to explore football museums all over the world, including

so-called 'football nations' such as Italy, Spain, Brazil, Argentina, and the first African host of FIFA World Cup—South Africa. The necessary exclusion of South American and African football traditions in this global sport is a parameter of this research. Also, due to the delay of the museum building project, explorations of the future German Football Museum were diminished. Hopefully, these aspects left out of this research will emerge in the near future. This project provides a detailed examination of four football museums through anthropological approaches. With the support of staff members of the National Football Museum, Manchester, I was the fortunate to participate behind-the-scenes and observe the final phase of preparations towards the reopening of the new museum, and in this lies the main originality of the research. More broadly, this research project contributes to the cross-cultural investigation of identity issues in anthropology through the lens of football museums, and takes a look at the usually ignored Chinese football museum to provide a fresh perspective. I do hope this piece of work will serve as a modest spur to introduce more anthropological research on contemporary football museums, and in a wider sense, on sporting heritage.

# **Chapter 2 The marriage between museum and football: literature review and theoretical considerations**

## **2.0 Prelude: World Expositions and the Olympic Games**

The Crystal Palace and the Eiffel Tower are two great icons of early-stage exhibiting practices. The Crystal Palace, 'a fairy wonder', covering and protecting all, was built in Hyde Park, London, for the 1851 Great Exhibition in Victorian Britain, as a national representation in 'the first grand cosmopolitan Olympiad of Industry' (Greeley 1851: 19-21). The growth of international expositions and fairs from the mid-19th century to early 20th century coincided with and cultivated the development and popularization of museums; the Victoria and Albert Museum, which originated in the Great Exhibition (Physick 1982), is a good example. As encyclopaedia-like displays, expositions and museums not only provided knowledge and spectacle, but also reflected a Western logic of classification and categorisation (Lidchi 1997, MacAloon 2013). Thirty eight years after the Great Exhibition, entering the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition through the Eiffel Tower, Pierre de Coubertin was amazed by 'symbolic power of international public spectacles' (MacAloon 2013: 147), from which his idea of the Olympic Games sprouted and was then fulfilled. Similar to the World exposition, the Olympic Games in its early years provided a cross-cultural contact zone for the 'West' to display and define 'Self' in contrast to its cultural 'Others' (Brownell 2008).

In the same context of 'exploration', 'imperialism' 'industrialisation' (Brownell 2008: 2) and cultural encounters in late 19th and early 20th centuries, a series of modern sciences was born (MacAloon 2013) and developed, in the same era with the sporting spectacle and exhibiting practices; and both sporting and

exhibiting processes have been involved in academic explorations. Narrowing down sporting and exhibiting practices, football museums have emerged in related research fields.

## **2.1 Moving with the ball: a brief history of football in the global arena**

Born and having its rules formalised in England, football gradually served as the dominant leisure activity for working class people in the late 19th century (Armstrong and Giulianotti, 1999). In the 20th century, a growing number of people became involved in the game, as the trade ties between different countries and the outbreak of the World War enhanced the dissemination of football all over the world. From this point of view, the progress and the transmission of modern football in its early stage serve as illustrations of 'the earliest form of cultural globalization' (Armstrong and Giulianotti, 1999: 4).

A key feature of modern football is the professional system, consisting of professional leagues, clubs, and footballers. Since the early 20th century, football players have started to travel and sign contracts with clubs away from their hometowns or even across the frontier of their home countries. Furthermore, especially for the advocates of 'international' football, the sport was and is a direct reaction to transnational links. From 1995, under the Bosman Ruling<sup>2</sup>, a new migration stream in football has been caused and connects closely to other migratory patterns (Lanfranchi and Taylor 2001), reflecting the inequality of the world economy. The so-called second-generation and third-generation immigrants, who start their career as footballers and spontaneously play for football clubs in the country they grew

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<sup>2</sup> In the year 1995, with the endeavour a Belgian football player named Jean-Marc Bosman, football players of the European Union obtained the right to transfer from one club to another after a former contract expired ('Bosman Ruling' 2013).

up other than the country of their ethnic origin(s), are a noticeable group of footballing migrants.

On the club level, the game embraces multi-ethnic players and international teams, and to a great extent, it is propitious for the development of football as a global game. Meanwhile, on national and international levels, the founding of FIFA—with association members acting as representatives of FIFA in their own nations—is another landmark in world football. One of the most significant roles of FIFA is the organising of the FIFA World Cup—the quadrennial international football tournament. Alongside the Olympic Games, it is one of the most prestigious sporting events, furnishing a platform for national teams. As many noted (Armstrong and Giulianotti 1999, Brown 1998, Duke and Crolley 1996), football has become an important public arena for the construction and reconstruction of collective identities in a symbolic way.

## **2.2 Sports/football entering the ‘temple’ of the museum: previous research and literature**

Unlike mega sporting events, sports museums existed on the periphery of academia for a long time. The value and the validation of museum artefacts have not been fully appreciated by scholars, especially sports historians. Moreover, the sporting history presented in sports museums has been regarded as indiscriminating and as glorifying history (Vamplew 1998, Moore 2012). To face these challenges, differences between ‘academic history’ and ‘public history’ have been asserted, and some (Vamplew 1998 and 2004, Johnes and Mason 2003, Moore, 2012) believe sports museums can provide ‘good history’ based on attentive research; while by employing multi-sensory exhibiting devices, sports museum can reach wider audiences to engage in the public history.

With sports more and more engaged in the museological discourse, issues on



sports museums have attracted more serious considerations. Looking back to previous literature, Danilov (1997, 2005) took pains to map sports museums all over the world; and in academia, several publications discuss sports museums in a certain country (see, for example, Chandler 2008, Kellett and Hede 2008, Norden 2001, Pahud 1991). Recently, the volume of *Representing the Sporting Past in Museums and Halls of Fame* (Phillips 2012) contributes to the field with an array of essays and an international scope; however, the chief focus is still on North American, European, and Australian sites. A handful of research looks into the issue of cultural identities in sport museums (Chandler 2008, Vamplew 1998) and suggests sports museums play a role in promoting community involvement.

Specifically on football museums, Forslund (2006) divided football museums into club museums and national museums, and based on the questionnaires answered by football museum professionals worldwide, he wrote a study on the establishment and purpose of football museums. A cross cultural perspective is well developed in his study, which is very rare among studies on football museums. As one of the most successful football museums across the world, the National Football Museum (NFM) is, with no doubt, mostly concerned with this cross-cultural reach. The Director of the museum, Kevin Moore (2008) has lectured on the NFM's role in the regeneration of the city of Preston (NFM's former site); and after offering an ethnography of an object (the ball used in 1966 World Cup final, now a key item at NFM, see Moore 1997), together with Hughson (2012), Moore examined the cultural importance of Diego Maradona's shirt as an exhibit displayed at NFM. Collections held by the NFM have also been studied by the curator of the museum (Jackson 2009a, 2009b) in the context of popular culture and regional history. Placing the NFM in the context of popular culture as well, Brabazon (2006a, 2006b), and along with Mallinder (2006), explored the 'institutionalized popular culture' projected at NFM's Preston site. Most recently, Hanson and Rainey (2013), illustrated the cultural and political changes in Manchester and Britain through

the lens of the Urbis building, NFM's current home, which marks a burgeoning research interest in the newly reopened Manchester site of NFM. Johnes and Mason (2003) took both individual and collective memories into consideration, demonstrating the remembrance of footballing past as a form of public history at the NFM, Preston. As seen from the above, the Manchester site of NFM is still waiting to be studied, and the previous researches are deficient in anthropological approaches and behind-the-scene perspectives—this project partakes in filling the blank.

I suppose it is also worthwhile to mention American anthropologist Thomas Vennum's (1994) research on the changing meaning of Lacrosse<sup>3</sup> in the history of North American First Nations. As McGarry (2010: 159) argued, Vennum's focus on 'what people say about lacrosse sticks' as well as his discursive interpretation of the tangible aspects of sticks helped retrieve the near-absent concern with material culture and sport in anthropological thinking. Both Vennum and McGarry have recognized that sporting materials are connected with notions of memory, identity and the past.

Next, I put football museums in the context of anthropology and other social sciences, and investigate the marriage between football and museum through the lens of five metaphors.

## **2.3 Football and museum: five metaphors**

Going back to the origin of the word, 'museum' has two distinct meanings. One is literally the place where Muses—daughters of the goddess of memory—dwell, a 'mythological setting' (Findlen 1989: 60, cited in Lidchi 1997: 155); the other is related to the public library for academic research in Alexandria in Hellenistic Egypt (Lidchi 1997, Digital Egypt for Universities 2003). Lidchi (1997: 60-62) argues that, the above two etymological meanings enable the

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<sup>3</sup> Lacrosse originated in Native America and is a team sport equipped by a small solid rubber ball and a long-handled lacrosse stick. It is popular in the North American countries and in British girls' schools (Vennum 1994).

museum to have an expansive potential in three dimensions: firstly, it encompasses the private realm and public institutions; secondly, it reconciles amusement and scholarly disciplines; and thirdly, it touches both memory and erudition. When museum embraces football—a global game, an identity projector—more issues are involved.

### **2.2.1 Football Museum: the shrine**

#### **On authority**

Glass boxes and cabinets of curiosities are primary impressions of museums. From being systematically preserved and publicly displayed, objects have become 'exhibits'. From the 19th century onward, hundreds and thousands of objects of nature as well as artefacts of aesthetic importance were classified and displayed in showcases to demonstrate natural history and so-called 'high' culture. Later, collections were no longer confined to indigenous cultures; ethnographic exhibitions on so-called 'native villages' (Ames 1992) began to sweep museums and expositions. Simultaneously, certain objects with historical significance were arrayed into 'national museums' in order to represent the history of a nation. With the rise and development of museums, those who judged and defined the value and importance of museum objects, mostly academic experts, gradually grew into the role of curators. The authority was then declared by the joint power of museum objects as evidence of history and of culture: museums as public cultural institutions (Marstine 2006) and curators as masters of knowledge.

To this day, the museum still wears the long-standing aura of authority as a shrine and consequently also maintains a sacred sphere and a therapeutic potential (Marstine 2006). Museum exhibits not only provide 'a kind of exalted happiness' (Clark 1954: 29, cited in Marstine 2006: 9), but also create myths through the symbolic power of showing and telling (Bennett 1994). I would

argue that, it is from this perspective that the portrayals of popular culture, of everyday life experiences in museums, should be carefully examined. The institutionalization of 'pop' cultures has challenged the museum's conventional role as temples of 'high' culture (Moore 1997, Brabazon 2006a); more importantly, with the help of the institutional power of the museum, popular culture could develop its own sacredness, and be (re) discovered as a serious side of life.

### **The pilgrimage**

Although wearing personal decorations is not allowed on the pitch for safety reasons, many football players do have talismans. Football teams also have their 'wishbones'. For example, during the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany, the German team believed a one cent coin could bring victories; therefore, they buried the lucky coin in the football ground—the soil of their homeland—before every game. So do the football supporters. Football, and sports in general, underscore superstition through objects, in which participants (players and fans) inject love, passion and beliefs.

The emotional involvements, to a certain extent, are also symbolized and objectified by team equipment and personal belongings, which understandably serve as a vital component of football museum, and come to be deified by museum's institutional power. Although many sports museums, including football museums, endeavour to avoid the stereotype of 'trophy display', glittering silverware is still an inevitable part of sports museums. The atmosphere of a shrine, together with the religious aspects of football and the emotional embodiment would make museum visiting similar to a pilgrimage: immersing oneself in the history of football through the museum materials. In this sense, to visit a football museum is a means to prove oneself as a supporter in the fan community; and the sense of pilgrimage may be intensified during a group visit, as a shared custom or tradition, in, to borrow Morris's (1981) term, a football 'tribe'.

## **Western device, Chinese conception**

The idea of the museum as shrine indicates the net of powers that comprise museum field. As intensive writings have concluded (Alpers 1991, Pearce 1992, Simpson 1996), museums were a 'characteristic part' (Pearce 1992: 1) in the constructions and expressions of European civilization. With colonial dominations, industrial power, the circulation of commodities and civic pride as defining conditions, exhibitions and museums experienced a rapid development in modern Europe (Simpson 1996). The museum is a vital cultural institution which has generated and sustained the European version of modernity since the colonial age (Bennett 1995); while, in Chinese cultural settings, the word museum is closely linked with an 'ecological conception' or a 'mode' called Bowu-ti<sup>4</sup>, consisting of a set of concepts, folklore and indigenous knowledge, and offering a cosmological frame of nature, knowledge, and life experience. Here, rather than stepping into the duality of West/East, as this project employs multiple site field research and a cross-cultural scope, I would argue that it is worth the attempt to locate both football culture and museum organisations back into their original cultural settings and examine how the value and authority are defined in and by the football museums.

### **2.2.2 Football Museum: the time-machine**

#### **Time dialectics**

Museums, history museums in particular, are mostly portrayals of the past. Lumley (1998) once compared the museum to a time machine. As for the museum objects, the metaphor indicates, firstly, the attachment to an unrepeatable dimension of time. To a certain extent, museum collections gain their distinctiveness from this non-repeatability (Lin, 2005). Secondly, pointing out the 'birth places' of objects, museums craftily create a sense of 'distance'

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<sup>4</sup> In the word museum, Romanised as Bowu-guan, 博物馆 in Chinese characters, 馆 refers to the physical building or exhibition hall. The Chinese Bowu-ti, 博物体 is a 'ecological conception'. 体 literally means a genre or a system (Peng 2010).

institutionally and geographically. The connections to the original time/space and the notion of 'genuineness' (Gurian, 2006: 35) secure the value of the objects and even offer an engendering condition for nostalgia, the yearning for the past and for home. Paradoxically, being carefully arranged in cabinets, showcases and other exhibiting devices, the attachments with their original time and space encompass certain detachments. The classifications and descriptions of objects separate them from their original locations as well as cultural contexts and may influence their meanings. Therefore, the 'afterlife' of museum objects must be acknowledged (Marstine 2006) by asking: how much does the object speak for itself and how much does the exhibiting context contribute to the production of meanings?

### **Home, being in time, being here**

When trying to locate museums in time and space, my concern is with the conceptualization of a time/space model drawn from the 'ecomuseum'. The ecomuseum, or 'ecological' museum (originally from *écologie* in French), focuses on the holistic interpretation of the identity of a place, encouraging local communities to celebrate their culture (Davis 1999). The locals are integral participants of the museum. In turn, the museum is part of their home, and their place is the enlarged museum. In some sense, home is the rudimentary version of the museum, personal and perpetual. From toys and books to art objects and family heirlooms, at the very beginning, objects were collected at the requests of personal interests or family traditions. Here, the ecomuseum, by maintaining the sense of 'being there' and 'being in time', has been made homely for the local community. The museum, thus, serves as a bridge mediating the private and the public.

I consider this model as extremely useful when examining football museums. On the one hand, football's past is not only about the trophies, medals and equipment behind the glass, but also passion and movement, love and allegiance, hatred and loathing on and off the pitch. On the other hand, in

terms of location, most football museums have the privilege to provide a 'being here' experience because they are attached to the football grounds, the spiritual homes of football teams, or built in a city with a solid football base, from which visitors, their supporters in particular, would like to feel they were involved. How simultaneously to keep the feeling of 'being in time' and 'being here at footballing home' are issues I will explore.

### **Making the past, making memories**

Memory is centred to historical, anthropological and sociological thinking. Pierre Nora (Nora and Kritzman 1996-1998) deployed the notion of 'Lieux de Mémoire' (sites of memory) when analysing the collective, national memory of the French people. In his words, 'sites of memory' are 'where [cultural] memory crystallizes and secretes itself' (Nora 1989: 7). Museums transport the milestones of the past into current form 'to stop time', 'block the work of forgetting' (Nora 1989: 19), and project collective memory. Moreover, the memory processes entail not only remembering, but also forgetting, and a wrestling between what to remember and what to forget. This happens not only in terms of grand historical narratives but also in aspects of everyday life (Bourdieu 1977).

Bringing the everyday into account, Susan Stewart (2003) analyses how everyday objects, especially souvenirs, participate in personal life when envisioning oneself and the world. As for football, memorabilia play a vital role in football fandom as well as in football museums. Besides official merchandise (including football shirts, scarves, caps, match programmes, tickets, autograph cards, posters and more), football supporters also make their own memorabilia, such as paintings, photo albums and car accessories. To purchase or to make memorabilia is a football ritual, a way to show support; and as showed, it is also about memory and remembering. Football museums, intensively displaying football memorabilia, preserve memories for teams and fan communities. Memory is also 'an archive of feelings' (Cvetkovich 2003). In

the circle of 'feeling-memory-object-museum', memory harbours feelings; objects carrying memories are located in museums; and, feelings are (re) animated and (re) generated through museum visiting.

As Gurian (2006) argues, museums are evidence of our 'existence'. Borrowing Kittler's (1997) theory, the museum, which is a medium both time-bound and space-bound, could be regarded as a storage site for human memory. If objects live longer than their owners, or say, if the thing-ness of a community has a longer life than the people, human beings and their experience through time and space can be collected through material culture, from which the past is retained for the present and the future.

### **Identity and imagined community**

It is commonly accepted that identity is being shaped by memories of the past (see, for example, Anderson 1983, Casey 1987, Smith 1991, Gurian 2006). Not only has memory been broadly divided into two columns—the individual/personal one and the collective/shared one—identity is also a multiple-layered conception, conveying both appeals to the sameness and the distinctiveness of oneself and with others (Erikson 1980, Sökefeld 1999). Collective identity shared by a group of people is largely constituted by and located in a certain socio-cultural setting and shared past (Bellah et. al. 2007, Smith 1991). A collective historical discourse being created through a consensus in memory process would lead to an imagined community. According to Benedict Anderson (1983), members of imagined communities may not base membership on frequent contact, and need not even have met or heard of each other, but they have a mental image of their communities and share a genuine sense of belonging. In the age of nation-building, with intentional national icons, traditions, and histories circled around, national values were secured and nationalism showed its strength in integrating a community (Hobsbawm 1992). When analysing how collective identity is constructed and how it works as an integrating power, sport is also an ideal



site. Early in Fascist Italy, Mussolini (cited in Agnew 2010) viewed sport as a powerful tool, both morally and physically, in enhancing the prestige of a nation. In this day and age, besides the Olympic Games, football is also worth reflecting upon, thanks to the popularity of the game. Also, a playing style or character of a football team could be identified and then influence the making of local/national imaginations. Going back to Anderson (1983), museums, as well as censuses and maps, which hold the institutional power of classification and serialization, produce the past as shared memories and remembrances in order to build imagined communities. Football museums, with the power of the museum as well as football, can help visitors travel through time and locate themselves in the imaged community.

### 2.2.3 Football museum: the curtain



Figure 2.1 The Artist in His Museum (1822), by Charles W. Peale.

Standing before us is the founder and curator of the Philadelphia Museum, Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827). In this 1822 oil-on-canvas self-portrait,

Peale, 'large as life' (Friedl 2011), holding up the velvet curtain, reveals his collections and invites his audiences into the museum. Behind the curtain, most notably, is an entire wall of showcases displaying classified animal specimens. As the painter himself once stated, what this portrait endeavoured to convey is not only the art of painting and the honour of his career, but also the 'rise and progress of the Museum' (Miller 1990: 622).

Here, the 'curtain' attracts me most. It serves as a dividing line of the museum space and a bridge between the curator and visitors. On the other side of the curtain, what happened in the process of displaying the dead turkey in the showcase? Did Mr. Peale reshape it using the colour palette and other tool by his side? The curtain is a powerful metaphor to demonstrate the underlying issues of the 'most visible' (Gurian 2006:135) products of museums—exhibited representations.

### **The poetics of exhibiting: meaning making and story telling**

A museum is a public space and an institution. 'Public' indicates a social space, a relation among strangers, and it introduces the poetics of world making. Like the coaches of football teams, who train, direct their players and make tactics, museum staff, especially curators, create exhibit plans and articulate museum objects, texts and activities to put meanings and stories into circulation.

Museums are central stages for cultural representations. Representation is a circuit of signifying practices producing meanings through the interactions among 'things' 'concepts' and 'signs' of language systems (Hall 1997: 61). According to Hall's (1997: 61) theoretical framework of cultural representation and signifying practice, the 'fixed, final or true meaning' is suspended in the dynamic system of 'encoding-decoding'. Take the name of two football museums of German clubs for example. The museum of Werder Bremen is called 'Wuseum' and the museum of Borussia Dortmund is named 'Borusseum'. By cleverly combining the club names with the word 'museum', both coinages capture the amusing sense of distinctiveness and activate the

meaning circle. Meanings provide us a sense of identity: who we are, where we belong, and how we maintain ourselves (Woodward 1997). My starting point of looking at museums lies here—querying and concentrating on the production, articulation and transmission of meanings, from which identity is projected.

With the visitor-oriented turnaround in the museum world, storytelling is a favourable approach. For sports museums, this approach is largely associated with the creation and distribution of sporting myths. The storytelling approach, as an encoding strategy and an act of narrating, is engaging with ‘an intense self-consciousness’ of presenting the events and stories of the past, which maintain historical values and being presented contemporarily (Hutcheon 1989: 71) for visitors to decode, or say, to relive the past and its myths.

### **The politics of exhibiting: ways of seeing**

Through visual display, museums have inevitably figured in the discussion of cultural representation in the era of visual culture (Hall 1997). Museum objects and other visual media work together to make the museum visible to museum visitors. Bouquet (2012) in her book *Museums: A Visual Anthropology* noted that, as repositories of local history and identity, museums have also become ‘visible’ to anthropologists in the trend of anthropology at home.

Exhibiting practices embody the ability to ‘make certain culture visible’, and to move others out of sight. From this perspective, museums also make their collections ‘subjected to the scrutiny of power’ (Lidchi 1997: 198). Museum visitors, as decoders, also play an important role; since it is through their ‘seeing’ that the representation process is accomplished. Referring to the collapse of a belief in the transparency of representation (Clifford 1986), ‘seeing’ should be examined as a device, which is determined ‘contextually’, ‘rhetorically’, ‘institutionally’, ‘generically’, ‘politically’ and ‘historically’ (Clifford 1986: 6). Museums encourage certain ways of seeing; but as John Berger (1972: 8) urged, ‘to look is an act of choice’: individuals from different

backgrounds can have their own perspectives. They see from multiple, constantly shifting positions, and these positions reflect the diversity and fluidity of their identities.

Museums display not only objects but also concepts and arguments. The embodied authority of display represents identifications and wields power to exert influence on public opinions, values and tastes (Karp and Lavine 1991). Within a Foucauldian perspective, 'ways of seeing' implies 'ways of knowing' (Foucault 2003), and museums are sites from which knowledge is generated. Museum authorizes visitors to acquire knowledge and to evoke social memories. The knowledge, collective memories, and ideologically based narrative context all emerge in the process of making oneself and ourselves (Kaplan 1994, Marstine 2006).

Again, looking back to Peale's painting, the curator acts as the gatekeeper of knowledge. Different from art museums which make aesthetic value their first consideration, football museums are highly teleological in controlling the public image of certain team(s). From this perspective, questions needing to be raised are: What has been excluded from football museums? Are conflicts in the field of football, including racism and so-called hooliganism, being displayed in football museums, and how? How do football museums commemorate dark and sad stories? How does football, as an individual experience, fit into the grand narrative of exhibitions? How, and to what extent, do football fans participate in the exhibiting practices? Who controls museum representations? The curtain in the curator's hand always reminds us that museums represent in a half-hidden way.

#### **2.2.4 Football museum: the theatre**

The 'theatre' metaphor and the 'curtain' metaphor overlap, as they both illustrate, firstly, the 'proscenium arch' separating a behind-the-scenes from the audience; and secondly, they imply the politics of seeing and knowing. The

museum as a theatre also introduces a third dimension concerning communications and interactions generated in and by this public institution. Besides the conventional projects of preserving and displaying objects, museums are 'places that offer human interactions, civic discourses, and social service'; and in order to remain civic, societies produce and protect 'congregant places', where strangers of a community can comfortably connect and communicate with each other (Gurian 2006: 67). Correspondingly, sport is also a necessary component of civic engagement (Ferguson 1967, cited in Jarvie and Maguire 1994: 1), through which the solidarity of a society can be captured.

The 'theatre' metaphor also manifests the museums' relationship with tourism. On the one hand, there is a tradition for people from Western countries to cast romantic eyes on 'the margins of empire and the peripheries of modernity' (Bruner 2005: 10); and more recently, tourists from so-called Third World share the desire of seeing the Other staged at tourist attractions. On the other hand, tourists consume the collections of signs, meanings and representations; and in response, audiences conform themselves into receiving the spectacles (Urry 1990), like the auditorium being a part of the theatre. As for football museums, again, a distinct feature is included. For many visitors who are football fans, to visit a football museum is to replicate the 'everyday': football is what they live and breathe; meanwhile, the new and unfamiliar will be experienced through museum materials and museum programmes.

Concerning tourism and cultural display, Dicks (2007: 199) proposed the term 'visitability' to depict the promotion of 'visitor-friendliness' at public institutions, such as museums that would 'attract the tourist gaze'. With the development of internet communication and new technologies breaking through, the 'visitability' is being produced beyond the physical walls of museums. A growing number of museums maintain their official websites in order to release museum news, and some create virtual museums through digitization of objects and texts. Social network platforms are also increasingly employed in museum practices,

proliferating communications between museums and visitors. Together with the popularity of football, internet-based practices of football museums may join the effort to reach out to wider visitor groups and generate more dialogues. In a word, the metaphor of football museum as theatre suggests museums' roles as 'contact zone' (Clifford 1997), supplying physical (and sometimes virtual) space and mediating communication and information.

### **2.2.5 Football museum: the miniature**

As reviewed earlier, the sport of football, to a high degree, engages in a global flow. Football is global and the museum serves as a miniature of the world. For example, Football Club Barcelona constitutes multi-layered identifications with the city, the region, the nation, and also embodies features of the global game (Shobe 2008). For sport in general, Hargreaves and Ferrando (1997) have provided a detailed case study of the negotiations between local (Barcelona), regional (Catalonia), national (Spain) identities in a globalised context of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games.

In the discourse of globalisation, Grossberg (1997) emphasises the moving borders between layers of identities. Following this line of thinking, Ritzer (2006: 227) offered the terms 'grobal' and the 'glocal' to examine sporting identities. Specifically, globalisation is determined jointly by 'grobalization' ('the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations, and the like and their desire, indeed need, to impose themselves on various geographic areas') and also by 'glocalization' ('the interpenetration of the global and the local, resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas') (Ritzer 2006: 338, Andrews and Ritzer 2007). This 'complementary and interpretative' (Roberson 1995) approach treats 'the global' not only as the context of any local football, but also as a player within it; and vice versa.

When it comes to the museum, by compressing time-space, museums process the ability to convey knowledge of the past and to stretch out social

relations (Massey 1994); museums symbolically perform as miniatures of the world. Bringing football into the museum context, football museums furnish arenas for institutions (such as museums, football clubs, and national football federations), communities (such as fan communities, local communities) as well as individuals (such as curators, footballers, football fans, tourists, researchers) to ‘position themselves globally’ (King 1991: viii).

The five metaphors developed above—football museum as a shrine, a time-machine, a curtain, a theatre and a miniature—demonstrate the capacity of football museums to address issues of institutionalised authority and ritual, memory and the formation of the imagined community, the poetics and politics of representations, social interaction and tourism, and globalisation.

| <b>Museum</b>   | <b>Football</b>   |
|---|---|
| Sacred, but speaks for ‘enjoyment’ (Frese 1960).                                | Entertaining, but retains a religious aspect (Coles 1975).            |
| Elite culture (so-called high culture)  | Popular culture (so-called low culture).                              |
| History.  | Movement.   |
| Material, tangible, but involves cultural performance.                          | Performance, intangible, but harbours a thing-ness.                   |
| Rational, intellectual.   | Emotional, bodily.  |
| Enlightened, classification, ‘Apollonian’ in Nietzsche’s sense (Nietzsche 1993) | Romantic, carnival, ‘Dionysian’ in Nietzsche’s sense (Nietzsche 1993) |

Table 2.1 Characteristics of the museum and football.

To view the sport of football and the museum institution (both concerned in the Western context here) separately, they, to a great extent, face each other from opposite sides (Table 2.1); it is from the tension between ‘football’ and ‘museum’ that football museums sustain a distinctive perspective in anthropological thinking. In the following chapters, I unfold ethnographic details gathered from multi-sited field research at football museums, and then weave them into a whole picture in final discussions.

# Chapter 3 Telling football's stories from grassroots up: the National Football Museum in the making

## 3.0 Fieldnotes

October 26, 2011 Manchester

On the train to Manchester.

A boy and a lady were sitting on the table at my right-hand side, and I overheard their conversations. The lady asked:

- Where are you from?

- I am from China. Are you Scottish?

- I am English. I live in Scotland with my husband. He is Scottish.

The conversation continued as lady talked about her husband, who is a university lecturer with Gaelic as the mother tongue.

-For him, does going to England from Scotland mean going abroad?

-He would say crossing the 'border'.

.....

The landlady picked me up at the Manchester Piccadilly station and showed me around in the city centre. It was the first time I walked into the City of Manchester. I found Manchester United and Manchester City souvenirs widely displayed at pop stores at the Piccadilly Gardens. Then, I went to the Manchester Visitor Information Centre at the Piccadilly Plaza, which is said to be 'the perfect place to begin a visit to the region'. 'Manchester United Museum and Stadium Tour' flyers and the F.C. United membership form were there, alongside postcards of the former Man United star David Beckham. I collected a copy of the 7th issue of the MCR (Manchester) magazine.

I also wandered Market Street and saw a man selling the 'Man city 6-1 Man United' (the match was three days ago) T-shirt. Walking through the shopping centre on Market Street, the building of the National Football Museum finally came into sight.



### 3.1 Football fever in Manchester: entering the field

Football is part of Manchester's DNA.

-Sir Alex Ferguson, 'Manchester Voices',  
in *MCR7* (2011), the destination magazine for Manchester



Figure 3.1 Left: The 'Manchester Football' shelf in a bookstore in central Manchester.

Right top: The book *Manchester-a football history*, by Gary James.

Right bottom: Gary James delivers a talk in a book signing session of his newly published book *Manchester-the City Years*, at a bookstore in Manchester, August 2012.

The football historian Gary James, who set up the Manchester City Museum and Tour, published a book called *Manchester-a football history*, providing more than 500 pages of stories of Mancunian football. He argues that residents in the region, fan or not, understand the 'importance' of football and 'the positives' it brings (James 2010: 6). Good results in the FA Cup (the Football Association Challenge Cup), especially Manchester City's 1904 FA Cup homecoming, created pride, joy and several shared moments for fans and significantly contributed in establishing a 'Mancunian footballing identity' (James 2013). Manchester is the home of two football clubs in the top league, Manchester United and Manchester City, two teams with great achievements

and massive fan bases. City's Etihad Stadium and United's Old Trafford<sup>5</sup> mark football territories in Manchester, and the city is decorated with the colours of these two clubs, blue and red.



Figure 3.2 Left: FC United of Manchester in the Manchester Day Parade, 10th June 2012.  
 Top right: The membership form collected at the Manchester Visitor Information Centre.  
 Bottom right: FC United of Manchester in the Manchester Day Parade, 10th June 2012, participants holding the 'Makin' friends not millionaires' banner.

Besides, football teams and supporters from the neighbouring Greater Manchester (Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and more) (James 2010), as well as local amateur teams (such as F.C. United of Manchester, Figure 3.2) have contributed to Manchester's football culture. Manchester has also played a crucial role on the national and international level, in terms of winning titles and hosting football matches and tournaments, including the League Cup Finals, the FA Cup Finals, UEFA Champions League Final, UEFA European Championship Finals, Olympic Football, and the FIFA World Cup. Today, the football spectacle also provides the city with one of its most attractive traits for international fans and visitors, which enriches the story of Manchester football.

<sup>5</sup> Old Trafford is situated in Stretford, Greater Manchester, not the city of Manchester. Culturally, especially visitors and football supporters from outside, identify Manchester United as a Manchester team; while some Manchester City fans insist that Manchester City is the only Premier League team in the city. I regard Manchester United as a Manchester side in this thesis.





Figure 3.3: A boy wearing his Manchester United shirt and scarf passes by the official shop of Manchester City, the CityStore, the Market Street, Manchester.



Figure 3.4 Manchester City's Premier League title celebration at Albert Square (left) and victory parade, the Princess Street, Manchester (right) on 14th May 2012.

Having arrived on the 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2011, and staying for almost a year, I breathed football at my primary field site, the new National Football Museum, and beyond the museum walls in the city. The National Football Museum (NFM) was originally founded in 2001 at the Deepdale Stadium, in Preston, a leading

museum and a successful brand in the field of sports museum and heritage, evidenced by an annual 100,000 visitors from 2003 onwards, and by being shortlisted as the final contestant for the 2003 European Museum of the Year Award. Largely due to the withdraw of funding from the Football Foundation, the museum faced financial difficulties in the 2009, and with a two-million-pound annual funding proposal, Manchester City Council achieved in bringing the museum to Manchester's iconic Urbis building (National Football Museum at Urbis: Business Plan). The Preston site closed to the public in spring 2010, when the museum team started to work on the new museum project in the city of Manchester. The new museum planned to open its doors in 2011, but was delayed until mid-2012 mainly due to the assessments and configurations at the building site. From November 2011, I was privileged to stay backstage with the museum team. Also, fortunately enough, it was the perfect timing for looking at football, as the Manchester duo chased each other on top of the English Premier League table, England performed in the 2012 UEFA European Championship in Poland and Ukraine, and Manchester hosted football matches of the 2012 London Olympic Games, especially the first game of the reformed Team GB.

On the 3rd of November, I finally made my first visit to the National Football Museum, or rather, to the museum offices in Pleer House opposite the museum, as the museum site was still closed for refrigeration. Mr. Kevin Moore, the director of the museum and his personal assistant Helen, met me, and we had a pleasant meeting at the director's office. Kevin showed great support towards my project, and he mentioned the museum would like 'to lead, not to follow' in the field of museum management as well as in academic research. We agreed to work out a schedule for me to spend one day with each of the Back of House staff members, in order to understand the organism of this institution. Pointing to the window where one would have an excellent view of the museum building and its surroundings, Kevin informed me of the museum's central locale in Manchester, with immediate neighbours being

Manchester Victoria Station, shopping centres (Manchester Arndale, Selfridges, the Triangle and more), the multi-functional Manchester Arena, the Manchester Cathedral, and the Chetham's School of Music—world-leading and the only music school in Northern England, as well as the meeting point of Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx. The museum is, clearly, situated in a teeming, affluent and culturally rich area in the heart of the city.

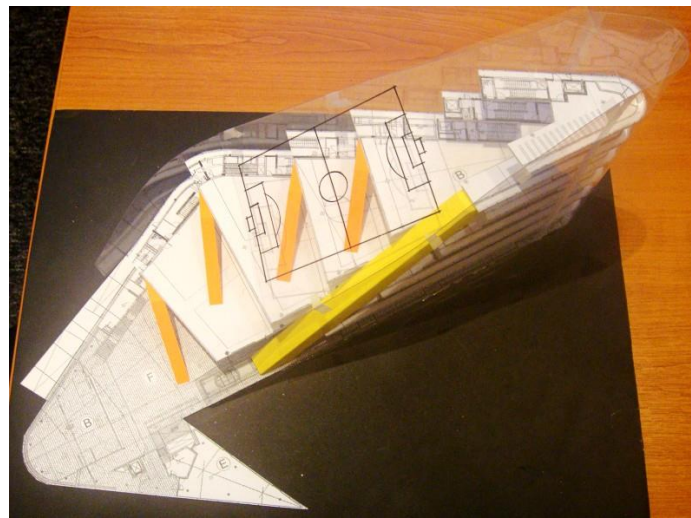


Figure 3.5 Miniature of the National Football Museum building.

We finished by talking about myself as a football fan. When I mentioned my allegiance to Schalke, Kevin told me that Schalke fans were here in the city centre earlier in the year (for the Champions League match against Manchester United), singing loudly. Before leaving, my eyes fell upon the miniature of the museum building sitting on Helen's table at the reception before leaving, and I decided to take this building as the starting point of my explorations at the National Football Museum.

### 3.2 The National Football Museum building: Urbis

Churches, palaces, castles, and particular houses, owe their chiefest ornaments as well as conveniences, to glass.

—Handiquer de Lancourt, cited in Raymond McGrath,  
*Glass in architecture and decoration* (1961: 5)

Besides the information that the director offered regarding the museum's central location and its remarkable neighbours, the historical backgrounds of the area where the museum is situated gives it another significance—the area is exactly the bomb site back in June 1996 where the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) dropped explosives (Hetherington 2007). The blast left devastation, yet also accelerated the regeneration process in Manchester. Witnessed by the magically surviving red pillar box, a symbol of Englishness (Hetherington 2007), the damaged square was reconstructed from the ashes. As part of the post-bomb Millennium Quarter in Manchester, Urbis opened in 2002, designed by local architect Ian Simpson. Containing seven floors and more than 4000 square metres of public areas, it was initially the 'Museum of City Life', offering permanent exhibitions on four floors, and later shifted into a changeable exhibiting space for temporary displays of popular culture, before being taken over by the NFM. According to Hanson and Rainey (2013), former employees of Urbis, the building may be regarded as 'a looking glass' of the wider cultural and political changes in Manchester and Britain. They argue the transfer from the 'Museum of City Life' to the National Football Museum evidences a change from 'everyday urban complexity' to a 'national and nationalistic' narration, especially with the opening of the NFM in the context of the London Olympic Games and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012 (Hanson and Rainey 2013: 229-230).

The Urbis is also distinctive in terms of architectural features. The building has a gradually sloped wedge shape, with a glass exterior surface of parallel glass units. Its semi-transparent trait reminds me of the Victorian Crystal Palace designed for the Great Exhibition, which was believed to be an architectural expression of national identity at the time (Miles and Zavala 1994) as well as imagerial local life (Richards 1990: 23):

'The view of the Crystal Palace the Victorians liked best was the view from a distance. From a distance, it could be seen as a purely magical object, a building begotten, not made... At a distance, the building closed itself off to outside scrutiny; it seemed to say that you had to enter it in order to be

initiated into its mysteries... Viewed from the outside, the Crystal Palace was both an heirloom and a humidor, conferring sentimental value on the things it contained and preserving them in perpetuity in a gigantic glass case.'

The Urbis, designed and remaining as a building for exhibition purpose, is an iconic showcase of the city as well as an ideal photo-shooting spot. During the day time, it attracts visitors with its unique shape and design; in the night, the exhibition area is usually closed, but the building itself still stands there, reflecting the lights of the surrounding edifices. Built in the once-damaged city centre, it has become a visually striking landmark of the rebirth of Manchester.



Figure 3.6 The Urbis. Courtesy of the National Football Museum.

The spatial experience carries on when stepping inside the building. Most noticeably, Urbis furnishes an indoor funicular railway. Before the opening, the NFM staff members were already fully aware that the funicular would be a visitor attraction. Sadly, due to maintenance concerns, the funicular had to be turned into a restricted service shortly after the reopening, mainly for the wheelchairs and baby strollers. As with 'Museum of City Life' in its early years, the building offered an entry called 'Arrival', in which the funicular was used to lift visitors up to the fourth floor, letting them walk down through the galleries. As Hanson and Rainey noted (2013: 229-230), the way of entering, with the rolling noise and the slowness, created a detachment from the high-paced urban living, and reconstructed the everyday experience by this disorientation.

They argue, however, that the new NFM, with newly installed primary escalators and stairs, and the 'department store' style decorations, marks a shift from 'disorienting' to 'orienting', which coincides with a 'conservative function'. (I do not fully agree with them, as the NFM has its own coherent designing plans to suit the exhibition contents.) Putting the political connotation aside, this in-depth reading of the museum design does illustrate the ways in which a museum building can shape the visitor experience and embody cultural meanings. Besides the controversial funicular, the glass panes allow a view of the surrounding space, especially the Cathedral Gardens right beside the museum building, a grass-covered area for meeting and relaxing. On bright days, I always saw people, especially the youth, gathering, skateboarding, showing off football skills, having coffee, or just basking in the sunshine. Visiting the Urbis building, from inside and out, encourages a glance at the leisure face of the city in its condensed centre. In a word, the building of the NFM, the Urbis itself, historically, culturally and architecturally, reflects the characteristics of the city.

### **3.3 Behind the scenes at the National Football Museum**

Before looking more closely at interpretations of the museum, I firstly provide observations on and information about the museum as an organization, from behind the scenes, and explore the ways in which the museum builds its self-image and its identity through internal operations and external networks. With tremendous support from Kevin and his team, I had the opportunity to observe the daily routines of the Back of House staff members, to sit in their weekly senior management meetings and project meetings, to join in the meetings with representatives from a wider circle, and to witness the final stage and the completion of the museum project. Through my research, I gained a panorama of a museum institution.



### 3.3.1 Internal: building self-image

The director's assistant, Helen, drew me a map of their Manchester offices (first and second floor in Pleer House) when I started my research, with detailed names and roles of staff members. Basically, the directors, finance officers, learning and community team were based on the lower level, and the marketing team, collection team, building manager and Front of House manager on the upper floor. Each officer and each team worked closely and communicated frequently with one another, especially in the period when the contents of the new museum project were produced, examined and fulfilled. The museum texts, the stories, were written and integrated under particular themes not only by the collection team, who are the 'curators' in the conventional sense, but also in the hands of officers of other departments and temporarily employed specialists. Staff members presented their sections at the interpretation meetings and received confirmations/approvals by the interpretation team led by the museum director himself. Most of the museum staff members actively participated in the museum interpretation processes, and cherished feelings of **involvement**. In one meeting, I offered my opinion on the choosing of a name for a film: 'The Beautiful Game' or 'The People's Game'. I argued, 'the former one seems more international, and the latter seems more British'. A staff member agreed and said to me, 'You will be proud when watching the film at the museum with your grandchildren, and tell them you contributed to this'. It was not me, primarily, but the staff who instilled their knowledge, passion and experience into this new football museum and they were always very proud when mentioning 'my part', 'my section', 'my floor' and 'our museum'. The sense of being a host of the museum was overflowing and made them willing to welcome and share the museum exhibits and behind-the-scene stories with their guests after the reopening.

Updated information provided by each staff member was saved in one hard disk drive and made **accessible** to all back-of-house staff. I called it the

‘magical P Drive’, the virtual ‘brain’ of the museum project. Besides the shared resource and updates in the P Drive, the museum also held several regular internal meetings every week, including the senior management meeting (Table 3.1), project management meeting (Table 3.2), interpretation meeting, dashboard meeting and other team meetings. Although the museum back-of-house team was and still is a small-scale one, with only twenty-some members, the new museum project has been precisely operated and professionally maintained. The team itself was also fully aware of the uniqueness of their working and operational procedure, and brought forward the issue of documenting ‘what we are doing to start a new football museum and what we have learnt’, for the reference of other institutions in this field.

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| <p>National Football Museum<br/>Senior Management Team- Weekly Meetings<br/>Monday at 9.30-10am</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>STANDARD AGENDA</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Director’s Update</li> <li>2. Head’s Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collections &amp; Visitor Service</li> <li>- Learning &amp; Communities</li> <li>- Commercial Development</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Dairy</li> <li>4. A.O. B.</li> </ol> |
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Table 3.1 Standard Agenda for the National Football Museum senior management team meeting (before the opening version). Courtesy of the National Football Museum.

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| <p>National Football Museum<br/>Project Management Team Meetings<br/>Monday at 10-11.30am</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STANDARD AGENDA</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Action Points from the LAST MEETING</li> <li>2. Issues arising from the weekly Project Team meeting</li> <li>3. Issues arising from the monthly Davis Langdon meeting</li> <li>4. Issues arising from the monthly Project Board meeting</li> <li>5. Building</li> <li>6. Programme</li> </ol> |
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|------------------------------|
| 7. Staff & Project roles     |
| 8. Procurement               |
| 9. Change Requests & Queries |
| 10. Work Groups              |
| 10.1 Public Area             |
| 10.2 Main Galleries          |
| 11. Exhibition Recourses     |
| 11.1 Photography             |
| 11.2 Film                    |
| 11.3 Objects                 |
| 12. Audience Research        |
| 13. Public Programme         |
| 14. Commercial               |
| 15. Marketing/ Branding      |
| 16. Risks & Risk Register    |
| 17. Ideas Assessment         |
| 18. A. O. B.                 |

Table 3.2 Standard Agenda for National Football Museum project management team meetings. Courtesy of the National Football Museum.

The NFM is also outstanding in terms of matching ‘national’ standards and pursuing excellence. On the very first day of my visit to the museum offices, I was impressed that a corner of the reception table was dedicated to the future ‘European Museum of the Year Award’ which they were aiming at. To a certain extent, museums of sports and other museums of popular culture, until today, nearly two years after my fieldwork in Manchester, are still not mainstream within the museum temple. In this context, the National Football Museum’s goal(s) and achievement(s) showed a confident stance. Museum officers appreciate this stance, and, as heard from them, they ‘enjoy working in the museum’ and ‘cherish in mind the museum’.

The museum management team also endeavoured to promote gender equality in the Back of House team as well as in the Front of House team. The Front of House recruitment was also under the guidelines of being more **inclusive** in regards of different age groups and diverse ethnicities.

Making the museum more **accessible** is an important concern of the museum, reflected in designing both the museum equipment and museum services.

Besides providing a barrier free environment, 'what we can do for the disabled and the blind' was discussed several times in different museum meetings. In the senior management meeting right after the opening, the issue of offering a multi-lingual service was also raised. The action point was to survey all the back- and front-of-house members' language skills, and to design language badges, in order to create a friendly and convenient environment for overseas visitors.

The organisational identity and self-image of the museum are thus delivered by the same people who construct and maintain the museum's cultural products; therefore, the identity-making processes start behind the scenes. The internal communication, working style, culture and value delineate the self-image of the organisation. Involvement, inclusiveness and accessibility appreciated by the museum team, are, arguably, also great features and ideas ideally delivered by the sport of modern football.

### **3.3.2 External: creating 'satellite exhibitions'**

The making of the new football museum was much more complicated than I expected. Meetings were taking place every working day between Back of House staff and external institutions, like the programme consultancy (Davis Langdon), the design consultancy (Mather & Co.), the graphic design studio (1977 Design), the public relations agency (Brazen), the audio, visual and digital interpretation company (Centre Screen) and many others. Besides, the museum also communicates with the museum world, the football bodies, the academia, the media, its commercial partners and, of course, the Manchester City Council.

### **The National Football Museum and the museum world**

The NFM is involved in the local, national and international museum networks and supports the wider museum world to stage the sport of football. For

instance, a few days before the museum's own reopening, the Director of the NFM delivered the opening speech at the launch of a temporary exhibition entitled 'Playing the game: sporting life in Jewish Manchester' on June 21st, 2012 at the Manchester Jewish Museum. As seen from the title, the exhibition was on the sporting history of the local Jewish community and Jewish sports teams. In his speech, the Director highlighted the achievements and impacts of Manchester Jewish football<sup>6</sup> as well as the importance and power of sports museums in celebrating 'our sports heritage' in 'our communities'. The NFM stays local, as its connection with the Manchester Jewish Museum carries on. Noticeably, in April 2014, these two institutions hosted a debate on anti-Semitism, featuring speakers from the football world, the Jewish community and the FA. At the same time, the museum also worked with the Jewish Museum in London, as an advisor for the 'Four Four Jew: football, fans and faith' exhibition, which illustrates the stories of 'football and the Jews' nationwide<sup>7</sup>. The NFM, as a leading figure in the field of football/sports museums as well as a famous museum brand, attracts organisations that endeavour to profit from the successful experience when planning or developing their museums. On my first day with the Director in his office, he received a phone call from the Cotswold Cricket Museum requesting advice on funding applications. He responded with patience and told me, 'We are happy to help'. The Director of the NFM chairs the Sports Heritage Network<sup>8</sup> in the UK, from which the museum strengthens its role in promoting a shared vision among British sports museums. Besides being constantly supportive of club museums in Manchester and all over the UK, the NFM also exchanges information with foreign sports museums. In winter 2011, I attended the

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<sup>6</sup> It includes the Manchester Jewish Soccer League since 1948, the Holocaust survivors who played in the League, and great Jewish footballers who entered professional football leagues, representing Manchester United (Reme Moses) and Manchester City (Barry Silkman) (Moore, 2012).

<sup>7</sup> For more information on the exhibition, please see: <http://www.jewishmuseum.org.uk/football>.

<sup>8</sup> The Sports Heritage Network, founded in 2003, is an organization of the sports museums in the UK, including the National Football Museum, the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum, the River and Rowing Museum, the British Golf Museum, the National Horse-racing Museum, the MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) Museum. Inspired by the London Olympic Games, the Sports Heritage Network created Our Sporting Life, a national project exhibiting British sporting culture. For more information, please see <http://oursportinglife.co.uk/>.

meetings between the museum staff and delegates from the future German National Football and the Deutsches Sport & Olympia Museum, Köln (German Sport & Olympia Museum, Cologne). Both German sides appreciated the lessons drawn from the ‘English story’.

### **The National Football Museum and football bodies**

At the same time, the NFM, communicating with football governing bodies, preserves football collections and showcases items on footballing occasions. The museum claims its international appeal through its stupendous collections, including the Football League Collection, the UEFA Library Collection, and most fundamentally, the FIFA Collection<sup>9</sup>, and also through items on loan and on tour. Here is an example. In May 2012, a few weeks before the 2012 Poland and Ukraine European Championships, the deputy director of the museum returned from Poland and reported on the touring exhibition ‘*Only A Game?*’ in Wroclaw, one of the host cities. The museum provided football shirts with historical connotations to mark great matches played on the continent. The touring exhibition was organised by UEFA, co-developed by the NFM, to explore football culture within a European context. In turn, football governing bodies, including FIFA, have made material, like film footage, available for the NFM to source. Above all, the NFM works closely with football organisations to share the work of celebrating football culture.

### **The National Football Museum and academia**

The NFM also maintains a strong position in academia—perhaps a peculiarity of a football museum. Firstly, the museum is in partnership with the International Football Institute of the University of Central Lancashire and engages with the International Centre for Sports History and Culture at De Montfort University. Two months after the reopening, the 3rd annual

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<sup>9</sup> Since the FIFA is planning a football museum on its own, it will further open up the scope of examining the relationships between the FIFA and the National Football Museum, Manchester.

symposium of the International Football Institute took place at the museum, gathering scholars and football museum specialists to discuss football museums' function in interpreting this global game. In 2013, the above three institutions co-organised the Football 150 Conference, an academic celebration of the 150th anniversary of the FA, which encouraged an international focus to explore diverse aspects of the game. In conversations with the participants, many praised the museum exhibitions, the opportunity of networking, and the 'smartness of honouring the history of English football through an academic meeting at its national museum'. For me, as well as broadening my research scope in this field, I was also able to invite the staff members from the museum of Borussia Dortmund to the above-mentioned meeting and to establish contacts for the next stage of fieldwork.

In addition, the museum supports research projects of local universities and derives benefits from the interactions. For example, on 18th November 2011, I sat in on a one-day meeting at the Manchester Business School with three museum staff. As part of their course work, after working with museum officers at old and new sites, three groups of students presented on sustainable plans for the NFM's former site in Preston and profitable strategies for the new museum in Manchester. The director, deputy director and the finance manager of the museum solicitously commented on each presentation and took advice. Alongside this, thanks to its outstanding network with football bodies and researchers, the NFM has also organised lectures and debates in the museum, opening to ordinary museum visitors, from which research findings are shared with a wider audience, and football scholarships are brought to the attention of football enthusiasts. From this perspective, apart from the exhibits on display, the museum constitutes a channel for conveying a general knowledge of football and football-related opportunities. (This role of the museum will be further discussed in the next chapter as a part of museum education.)

## The National Football Museum and the media world

In order to increase publicity, the museum keeps an attentive relationship with the media world and transforms media material into museum exhibits. The remaking of the National Football Museum coincided with the relocation of BBC Sport and BBC Radio 5 Live (national radio services covering news and sports themes) to MediaCityUK<sup>10</sup>, Salford, Greater Manchester. It has helped interactions between the museum and the BBC to flourish.



Figure 3.7 Exhibition area created by the National Football Museum, for 2011 Celebrate Sport.

In December 2011, the MediaCityUK hosted a two-week *Celebrate Sport* programme, featuring special shows and events including the BBC Sports Personality of the Year (BBC 2011). The museum participated in the

<sup>10</sup> Information on BBC as an occupier at the MediaCityUK at: <http://www.mediacityuk.co.uk/occupiers/bbc>.



programme by showcasing some star exhibits in the BBC building. The items on display included the 1966 World Cup final ball, a signed shirt of Manchester United legend George Best, the *Spitting Image* Puppet of Manchester United's Eric Cantona, the fan-made crown for 'King' Collin Bell of Manchester City, the iconic sheepskin coat of Manchester born BBC football commentator 'Motty' (John Motson) and the Sports Personality of the Year Award won by Paul Gascoigne in 1990 (the year that England reached the final four in the World Cup, the team's best since the 1966 win). Distinctly designed for local visitors, this small-scale preview of the NFM had predominantly a Mancunian feeling and highlighted the BBC's involvement. In addition, the museum's learning and community team, along with a few Manchester based artists, developed activities for local school groups and families, such as storytelling sessions for toddlers by a Pickles puppet (the dog who discovered the stolen Jules Rimet Trophy for England in 1966), a poem session inspired by football-related items, object handling and investigation, kit design and dress-up workshop and so on. I was with the learning and community team at that moment and participated in the meetings between the museum learning officer and a local artist (they call her a NFM artist), who jointly planned and carried out 'Football Family Creative' sessions and an art creative day for school groups to cast objects and colour their pieces of works. Several old-style boots, balls, and football rattles from the museum collection were selected for the activities. It was the first time that I had handled and spun a rattle, a wooden noisemaker used by supporters at football grounds, which, told by an elder football fan, 'was particularly popular in England in the 1940s and 50s and banned in the 1970s for safety concerns'. 'My father bought me one when I was a kid. I loved the cracker,' he continued. The vintage football rattles perfectly represented the objectives of this series of NFM activities staged at BBC Studios—emboldening school kids and families to 'celebrate the sport of football and learn about histories, stories and memories of the museum collection'. The cooperation between the museum and the BBC was

further extended through the BBC Radio Commentary Collection, a permanent audio exhibit in the museum since the reopening. It is an archival collection of distinguished clips by BBC football commentators from English league games and national team matches, provided by BBC Radio 5 Live and BBC local radio stations all over England. Football fans were also involved in the project by suggesting their favourite clips online. Radio shows were also broadcast from the museum by BBC Radio 5 live and BBC Local Radio before<sup>11</sup> and after<sup>12</sup> the reopening of the museum. The partnership between the BBC and the museum preserves and shares the 'audio memory' for the nation's great footballing moments, and also furnishes a particular studio for the 'voice' of the game to reach more people through a national radio service.

### **The National Football Museum and the commercial areas**

Apart from its founders, the museum has its business plan and commits itself to develop commercial partners, in order to survive. Interestingly, the museum also showcases items at highly commercialised places. For example, in the heat of the World Cup, the museum showcased several World Cup related items at Harvey Nichols (a chain of luxury department stores), Manchester, in June and July 2014. Items in the glass cabinets served the interests of the host country (a statue of the Brazilian legend Pele) and pride of their national team (George Best's FIFA World Player of the Year Award, Bobby Moore's England shirt and Beckham's World Cup football). Again, people with common knowledge of football will know that the big names from the England team on display are at the same time representing local clubs. As with the showcases at BBC's Manchester studios, the exhibits were specially tailored for the museum's commercial partner. Alongside the exhibiting area, the museum shop was in residence at the store, offering football memorabilia; prize draws,

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<sup>11</sup> In May 2011, a two-hour radio show was broadcast from the museum before its reopening, presented by Colin Murray from BBC and joined by Manchester United's Alex Stepney, Manchester City's Mike Summerbee as well as the Deputy Director of the museum.

<sup>12</sup> BBC Radio 5 Live recorded in the National Football Museum again during the 2014 World Cup. See website of the show at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/proginfo/2014/23/5-live-world-cup-quiz>.

including the tickets for the England game in Brazil, were also available for both shoppers and museum visitors (National Football Museum 2014). Another example is the appearance of museum objects at the Hilton Hotel at St George's Park, England's national football centre in Staffordshire in 2012. I firstly came across it in the museum's senior management meeting when the director was talking about planning the 'Hilton Hotel showcases'. However, since I had no opportunity to travel to St George's Park, I did not follow it up. Then, a few days before leaving Manchester, on a rainy day, in the museum cafe, I talked to a couple from Chesterfield, who inadvertently mentioned their stay at the Hilton Hotel, St George's Park. The lady said, 'It's a perfect venue for football fans, built-in training fields of national teams, and it hosts football memorabilia on loan from this museum.' They did not declare the showcases at the hotel were a motivation for their visit to the museum in Manchester, but apparently, they perceived the connections between the hotel showcases and the museum site. The offer of loaning museum objects to its sponsors and partners echoes the commercialisation in the museum world in this day and age, which remains controversial. But what seems more important to me is that the cases also mirror how the sport of football has engaged with consumer culture and how the museum collection has been consumed by the public.

### **The National Football Museum in the context of the city**

Last but not the least, the museum holds a complicated relationship with the pace of the city. 'What is going on in the city of Manchester' matters. On the one hand, I saw the museum always in negotiation with the Manchester City Council before and after the reopening, in terms of financial issues, project management and many other matters. As mentioned before, Manchester City Council was the deciding power in bringing the museum to Manchester and has been the principal founder of the new project. On the other hand, while the museum is pleased to be involved in the affluent cultural environment of Manchester, it sometimes struggled to step back from the political issues. A

small example. At our meeting on the 6th March 2012, the director informed me that the date for the announcement of the reopening was finally fixed for the 27th of March. The original date was March the 28th, exactly 100 days before the confirmed reopening on July 6<sup>th</sup>. While it had to be shifted earlier because the 28th is for 'Purdah' in Manchester, the pre-election event for revealing the shortlists of candidates for the final election for the House of Commons of the United Kingdom constituency of Manchester Central. Trying to explain to me the origin and meaning of the word, he wiki-ed 'Purdah' and told me the 'it is from Persian, referring to the veil or curtain covering a woman's head'. Interestingly, the metaphor of the 'curtain', as mentioned before and will be further discussed, also suites the museum well, in regards of the half hidden way of representation as well as the restrictions museums are facing.

### **The idea of 'satellite exhibitions'**

The above paragraphs illustrate how NFM has regularised communications with local, national, and international institutions and partners into its everyday routine. Through the networking circle, it stretches football culture and promotes the idea of celebrating football heritage to a larger scale of audience. Also, the museum loaned and will continue to stage football items beyond its walls to suit the interests of specific locations and occasions. I borrow the idea of 'satellite cities' from scholars in urban planning and urban sociology to name the specially tailored exhibiting areas as '**satellite exhibitions**'. Taylor (1915), employs the concept of 'satellite city' to describe the growth and urbanisation of larger industrial cities' suburbs, with a focus on the people working, living and claiming their rights in the satellite cities (Bedford 1916). I consider the concept of the 'satellite city' also suggests how the movement of people between places and jobs shaped the urban landscapes.

Similarly, my idea of 'satellite exhibition' is rooted in mobility as well—the ability of the museum objects to move around physically, and symbolically, the

circulation of knowledge. As mentioned above, the NFM has created satellite exhibitions through five different channels mainly (Figure 3.8): by touring exhibitions, loaning items, delivering and hosting football themed lectures, meetings, and media shows; and more channels may be made and recognized.

The museum's adjoining 'satellite exhibitions' have created an open and extensive access for meaning-making and discourses of identities on local, national and global levels. While, above all, monitoring the changing pace of Manchester, the museum has created most of its 'satellite exhibitions' in the city and for the city. The exhibitions at the main museum site and the satellite exhibitions' all weave into the image and branding of the city.

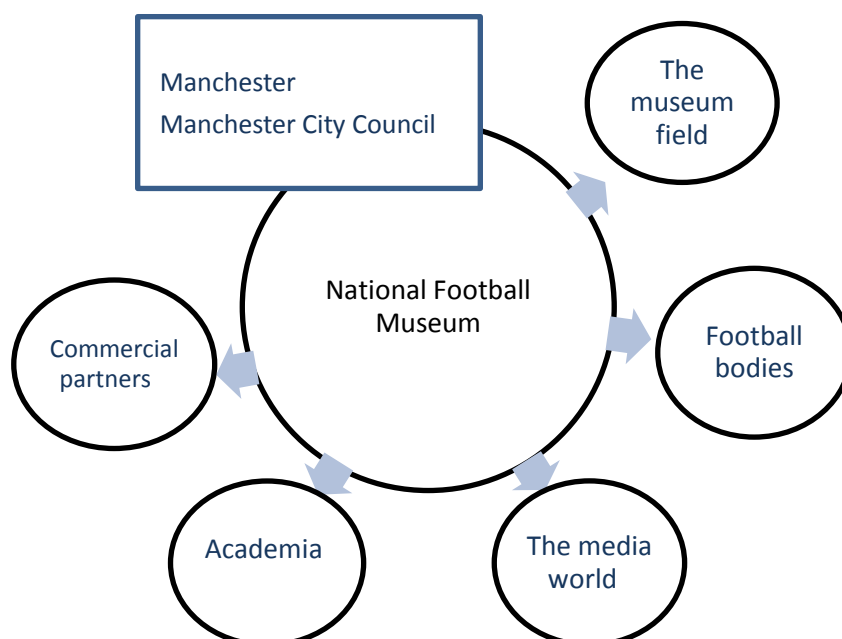


Figure 3.8 The National Football Museum and its 'satellite exhibitions'.

In this section, I have described the internal style and values of the organisation, and the museum's 'satellite exhibitions' through external connections with the wider museum, football, academic, media and commercial worlds. Next, I will return to a more conventional route by looking at interpretations of the museum exhibitions as such.

### 3.4 Exhibiting representation(s) and interpretation(s)

This section principally considers the National Football Museum's permanent exhibition galleries, and a temporary exhibition on show when the museum reopened its doors to the public in Manchester in July 2012. The words 'representation' and 'interpretation' are used in both singular and plural forms, referring to the museum's exhibiting *practices*, as well as the '*resultant*' *cultural products at the NFM* (Lidchi 1997:153). After showing the layout of the museum, I examine selected themes, museum devices and interpretation approaches through which the NFM circulates meanings and represents multi-layered identities. I also describe a special episode of the museum's former Preston site and finish by looking at 'football and art' in the museum, through Lowry's art work and Stuart Roy Clark's exhibition.

#### 3.4.0 Exhibition frame: the Floor Plans

As do many visitors who map out their museum visits using the Floor Plans<sup>13</sup>, I begin with an outline of the main exhibiting elements of each floor<sup>14</sup>.

##### **Ground Floor Arrival, Hall of Fame, Shop and Cafe**

##### **Welcome Wing**

##### **Hall of Fame**

The one and only exhibiting area on the ground floor, the atrium, is dedicated to England's football Hall of Fame (HOF). Besides a Wall of Legends featuring the images of the Hall of Famers at a young age to inspire the youth, a LED curtain and touch screens are also on offer for an updated HOF list. As with the Preston site, the new home of the NFM hosts an annual induction ceremony at the HOF atrium.

<sup>13</sup> The NFM's Floor Plans can be found in the Museum Guide, which is available on site at the Welcome Wing for one pound. An online version is offered as well at the museum's official website under 'visit us'.

<sup>14</sup> The four lower floors are exhibition galleries, together with a level (4) for school and family activities. A restaurant was located on the top two floors (Level 5 and 6) when the museum was reopened in 2012, and is currently (2014) closed.

## **Museum Shop**

## **Museum Cafe**

### **Level One Football History**

#### **BBC Radio Commentary Collection** (balcony)

As mentioned before, in partnership with the BBC, the museum harbours the audio archive of commentary clips, including the 'best five' commentaries of 92 league clubs and the commentators' masterpieces for the national team's greatest moments.

#### **The Game**

A brief history of the pre-life (pre-1863) of modern football and beginning of Association football.

#### **First Eleven**

Eleven objects are selected by the museum to illustrate the history of modern football.

#### **Fans**

Capturing the change and development of the fan culture over a century, sourced from artworks, fan objects, and audio-visual stories called 'Fans' Voices' (from the 'Kicking and screaming: an oral history of English Football').

#### **Competition**

This zone takes the central space in the exhibition hall on this floor, featuring high-prestige trophy cabinets and two crescent interactive databases on league and cup competitions. The 'Football Plus'<sup>15</sup> interactive **Lift the trophy** is also located here, using technology to create 'hands on the trophy' pictures. The history of the FA Cup is depicted here under the spotlight. The zone finishes with the 'English team in European Cup games' memories, which naturally leads to the next zone.

#### **Global Game**

A World Cup focused section, the England National Team's international

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<sup>15</sup> The 'Football Plus' is a series of seven paid interactive items on Level 1 and 2, which will be further discussed later.

journey is enclosed.

### **UEFA Zone**

Dedicated to the UEFA Cup Winners' Cup (1960-1999), which was the first cup won by an English league team (Tottenham Hotspur, in 1963) in European competitions.

### **Stadium**

Stadia are the centre stages for football competitions and the spiritual homes for football fans. This section not only demonstrates the magnificence of football stadia, but also touches on the devastating tragedies that have happened at football venues.

### **Clubs**

The birth, growth and changing faces of football clubs.

### **Players**

This zone tells stories of individual footballers, Brits playing abroad and foreign players playing in England, iconic ones as well as some comparatively less known ones, who have made this game more attractive and diverse.

### **Media**

The zone explores the power of media in reporting football, past and present, ranging from newspaper and magazine to radio, TV and film. The 'TV Heaven', delineating football-related characters and the Football Plus interactive **Match of the Day Commentary Challenge** are both situated here.

### **Our Beautiful Game** (cinema)

A 10-minute film about one month in the life of football in England, featuring scenes from the national team, professional league teams to football in school and the street.

## **Level Two Playing the Game**

### **Football for all**

Exhibitions on Level Two begins with football and winning enjoyed by people from diverse backgrounds, regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnicity and



creed.

### **Laws**

A collection of objects and stories here show the regulations for association football from the invention of the rules to the iconic referees in this day and age. Also, drawing from the comic book by Trevillion, an interactive game called *You Are The Ref* is available. After watching video clips, visitors are encouraged to make decisions on their own as football referees.

### **Managers**

The zone features classic team formations and tactics generated by famous football managers all over the world.

### **Performance**

This section, with an impressive life-sized treatment table to touch on, explores the physical elements, possible injuries and medical treatments in football playing.

### **Kit**

This zone examines the change and development of football shirts, boots and other equipment. A players' locker room is included here for observing and smelling footballer's lockers throughout the time.

### **The team**

This section illustrates different roles and positions on the pitch, from the attacking line, through the midfield and defence, back to the goal line.

### **Toys and games**

This zone approaches football through its fun and family-based forms, from table top football game, football cards/stickers to football themed video games.

Five **Football Plus** activities

### **Discovery zone for under 5's**

## **Level Three Changing Exhibitions**

### **The Homes of Football (2012.7.6-2012.12.31)**

A photographic exhibition by Stuart Roy Clark.

**Moving into Space: football and art in West Africa (2012.7.6-2012.12.31)**

A football themed exhibition, as one component of the 'We Face Forward' exhibition series, joining other museums and galleries in Manchester to celebrate the London Olympics through the lens of West African art.

**Level Four Learning and Community**<sup>16</sup>

**Our Sporting Life (2012.7.12-2012.12.31)**

Curated by young people from all over the Greater Manchester region, celebrating sporting culture and the 2012 London Olympic Games. An entry of the Sports Heritage Network's national 'Our Sporting Life' programme.

### **3.4.1 'Football for all'**

In the extended version of the mission statement and strategic aims, to answer the question of 'who is the museum for', the museum claims it 'is for everyone, regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion or any other factors' (National Football Museum Strategic Plan). The NFM unfolds this ideological setting in three ways. As noted earlier, the first two means are, a) in terms of museum facilities, providing a physically accessible environment (such as wheelchair accessible and discovery zone for under 5s) and b) in regards of the personality of the museum organisation, being culturally inclusive and establishing a welcoming atmosphere. Here, I look at the third one, how the idea of the 'NFM for all' is carried out through exhibition devices.

'NFM for all' is rooted deeply in the idea of 'football for all', and the museum explores the idea through a 'Football for all' theme. The 'Football for all' zone (Figure 3.9 top) is the first zone on Level 2, starting with stories of the AFC Masters. Founded in 2005 in Bolton, the AFC Masters is a football club providing training and match opportunities for disabled people, kids and adults, male and female (AFC Masters 2014). The background picture of the case (Figure 3.9 bottom left) is a Bolton Masters player who scored the 'goal of the

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<sup>16</sup> This level is reserved for activities developed by the NFM's learning and community team and was temporarily taken over by this exhibition in 2012.

tournament' in the 2011 north-west Ability Counts (the football tournament for disabled players, supported by the English FA), celebrating his goal with a wide smile and arm raised. This photo was also used in the museum's promotional flyer design (Figure 3.9 bottom right), in order to deliver the message of 'football for all', and the museum's approach of 'telling football's stories from grassroots up'.

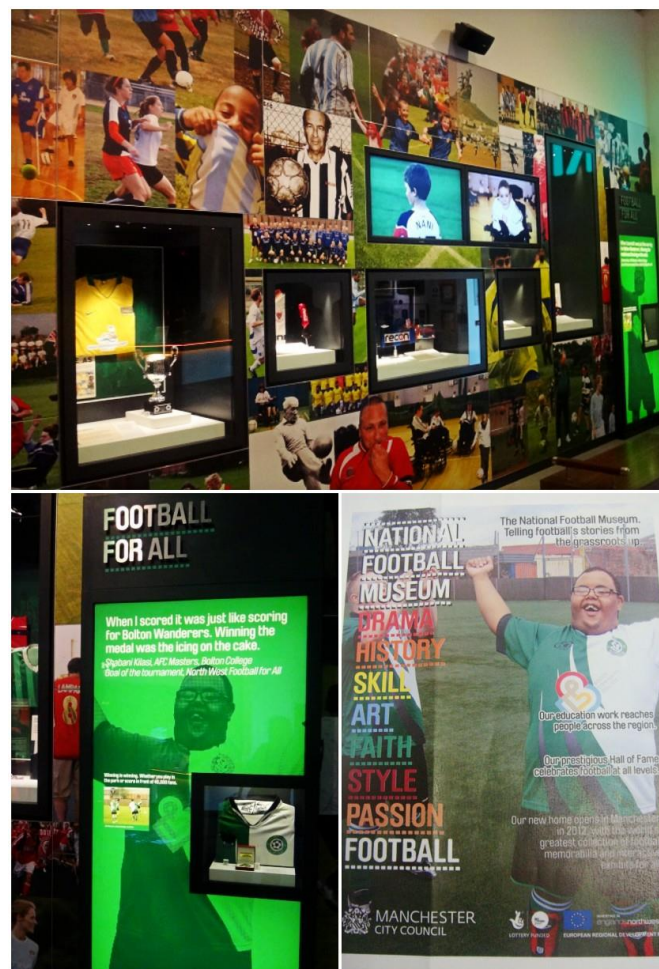


Figure 3.9 Top: Overview of the 'Football for all' zone.

Bottom left: The introductory showcase. Bottom right: The promotional flyer design.

The 'Football for all' zone continues with object cases depicting stories of Stephen Daley of England's partially sighted team, Mike Burles of England's over 50s team, Preston Canaries FC (footballers all with an Asian background), Village Manchester FC (a gay football club) and Brett Ormerod (a player who scored in different divisions of English league football and who fought back to

the top league after a severe injury). The showcases together, in the words of the staff member who is the 'story teller' of this zone, represent the character of 'winning and competing at whatever level or whichever context you play in'. The displaying cases are articulated in an image and film wall, featuring more people from diverse backgrounds in football shirts and enjoying football.

The 'football for all' idea is replayed in the *Our Beautiful Game* film. The film was originally named *The Beautiful Game*, with a backup choice *The People's Game*. The final version incorporated 'our'—this 'our' is ambiguous, but also represents that 'the sense of togetherness' could belong to everyone. Commissioned by the NFM, the director team travelled across England for a month and filmed Team England, GB Amputee Squad, Premiere League teams, Farm Pitch United, school teams, two kids one-on-one and more. The film demonstrates people preparing for matches, playing the game on the beach, at parks, stadiums and supporters watching and cheering on their teams.

Several visitors chose the 'Football for all' section or *Our Beautiful Game* as their favourite and made intriguing comments.

Visitors on 'Football for all' zone

'The (Football for all) section is excellent. People differ in gender, age, sexuality...share the pitch. The Brett Ormerod's case is superb; I am far from a Blackpool fan though. He recovered from a broken leg and promoted Blackpool, succeeded by perseverance. He is still playing... **That's a lesson for all.**'

'I am not really interested in football, but the museum's great. Glad I came...I **liked the scene that a boy in a wheelchair passing the wall of Football for all.**'

Visitors on *Our Beautiful Game*

'**All levels of football** in ten minutes. Absolutely brilliant!'

'The film is my favourite. Good to see FC United (of Manchester) on the big screen... We really enjoyed it.'

Museums and football pitches are both ideal stages for showcasing the diversity of people. The NFM welcomes not only football fans, football addicted families (local and those who have travelled with their teams to Manchester),

football teams and football celebrities, but also school groups, non-fans, even someone popping in after shopping or taking a shelter from the rain. The museum is for all. While wandering in the museum, visitors do glance at, overhear and sometimes communicate with other museum audience. The visitor becomes an integral element of the museum exhibition; and the NFM embraces and encourages a larger and diverse scale of museum visitors than a club museum. Therefore, one may naturally acquire a sense of 'museum for all' when in between peer museum spectators. What the museum visitors said is a clue illustrating how the 'football for all' idea, unconsciously, transforms into and associates with a 'museum for all'.

### **3.4.2 The stadium reinvented: museum, stadium and fans**

It's more than a football ground; it's a way of life...

—Chester City supporter, quoted in the introductory panel of the 'Stadium' zone at the  
National Football Museum, Manchester

The NFM opens its doors for all, but a football museum primarily attracts football fans. Different from football museums on the club level, the ones bearing the 'national' in names are sometimes situated far away from football stadiums, such as the NFM in Manchester. As mentioned before, the NFM is in central Manchester, not attached to the football stadia of Manchester United (Old Trafford Stadium, around 4 miles away in the southwest), Manchester City (Etihad Stadium, about 2 miles to the east) nor any other football grounds. It is a prime location for a visitor attraction, but less appealing to football fans, in comparison to built-in-stadium and built-alongside-stadium ones.

What the museum did and does is to create the stadium-like structure and atmosphere. Firstly, on the way leading to the main entrances, seven exterior banners are installed, expressing the 'Core List' of words for the NFM brand—Drama, History, Skill, Art, Faith, Style and Passion. The Core List is said by the museum staff to be 'the personality of our organisation', about 'who we are and what we offer'.



Figure 3.10 The exterior banners, with the view of the museum entrance at the far end.

Those banners not only visually manifest the character of the museum, but also, similar to the flagpoles featuring team logos typically seen at football grounds, create the ‘getting to the stadium’ feeling. After entering the museum, visitors will pass the welcome desk and enter a tunnel of ‘football supporters outside the stadiums’ pictures. Then comes the most symbolic installation in the museum—the full height metal turnstile. More than a half of my interviewees mentioned the turnstile—‘the sound when revolving the turnstile’, ‘a feeling when passing the turnstile (once again)’, ‘the kid’s first time pushing through a football turnstile’—viewing it as a mark of entering the ‘game’, the ‘playground’, the ‘pitch’. As reflected in the interviews, the turnstile successfully carries out of the aim set by the museum staff members, which is ‘offering the sense of going to the match’.



Figure 3.11 The tunnel and the turnstile in the NFM.



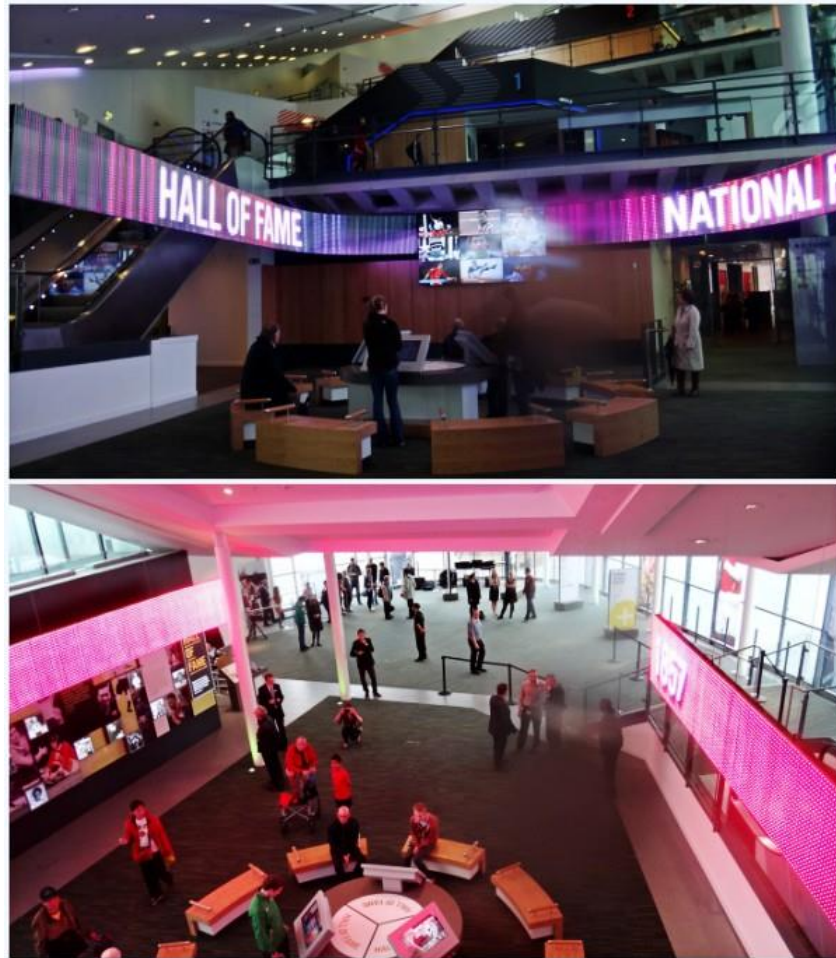


Figure 3.12 Top: Picture taken in the Hall of Fame.

Bottom: Picture taken on the balcony on Level1 overlooking the Hall of Fame.

Going through the turnstile, the Hall of Fame comes into sight. From the ground floor HOF atrium, one could get a view of the upper four exhibiting levels, which designed to represent four tiers of the stand in a football stadium. Correspondingly, from the balconies of the main exhibition levels (Level 1 and Level 2, which are also entitled 'the first half' and 'the second half' of the game) visitors can look down to the ground 'pitch' level where the English football Hall of Famers are shining on the LED curtain and the legend wall. Through the articulation of the banners, the tunnel, the turnstile, the 'stand' (level1 to 4) and the 'pitch' (the atrium), the museum injects characteristics of a stadium into the museum space.



Figure 3.13 Top left: A museum staff member advising on the Penalty Shoot Out.

Top Right: The Penalty Shoot Out Top Scores sheet.

Bottom left: Graphics for the Shot Stopper.

Bottom right: The Football Plus ticket (of mine).

The 'Football Plus' programme is another device which smartly furnishes the museum as a 'stadium'. Football Plus is a series of seven interactive activities, including Lift the trophy and Match of the Day commentary challenge on Level 1 and five compartments (Shot Stopper, Penalty Shoot Out, On the Ball, Pass Master, and One-two) on Level 2 to test one's football skills against or alongside top English footballers featured in the graphics (i.e. Stuart Pearce on the introductory panel; Joe Hart at the Shoot Stopper, see Figure 3.13 bottom left; and Ashley Young at the Penalty Shoot Out). As suggested by a museum staff member, before the reopening, famous players were invited to test out the interactive items, in order to promote Football Plus. For museum visitors, after taking part in the activities, they can also download related photos, commentary clips and certificates online and share them on social network sites. Although, as shown in interviews and the museum back of house meetings, Football Plus received criticism in terms of the price and technical



issues; as a representational device, it significantly contributes to the atmosphere of a football ground. Visitors play, watch others play, and even compete against each other under the roof of the museum. Aside from offering activities for visitors and helping the museum to be financially self-sufficient, I also find the Football Plus programme valuable because it produces the 'tickets', printed with a unique Football Plus ID and the Quick Response Code (See Figure 3.13, bottom right). 'We didn't buy anything at the shop. But look, my son's got his Football Plus ticket.' —the visitor's words reminded me that I also kept my Football Plus ticket with other football tickets I collected. The museum itself is free admission without a ticketing system, therefore purchasing Football Plus credits also means obtaining tickets—as evidence of one's participation in museum activities, as a souvenir and a memory to carry on after the museum visit. From this perspective, the Football Plus further associates the museum experience with the match experience.

The 'Stadium' zone in the main gallery raises the 'museum and stadium' relationship to a new level. My informants described the zone as 'emotional', 'poignant', 'thoroughly designed' and 'covering both the good and the bad'. Two repeated mentions were 'being able to lean on a crush barrier and sit on the wooden seat from the old Wembley' (Figure 3.14) and 'telling the stories of the Bradford Fire<sup>17</sup> and the Hillsborough Disaster<sup>18</sup>'. As summarised by a museum visitor, the section's approaches encompass most familiarities of the match day experience in the stadium (the barrier and the seat) and the most shocking moments in England's football history.

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<sup>17</sup> Bradford Fire refers to the fire disaster that occurred at the Valley Parade stadium of Bradford City F.C. on 11 May 1985. Fifty six football fans died in the fire. For more information and stories, please see <http://bradfordcityfire.co.uk/>.

<sup>18</sup> On 15 April 1989, a crush happened at the Leppings Lane terrace in Hillsborough Stadium, the home ground of Sheffield Wednesday F.C., during a FA Cup match between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest. 96 Liverpool supporters lost their lives in this disaster (Hillsborough Independent Panel 2012). In England, football grounds started to change after the disaster. As the most devastating tragedy in the history of English football, issues regarding the Hillsborough Disaster have been controversial throughout these years, involving voices from the Police side, football bodies, fan communities, the government, and the media world. For more information, please see the official website of the Hillsborough Independent Panel at <http://hillsborough.independent.gov.uk/> and one of the latest news from the Guardian at <http://www.theguardian.com/football/hillsborough-disaster>.



Figure 3.14 Left: The old Wembley seats. Right: The Hillsborough Disaster booth.

The Hillsborough Disaster booth is an ideal case of the museum 'montage'—stitching the architecturally detailed crush barrier from the home ground of Chesterfield FC and the footage and pictures of the disaster from more than 20 years ago—to detach the museum items from the original time-space and weave them into a constructed museum context. The crush barrier here stands for all the stadiums witnessing neglect in the history of football grounds, paying tribute to those dead football fans. This booth triples the idea of the 'stadium' through a) connecting the genuine object from a stadium and a real story from another to create a more abstract stadium, b) situating the timeline of the history of the football stadium under the 'Stadium' theme, and c) in the context of the NFM's overall stadium-like feeling. The 'stadium atmosphere' is at the peak.

In addition to above museum settings, the sense of the stadium also emerges in small ways. For instance, the voices in the vernacular lift informing levels, 'doors opening/closing', 'going up/down' are from the famous Manchester-born

football commentator 'Motty'<sup>19</sup>. Some passengers showed understanding smiles when hearing the voice, while some just said out loud 'It's Motty'. I got the opportunity to listen to the original recordings from Motty, and what the visitors would never hear is that he said 'in the style of a match commentator' at the very beginning, from which the museum's effort in bringing the match feelings is clearly seen. Another example is from the museum text notices when some interactive devices face problems—'I'm injured and receiving treatment. I will be back to full fitness as soon as possible.'

In a word, the NFM endeavours to regain the sense and feeling of the stadium via grand design plans, museum objects, thematic and interactive items, as well as detailed museum settings. Stadiums embed the power to reflect certain cultural situations and examine identity formations (Frank and Steets 2010). So do museums. The NFM, locating itself in-between 'stadium' and 'museum', strengthens the power. At the foundation level, the museum constructs identifications for football fans, by incorporating the sense of 'the stadium' into the museum space and generalising the idea of 'the stadium' in the meaning circles.

### 3.4.3 The Englishness, the Mancunian feel, the Preston bond and 'find your team'

'Interesting, I saw the (German National Team's) training gear of the 54', and mascots from 74' and 90, in **England's National Football Museum**. We (Germany) had great wins...Sometimes I don't want to admit England is so influential in this game...Loved the museum anyway, very detailed and informative... **The history of English football looks like a condensed history of world football.** '

One may not agree with this German visitor, but he was fully aware that although the museum believes 'football for all, NFM for all' and they create the stadium and match-day feeling for football fans from all over a world, as a

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<sup>19</sup> Motty is the nickname of John Motson. As mentioned before, his sheepskin coat was showcased at the BBC studio before the reopening of the NFM, and this item later gained its place in NFM's permanent exhibition, at the 'Media' zone.

national museum, it still focuses on the English stories. In fact, the *Our Beautiful Game* film, the 'Football for all' zone as well as the 'Stadium' zone mentioned before, are all basically within the scope of England. The museum certainly claims its international profile and provides a 'Global Game' zone and a UEFA zone, but other than that, it is the National Football Museum of England and tells the story of English football. In addition, its new home and former site, Manchester and Preston, both cast shadows over the museum. The exhibition gallery starts with the First Eleven as a teaser of what the museum will convey. The First Eleven consists of 11 key objects in showcases, and a multi-screen wall with imaginative flows (Figure 3.15). The First Eleven in the new NFM are:

1. **The 1872 England international shirt** worn by Arnold Kirke in the first international game of modern football (Scotland versus England in Glasgow).
2. **The 1889 coloured print of the Preston North End 'Invincibles' team**, the first champions of the first football league (and unbeaten throughout the season).
3. **A football of the 1890s**, when the Brazilian-born Charles Miller took balls and laws of the game to Brazil after his education in England.
4. **Pennants of Dick Kerr Ladies (versus France, Belgium and Canada)**, one of the best women's teams in history, continued competing internationally after the English FA's ban (1921) for women's football.
5. **The 1930 World Cup ball**, with which Hector Castro scored and crowned Uruguay at home.
6. **Match programme of England versus Hungary at Wembley in 1953**, the match that England lost at Wembley stadium for the first time.
7. **World Cup Willie toy**, mascot of the 1966 England World Cup and the first mascot in the history of the World Cup. England won the World Cup for the first time in 1966.
8. **Alex Stepney's 1968 European Champion Club's Cup final shirt**. Manchester United won the European competition as the first English team.
9. **Hillsborough<sup>20</sup> tribute scarf** in red and white from Anfield.
10. **Drogba's No.11 Chelsea shirt**. The Ivorian star played in the English Premiere League from 2004 to 2012<sup>21</sup> for the London-based club.
11. **The African horn Vuvuzela**, which gained enormous notoriety in the 2010 South Africa World Cup, the first time FIFA World Cup held in Africa.

<sup>20</sup> Hillsborough Disaster. Please see footnote 13.

<sup>21</sup> Drogba re-joined Chelsea in 2014.



Figure 3.15 The First Eleven at the NFM, Manchester

## Englishness

Compared to the museum's former eleven must-see items<sup>22</sup>, the new NFM has changed more than a half of the 'players' in the 'starting eleven', in order to keep the exhibits updated (recent items 10 and 11, newly loaned item 8). Also, the coherence and richness of the First Eleven have been improved, by adding up objects that relate to stories of 'the formation and development of football league in England' (item 2 and 10), 'the spread of the game from England' (item 3), 'Team England's defeat' (item 6), 'English club in the European tournament' (item 8) and 'disaster(s) in English football' (item 9). The history of modern association football is represented through the lens of the English stories. What was said behind the scenes was that the First Eleven as a whole 'should be anchored in England, but always referencing that this is a global game'. Visitors may not take it in, but Englishness is a proud voice dominating the museum, from the invention of the laws for the game, introducing the red and yellow cards, to the Wembley stadium—home of the English national team, and the glossy history of the FA Cup. The 'Global Game' zone is also centred on England's 1966 World Cup win on home soil and is structured by the '1900-1938, 1950-1962, **1966**, post 1966' timeline; and even today in 2014,

<sup>22</sup> The First Eleven at the Preston site of the former National Football Museum were: 1) the 1872 England international shirt, 2) the 1896 FA Cup, 3) pennants of Dick Kerr Ladies, 4) the 1930 World Cup Final balls, 5) Stanley Mathews' 1953 FA Cup Final shirt, 6) Bert Trautmann's Neck Brace in the 1956 FA Cup Final, 7) the Jules Rimet Trophy, 8) 1966 World Cup ball, 9) Bobby Moore's England shirt worn in the 1970 World Cup, 10) Diego Maradona's Argentina shirt in the 1986 'Hand of God' match against England and 11) 2002 World Cup Ball.

the '1966 England captain Bobby Moore holding the Jules Rimet Trophy' picture is still the most iconic footballing image for the museum to express the pride of the nation and hope for future glory during the World Cup.



Figure 3.16 Top: The Showcase of 1966 England World Cup, at NFM.

Bottom: Screen capture of the NFM's 2014 Brazil World Cup Prize Draw, featuring Bobby Moore.

### **Manchester and Preston**

At the same time, both the former and new First Eleven show objects relate to Manchester (former: two, new: one) and to Preston (former: one, new: two), and to the Northwest besides Manchester and Preston (former: one of Blackpool, new: one of Liverpool). The newly added Drogba's Chelsea shirt, representing the attractiveness and globalisation of the Premiere League, in fact, also illustrates the museum Interpretation Team's considerable effort in balancing the North West and the South. To situate 'Manchester' in the NFM's new home, especially Manchester United and Manchester City (individually and together), was one of the trickiest issues the museum team faced (I

consider it still is and will always be). The stories, cultures and successes packed in these two clubs are too difficult to escape from, and the museum recognises the responsibility in promoting local culture and local identity as well; at the same time, being a national museum, to maintain a state of equality is also necessary, which was one of the most discussed issues at the interpretation meetings before the reopening. However, one of the main complaints in the first three months after the reopening was: 'too much Manchester', 'an apparent bias', 'the focus' towards Manchester clubs, 'lack of northeast and southern teams'. While, many Manchester City fans simply thought 'more City items are needed' and they hated seeing Manchester United objects and sometimes felt 'disappointed', 'sad', even 'disgusted' about 'the Trafford side' accounting for a larger proportion than Man City in the NFM. Take the ending part of the Player zone (Figure 3.17), for example. Firstly, there is the puppet of Manchester United's Eric Cantona, the most visually dominant one among other objects in the showcase; then, on the glass of the showcase, one can see the reflection of the oil painting of Sir Bobby Charlton, which is displayed on the wall; and last, Michael Browne's Renaissance-style 'Art of the Game' painting, 305.5 x 254 cm, depicting Eric Cantona as Jesus and featuring other Manchester United stars as well. Although, theoretically, Sir Bobby's portrait (Sir Bobby as a legend of Team England) and Cantona with the St. George's Cross flag in the 'Art of the Game' painting both also contribute to this Englishness, they are just Manchester United items in the view of Man City fans; as for many other visitors, a strong Mancunian feeling is delivered.

In fact, Manchester City elements were more involved behind the scenes at the NFM. As mentioned before, the Man City historian Gary James, who initiated the Manchester City's museum and tour, was also employed in the process of creating the NFM Manchester and keeps a good relationship with the museum team. In addition, the 'Home of Football' photographer Stuart Roy Clark who has worked with museum's back of house team even more closely,



followed Manchester City's final match and celebration of the Premier League win in May 2012, and presented the footage of this recent project (featuring the NFM in the background), a stairwell display at the NFM as a Manchester City related item. Besides the exhibiting devices, the museum carries further the local identity through plenty of museum activities, which will be elaborated in the next chapter.



Figure 3.17 The Player zone at the National Football Museum, Manchester.

The National Football Museum also has an intimate relationship with its former home, Preston. As shown in the new NFM's First Eleven, Preston is the home of the Preston North End (PNE), the first club to win the title in the first football league, and Dick Kerr Ladies, the world's best female team back in the 1920s. The founding of the National Football Museum in Preston was in the wider context of the regeneration of the PNE's Deepdale Stadium, the oldest Football League ground still in use; and the museum also generated positive economic and social impacts on the city's development and image-making (Moore 2008). I visited the museum's Preston site at Deepdale to explore more. My original motivation was to follow the curators at the museum's mixed collection store and to wander around the already closed museum galleries, but I found several intriguing points after a tour of the exhibition halls offered by



the Duty Manager of the Preston site. Firstly, Sir Tom Finney, an incontrovertible figure representing Preston's footballing history and personality was born and bred in Preston; he played for PNE and the England National Team. 'The Splash' sculpture of him slid-tacking for a ball was located in front of the museum entrance (Figure 3.18 top). In 2009, the museum staged a temporary exhibition entitled *Local hero, football legend: Sir Tom Finney* to coincide with the Sir Tom Finney Day introduced by the Preston City Council. The exhibition's target audience was 'the people of Preston and the local area' who 'know and respect Sir Tom' (NFM 2009). When I visited the Preston site, some items, texts and floor stickers guiding the way to the exhibition were still available (Figure 3.18 bottom). Although only a fragmented view, I could tell from the museum text that, 'born and bred in Preston', 'playing for Preston North End and England', Sir Tom was not only 'a tremendous ambassador for the game, as he was never booked or sent off', but also 'remains a proud Prestonian and a true gentleman' who 'continued to work tirelessly in his hometown for many worthy causes'. For the city of Preston, Sir Tom is more than a football legend. The museum recognised the bond and strengthened it with the exhibition. Today, Sir Tom is still the Vice President of the NFM Manchester.



Figure 3.18 National Football Museum, Preston.  
Top: entrance. Bottom: the Local Hero Exhibition

Secondly, PNE and the Deepdale Stadium: as with Sir Tom Finney, the most respected and loved football figure in Preston, PNE is the dominant football team in the city. Without troubles like the Manchester United versus Manchester City opposition, the Deepdale Stadium of PNE is the heartland of Preston's football identity. Being able to originally host the English National Football Museum already showed the club's and the city's confidence and ambitions for their footballing history. The NFM Preston also developed an exhibition area for the club and the stadium where visitors could have a great view of the ground (Figure 3.19) —this is what the NFM Manchester cannot offer.



Figure 3.19 Deepdale.



Figure 3.20 The Hand On Gang of Preston museum and heritage sites.

Thirdly, and what interested me most, Preston had invented the Hand On Gang (named Frankie) (Figure 3.20 left), to act as the guide for the museum activity trail. This little character had four peers from other heritage sites in Preston<sup>23</sup> to make a full 'hand-set' of fun (while after the NFM making its new home in Manchester, there is only four of the Hands On Gang, see Figure 3.20 bottom right). The Hand On Gang, certainly a marketing strategy, also contributed to the Preston identity and a sense of togetherness by articulating local heritage sites/visitor attractions in a novel way.

Finally, I heard stories from my tour guide about activities for local school children and saw the drawings and 'footy' poems still hanging in the learning area. The former NFM in Preston, bearing the 'National' in its name, stayed local.

This partial view the NFM Preston, to a certain extent, illustrates the NFM's close former association with the city of Preston, with its local hero, the PNE, and more importantly with local community for nearly a decade. As claimed by a family who visited the Manchester site just after its reopening in July 2012, 'We loved the National Football Museum in Preston. Visited a couple of times...It should never have been moved from Deepdale'. My interviewees who visited the NFM in Preston before loved to compare the old and the new. Some found the Manchester one 'brighter', 'more airy' 'more interactive' 'more modern', while others thought it 'too new' 'holding less objects' and 'Preston was better'. The museum's deep bond with Preston does cast a shadow over the exhibition at the Manchester site as well. Besides two historical items in the First Eleven, another example is the case containing the PNE fans' rosettes in the introductory panel of the Fans zone, with the photo of the PNE fans at the 1964 FA Cup final, a tribute to the museum's former Preston home and the fans there. Nowadays, the Preston site remains an integral part of the NFM, as the museum store and the research centre remain there; many Back of House

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<sup>23</sup> Besides Frankie, the rest of the Hand On Gang were: Annie from the Harris Museum & Art Gallery, Reg from the Queen's Lancashire Regimental Museum, Stan from the Museum of Lancashire and Mr. Ribble from the Ribble Steam Rail Way.

staff members who have witnessed the ups and downs of their museum from its birth are still living in Preston and travel between the Manchester site and Preston site very frequently. The Preston site, the pre-life of the NFM Manchester, is the evidence of the NFM's own history and memories.

### **'Find your club'**

Without doubt, museum visitors were tremendously diverse in cultural backgrounds; and most importantly, when it comes to football fans, they supported various football clubs. 'Trying to find my club' is the only point every football fan mentioned in the interviews. The museum team endeavoured to cover as many clubs as possible and to balance the museum content with a national scope, but space is limited. Therefore, they did install exhibits with the digital features to meet the expectations of a larger amount of football fans supporting English teams. The first one, as mentioned above is the BBC Radio Commentary Collections which covers 92 English teams. Another two are the league competition interactive database and the data of English Cup games in the Competition zone around the trophy cabinet. The database of the league contains a 'find your team' sector, under which one can explore a club's history, club records, star players of the club, and the club in the league table as well. However, according to my observation, the Competition zone was extremely crowded at times, as a result of the attractive glittering trophies and the Lift the Trophy interactive exhibit; and therefore many visitors missed or did not have the chance to get their hands on the database. A few visitors said he/she would go back and check his/her club when I mentioned it in the interview.

Fans have sharp eyes in hunting museum items featuring their club and their players. They mentioned match programmes of Leeds United or Blackburn Rovers, tickets of Nottingham Forest or Derby County FC, which are very small items among around sixty items in a showcase. Visitors from overseas felt 'happy', 'thrilled' when seeing their club at the English National Football Museum. One extreme example—a Shakhtar Donetsk supporter who travelled

from Ukraine found the Shakhtar Donetsk captain Srna's national team (Croatia) Match Attax card in the corner of the showcase in the Games and Toys zone (this zone is in the corner as well) and said to me, 'The card made my day!', and she loved the museum because of this item. Among plenty of examples, my personal best is that of a little boy. He was visiting the museum with other kids from the Manchester United Football Camp, wearing a jacket with the Manchester United logo. He took off his jacket when he approached the wall featuring Liverpool's Champions League win. At first I did not notice anything special as he had a red football shirt underneath the jacket. But a few seconds later, I saw Gerrard's name and number on the back of his shirt and understood it was actually a Liverpool shirt. Then the boy posed in front of the wall, with his finger pointing at the quote from Gerrard 'It will be a dream come true if I can go there and lift it', and asked another boy of the group to take a picture for him. I planned to talk to him later, but unfortunately lost him at the last; and therefore would never know his stories about Liverpool, Gerrard and maybe the magic Champions League win. But I still remember his pose and smile, and this is absolutely one of the most precious moments throughout my fieldwork at football museums.

In the NFM, besides not being a particular club museum, 'can't find my team' and 'not enough of my club' are the biggest disappointments for football fans. While, 'seeing my club' and 'meeting my football hero' in the museum are surely very pleasant, 'the more, the better'.

### **3.5 'Going to the match' and 'Homes of football': art, museum, going to the museum**

Back in 1953, the English FA held a *Football and Fine Art* competition and exhibition in London and the organisers started to think about building a national museum for the sport of football. In 1999, the artwork *Going to the Match* by Lawrence Stephen Lowry (1887-1976) which won the 1953

competition was bought by the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) for nearly 2 million pounds (Moore 2008). The painting depicts football fans going to the match at Bolton Wanderers' home ground. The print of *Going to the match*, loaned from the PFA, was displayed in the Fans zone at the NFM, together with a smaller pencil sketch by Lowry (Figure 3.21). On the way leading to this key exhibit, the museum created an interactive 'Lowry Corridor'. It is mainly a floor projection of a cobbled street animation in the style of Lowry's painting. Visitors can virtually kick a vintage football on the cobbles as well.



Figure 3.21 *Going to the Match*.

Although less known in the 1950 when winning the *Football and Fine Art* competition, nowadays, Lowry has become one of the most recognisable and popular artists for painting small 'matchstick men' in moving crowds, the everyday life and the iconic industrial landscape of 'the North' (of England) (Waters 1999). I remembered when giving a museum tour to a group of Brazilian guests, the museum director talked, with good humour, about the fans standing their collars up in Lowry's painting, because of the typical cold weather in the North of England. I agree with him that *Going to the Match* does express the sense of Englishness and the North; and, as Levy (1975) noticed,

the painting is also an artistic representation of a more general 'going to the match' ritual than a single match. What I would argue through Lowry's masterpiece displayed are the relations between football, art and football museums. The director himself notes (Moore 1997) that football as well as the wider popular culture has been viewed as 'low' culture in the cultural establishment and the museum temple for a long time. While, in 2013, breaking through the North West divisions and throwing aside the prejudices, '*Lowry and the Painting of Modern Life*' exhibition took place at Tate Britain, London, and *Going to the Match* was on display among many other works of Lowry. So, the NFM and Tate Britain (one of the leading institutions of so-called 'high' culture) both have or had the same painting on display, and the NFM and the football world discovered and paid attention to Lowry and *Going to the Match* even earlier. As a matter of fact, the representation of the painting in the NFM is more sophisticated, as it includes an interactive 'Lowry Corridor' to enrich the 'going to the match' feelings.

The NFM also embraces other artistic visions. The most remarkable one is the temporary exhibition of the 'Homes of Football' by Stuart Roy Clark, a visitors' favourite. 'Homes of football' is also a photographic database of 100,000 images, the one of the NFM's latest acquisitions. By the opening of the exhibition at the NFM, Clark had travelled to more than 4000 football matches with his Bronica camera. The Homes of Football at NFM exhibition explores ten key words in football fandom through photographs: loyalty, blind-infatuation, eccentricity, old-fashionability, sense of occasion, humour, fair-play, homeliness, triumphalism and the photographer's eye. Every single item has a name and conveys a story. Clark himself led several guided tours to share his stories with the museum audience. The most frequently used word was 'moment'. 'To catch the moments of football' and what these moments would long carry and through which we could understand our own changes. Clark is an excellent storyteller, knowing how to reach the details: to 'discover something about all of us' but from the small detail. Also, he is a good curator,



wisely articulated his experiences, 'the moments' and 'the small' into a whole picture of the Stuart Roy Clarke's Wallpaper (Figure 3.22 left) —a map of the British Isles consists of the names of football teams; and Clark visited all the home grounds of these teams. 'Through photographing football' he manages to map the world, and 'locate the sense of place'.



Figure 3.22 Left: Stuart Roy Clarke's Wallpaper.

Top right: Visitors in the exhibition hall of the Homes of Football.

Bottom right: The Homes of Football tour led by Clark.

I also understand Clark's exhibition and the ongoing project as the linkage between Lowry's painting and the NFM. Clark regarded the *Going to the Match* as the starting point for him and, as with Lowry, he started with moving people in the street. But he also wished to 'put faces to the matchstick people in Lowry's street scenes, by using a camera, in the modern era, in up-to-date settings' (MacKichan 2012). Lowry depicted crowds, while Clark is portraying individuals in the crowds. Clark's work does not hide the anxious, frightened and bizarre side in football fandom, but sheds a humorous and adventurous



light, bright and colourful. It seems that Clark has changed Lowry's 'expression of loneliness' into the 'seeking for togetherness', as he said in the film shown at the exhibition:

'Back to the football thing...for at least 90 minutes or a couple of times, I can feel, you know, I belong. I can feel special. I can get something out of this, and I can stand shoulder to shoulder with people, not feel isolated...I've got a kind of a family.'

On the other hand, Clark and the NFM are highly similar in terms of approach. The collaboration between the photographer and the NFM is based on a mutual belief in the power of football, pluralism and the common approach of storytelling. Of course, their connections also contribute to the reputation of both sides, and as the NFM has unlocked the commercial potential of the Homes of Football by reproducing the images, shared profiles are also created. As I observed, Clark was a real resident artist at the NFM, working with the museum team, leading museum tours, participating in museum talks, storing his stuff at the museum store at Preston. The museum printed his images on banners, flyers, panels, postcards, posters, and visitors loved it. There was nothing negative about the Homes of Football exhibition in my interviews with museum audience as well as the museum meetings during my fieldwork stay. Plus, the Homes of Football postcards were so popular. Why? Visitors described Clark's photos as 'simple', 'straightforward', 'emotional', 'fascinating', 'magical', **'different, but still us.'**

To think beyond the high culture/low culture dualism, football is culture, and art gives football an extraordinary face. From Lowry's *Going to the Match* painting (1953) to Clark's the Homes of Football exhibition at NFM (2012), we perceive how football fandom has changed over 60 years, and how a football museum stages football arts. It suggests another perspective of looking at our beautiful game and meeting another side of 'us', through artistic eyes, by going to the museum.

### 3.6 Storytelling and interactive exhibits

We are trying to put in more stories. Not only the objects to look at.

—Staff member of the National Football Museum, Manchester

This is our First 11. What would yours be?’

—Text on the panel wall of First Eleven section, NFM, Manchester

The NFM constructs the sense of involvement, belonging and togetherness, or say, collective identities through the history of the game delivered by museum’s representational products, and through the shared love, costumes and enjoyment in the sport conveyed by the museum devices. But, in fact, the museum’s approaches to interpretation are not through a monotone or/and a dominant viewpoint, but a pluralistic voice and individual perspectives.

The main approach of the museum’s interpretation is **storytelling**, and all stories are putting the **person(s)** who related to the objects into the central place. The much mentioned guidance in the museum’s Interpretation Meetings was ‘**people the text**’, and the use of **quotations** was hugely encouraged. As a result, the introductory sectors of museum zones are organised in a ‘background image-quotation-showcase-photo-(text) story’ format. This story-based and quotation-highlighted approach, in a direct way, involves voices from different angles in the field of football, including players, managers, referees, journalist, scholars, and fans. Apart from quotations on the introductory panels and on image walls, some stories are also stated besides the object labels, employing first person narratives. For example, all the showcases in the image and film wall of the ‘Football for all’ zone have a story starting with ‘I’ or ‘we’ alongside the object labels. The museum not only employed many interactive items, but also takes an **interactive** interpretational approach, giving visitors’ options through the museum texts and virtually creating the atmosphere of dialogues. On Level 1, next to the BBC Radio collection, is located the ‘Your shout!’ installation, for visitors to record their

viewpoints on hot issues in football, pushing the 'museum-visitor' dialogue in a more real way.

Museum objects are not only articulated into themes to serve the museum's grand story of 'English football with references to the development of the global game', but also interpreted in a storytelling, people-centred, and interactive approach which adds a personalised layer to the process of identity making.

Starting with background information about Manchester's football atmosphere and the National Football Museum's organisational culture, this chapter has mainly focused on the museum representation(s), including the NFM's strategies in displaying practices and the museum devices as final products which convey meanings and construct multi-layered identifications, from the 'football for all', the collective identity as football fans, to Englishness, the connections with the local (Manchester and Preston), the club(s), and individual perspectives. The story of the NFM will continue in the next chapter, with the emphasis on the museum activities I participated in and observed (mostly in the firstly three months after the reopening of the NFM in Manchester), to look into the museum's education roles, the relationship between the museum and local people, and the museum's performance beyond its walls. A summary of these two NFM chapters will also be present in the chapter.

# **Chapter 4 Much more than 90 minutes of football: the National Football Museum on performance**

## **4.0 The Mission Statement of the National Football Museum**

|  |
|--|
| <p>Amazing collections<br/>We are proud to care for the world's greatest football collection-over 140,000 items-including the FIFA Collection.</p> <p>Great exhibitions<br/>We explore football - past and present - through world class exhibitions, looking at the game from every angle, telling the stories that matter to all of us.</p> <p>Football changes lives<br/>We use the power of football to improve people's lives, through our outstanding learning and community programmes.</p> <p>Superb service<br/>We provide superb service to our visitors in all that we do.</p> <p>—Official Mission Statement of the National Football Museum, Manchester</p> |
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## **4.1 Bring it on: from pre-launch campaign to the reopening day**

This chapter examines the activities generated by the National Football Museum. I start by looking at the marketing team's work—how they delivered the reopening message to the public, how the communication plans reflected the museum's guiding strategies and how the museum projected Englishness and the Mancunian sense through the marketing processes.

The National Football Museum reopened in Manchester on 6 July 2012, with 5 July as the launch day. The marketing team's work faced the public much earlier than the reopening day. Consisting of only two members (one marketing

manager and one marketing officer), the marketing team was extremely busy during the pre-opening period.

## Pre-launch

Even before entering the field, in September 2011, I noticed the counting down activity on NFM's official web site, which encouraged football fans to join in and share personal football stories online through doodling (Figure 4.1).



Figure 4.1 Screen-print of the National Football Museum official website on 10 September 2011<sup>24</sup>.

At the same time, the marketing team worked closely with a local public relations (PR) agency and prepared a series of reports to be released on national, regional and local media. They also posted two stories on the museum website in March 2012 regarding new arrivals in collections. The first story is England Women's team coach Hope Powell's 2009 Women's European Championships silver medal and boots handover; and the second is Manchester City legend Collin Bell's reunion with a fan, who made him a crown, to officially loan the object to the museum<sup>25</sup>. These two pieces of news also secured media coverage on websites of women's sports magazines

<sup>24</sup> A doodle being selected and posted on NFM's official page—a Norwich City fan from London depicted his team's historical win over Bayern Munich, interestingly drawing German national flag to represent the German club.

<sup>25</sup> Please see 'HOPE PUTS HER BOOT IN' (8 March 2012) at <http://www.nationalfootballmuseum.com/about-us/latest-news/2012/03/hope-puts-her-boot-in/> and KING 'COLIN REUNITED WITH THE FAN WHO CROWNED HIM' (20 March 2012) at <http://www.nationalfootballmuseum.com/about-us/latest-news/2012/03/king-colin-reunited-with-the-fan-who-crowned-him/>.

*Sports Sister* and *Her Kicks*<sup>26</sup> (Hope Powell's story), and local newspaper *Manchester Evening News*<sup>27</sup> (Collin Bell's story). The deliberately selected PR stories of two English football Hall of Famers encompass a number of possible discourses: national/local, female/male, football professionals/football fan, football kit/ fan-made object, active football coach/ retired football legend. This encompassment reflected well the museum's strategies on 'inclusiveness', 'fan-engagement' and 'storytelling'. After the release of both stories, on 27th March 2012, the official web site of NFM changed into a new face to celebrate the final 100 days countdown of the reopening. This also marked the start of the intensive pre-launch advertising under two strong messages: 'Football's greatest stories *in Manchester*' (incorporated into the brand identity, Figure 4.2); and 'The world's biggest and best football museum *comes to England's football heartland*' (my italics). Two other supplementary messages were: 'Summer's biggest football event isn't in Poland or Ukraine'; and 'In football you can't miss openings like this.'



Figure 4.2 The pre-opening advertising message.

<sup>26</sup> Please see '5 minutes with Hope Powell' (Sport Sister 27 February 2012) at <http://www.sportsister.com/2012/02/27/5-minutes-with-hope-powell/> and 'Hope Pus Her Boots In' (She Kicks 27 February 2012) <http://www.shekicks.net/news/view/4684>.

<sup>27</sup> Please see 'Reunited: "King" Colin Bell and the Manchester City fan who crowned him on Maine Road pitch in 1978' (Keegan 15 March 2012) at <http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/reunited-king-colin-bell-and-the-manchester-684468> and 'Manchester City legend Colin Bell reunited with fan who crowned him King' (Keegan 20 March 2012) at <http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/manchester-city-legend-colin-bell-684835>.

In June 2012, NFM advertising material swept the city, the city centre in particular. I saw 'What's on' leaflets at the Manchester Visitor Information Centre, lamp post banners on Corporation Street, washroom advertising at a Manchester City fan bar, and advertising posters at Manchester Piccadilly and Victoria stations. The digital advertising online might deliver the reopening news more widely. The NFM pre-launch banner appeared on web sites of *FourFourTwo* (mainstream football magazine, national scale), *When Saturday Comes* (independent football magazine, national scale), Manchester Football Association (local football governing body), *She Kicks* (women's football magazine) and more. The chosen sites also successfully conveyed the museum's appeals of expressing inclusiveness and multiple voices.

### **The launch day—5 July**

The media coverage of NFM's launch day kicked off in the morning on BBC Breakfast, a national TV news programme in the morning. The museum was opened to the press during the day, and John Barnes (former Liverpool and English national team player) and Rachel Brown (England Women's team player) were on site at the museum for media interviews. The launch day event reached its peak at the VIP launch event in the evening, joined by the President and Vice Presidents of the museum, Sir Bobby Charlton, Sir Trevor Brooking and Sir Geoff Hurst, three big names in English football. The event could have had still wider media coverage, as in the original plan—heard from the launch event meeting between the museum staff and the PR agency in November 2011—it was Prince William (President of the English FA) to open the museum formally, and symbolically.

I was greatly honoured to attend the evening event among more than 800 guests and observed several intriguing scenes. Firstly, there was a strong sense of 'Manchester', with a large proportion of the guests from local football organisations, museums, press, and local institutions who contributed to the museum project. The live music at arrival was performed by the Chetham

Music School, and the guest gift bags were sponsored by Selfridges, two neighbours of the museum. The first of three launch speeches was made by Chair of the National Football Museum Trustees, who in the last lines paid 'tribute to Manchester City Council (MCC) for providing this amazing building and for their determined financial and organisational support, without which this project would not have been possible'. Following a speech from an MCC representative, the Director of the NFM delivered the final address, starting with 'we are extremely proud to be here in Manchester in this amazing building'. Then, the host asked the three 'Sirs' about their feelings of being presidents of the National Football Museum in Manchester, and the significance of Manchester in English Football was unfolded. Sir Bobby concluded, 'I love the game of football and I love living in Manchester.'

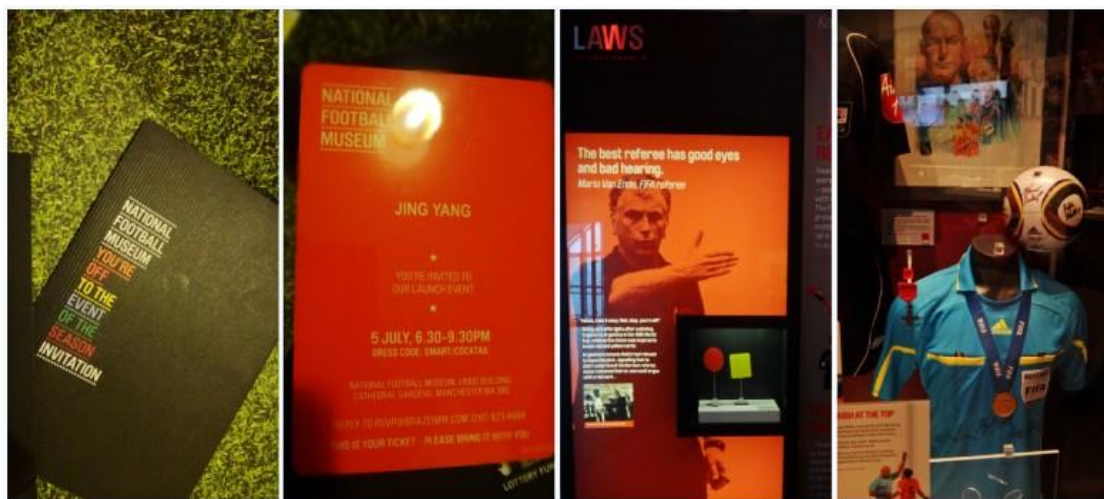


Figure 4.3 Left to right: a. the invitation wrap, b. the 'red card' invitation (of mine), c. the introductory case of the 'Laws' zone, and d. Howard Webb exhibits in the Laws zone.

Secondly, the event staged Englishness. The invitation cards were specially made as 'red cards' wrapped into 'referees' notebooks' (Figure 4.3 left two). It is not only a souvenir-like invitation, but also echoes museum objects and story in the introductory case of the 'Laws' zone, which is the introduction of the red and yellow cards by the English referee Ken Aston (Figure 4.3 c). At the same time, two distinguished guests of the launch evening, English football



referee Howard Webb and English football illustrator Paul Trevillion both participated in the 'Laws' zone. There are several Howard Webb related items on display in the zone, including his shirt and medal from the 2010 FIFA World Cup Final as well as his MBE (Member of the British Empire, presented to him in 2011 for services to football) and an artwork of himself in the 2010 World Cup Final by Paul Trevillion (Figure 4.3 d). Paul Trevillion also provided illustrations for the museum interactive item 'You are the Ref', a touch screen device encouraging visitors to perform refereeing roles. It may missed by many that, the appearance of 'red card (invitation) -Webb-Trevillion' at the launch event is related to 'red card (the object and the invention of red card)-Webb items-You are the Ref', which also reflects NFM's interpretive strategies—'people' the game, 'play' the game (interactive), showcasing past and present of the game, and celebrating Englishmen's contributions to the game. Another highlight moment of Englishness was Sir Bobby signing a shirt of the English national team for a boy under spotlights (Figure 4.4).



Figure 4.4 Sir Bobby Charlton signing an England shirt for a boy.

Thirdly, after all the addresses, the host of the events mentioned 'some of the fantastic guests', including, Sir Bobby, Sir Geoff and Sir Trevor, 'leading professors and academics of football history and culture', 'representatives from sports museums in the UK and Germany', and 'a very important delegation from Brazil—Olympic and FIFA World Cup officials and the Director of the

Brazilian Museum of Football'. The script of the host was carefully drafted and the selection of the special mentions clearly mirrored what the museum values and the museum's international networks. In a word, the Launch evening, as a PR occasion and a celebration of the museum, was also an arena for the museum to stage its local, national, and international appeal.

### **The reopening day**

Finally, it was the 6th of July, 2012. After more than two years of hard work, the museum was ready to unveil itself to the public. In a typically rainy morning in Manchester, around twenty visitors waited at the entrance before the building manager of the museum officially opened the entrance door (Figure 4.5). The museum was extremely busy in the morning, crowded with individual visitors, groups, journalists, and special guests. The Brazil delegation, mentioned at the launch event, was given a guided tour by the museum director, in which I participated. The most interesting scene during the tour was when one officer of the Brazil World Cup committee passionately performed the Match of the Day commentary challenge in Portuguese language while being watched by a few English-speaking visitors. I was later wandering the museum with the director of the Brazilian Museum of Football (Museu do Futebol, São Paulo), who is also an anthropologist, and she told me, 'people shout in our museum too', 'it's a noisy museum, because it is football. Visitors love it.'



Figure 4.5 Visitors queueing to enter the museum on the reopening day at 10a.m.

The first ever visitor might love the museum even more, as he received a shopping bag with the museum's logo and handshakes from the director and deputy director of NFM. This lucky visitor was a four-year-old birthday boy in his England shirt, accompanied by his dad, a Manchester United supporter who had visited the Preston site before. As a witness of the Manchester United and Barcelona clash in European Cup Winners' Cup quarter-final in 1984, the dad was keen to see 'the Cup' (NFM's new arrival and one of the key objects) in the museum. The first visitor's story, surprisingly perfect for a media release (containing local and national teams, young and adult visitors, former and new sites and personal football stories), was soon evolved by the Marketing Team as museum news for the official web site. It was an excellent finishing touch by the Marketing Team, followed by coverage of the museum's launch evening and reopening day by local, national and international media [see, for example, Manchester Evening News (5 July 2012), the guardian (6 July 2012), the San Francisco Chronicle (7 September 2012) and BBC UK China (12 July 2012, article in Chinese)<sup>28</sup>].

The 'first visitor' story is the end of the Marketing Team's stories from the pre-launch campaign until the NFM reopened in Manchester. The Marketing Team, communicating and negotiating at the 'coalface', is the 'goalkeeper' between the museum information and the public. The work of the team includes 'the decoding' of museum strategies from within and 'the encoding' of museum messages to the media world and to potential visitors. As seen above, in the processes of increasing public awareness of the museum brand, the Marketing Team's work also played vital role in constructing national and local identifications.

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<sup>28</sup> Interestingly and problematically, in San Francisco Chronicle, the museum was mentioned as 'British National Football Museum' (Cooper 2012). In the BBC UK China news, the Chinese phrase '英国足球' can be understood both as English football or British football. In Chinese language, '英格兰足球' clearly refers to English football. However, the ambiguous one was chosen by the journalist.

## 4.2 'Mix' into the city: the museum and the city

In the first three months after the reopening in summer 2012, when school holidays overlapped with the Olympic period, the NFM organised various events and saw a steady increase in visitor numbers. It became a new attraction in Manchester evidenced by welcoming 100,000 visitors in only six weeks' time. In this section I focus on museum exhibitions and activities involved in three cultural festivals, as well as the 2012 London Olympic celebrations, and consider how the museum merged into the wider cultural map.

### ***Moving Into Space and We Face Forward***

*Moving Into Space: Football and Art in West Africa* (6 July 2012 to 31 December 2012) was a temporary exhibition hosted in the temporary exhibition gallery of the NFM, showcasing paintings, textiles, sculptures and installations of eleven West African artists. Separated from the permanent exhibition which depicted the history of football, exhibits of *Moving Into Space* focus on social matters through the lens of football, such as conflict and war, gender inequality, dream and escape, globalisation, commercialisation and identity (Moving Into Space 2011). Two large-scale installations—Exit Ball (by Romuald Hazoumè, 2009, see Figure 4.6 top left) and Gold Nuggets (by Pascale Marthine Tayou, 2010, see Figure 4.6 top right) —attracted many visitors. Noticeably, not an isolated exhibition, *Moving Into Space* was involved in a citywide exhibition series of contemporary West African art and music under the title *We Face Forward*<sup>29</sup>. Inspired by the West African textiles preserved and displayed in galleries in Manchester, which indicate the historic linkage between West African countries and Manchester since the slave trade years, the exhibition series (2 July 2012 to 16 September 2012) was a

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<sup>29</sup> The name is derived from the Ghana's first president's words 'We face neither East nor West: we face forward', an expression of the independence in 1960. For more information of the exhibition series please see: <http://www.wefaceforward.org/about>.

celebration of the diversity and creativity of West African culture as well as West African artists in Manchester. Participants of *We Face Forward* included art galleries (such as Whitworth Art Gallery and Manchester Art Gallery), museums (the Manchester Museum and the NFM) and music venues (such as Bridgewater Hall and Band on the Wall) across the city.

As one of the *We Face Forward* venues, the NFM offered a package of free activities to accompany the exhibition. I list them as follows:

- a) On Saturday 21 July, the River Niger Orchestra performed live West African music in the Hall of Fame of the museum, inspired by *Moving Into Space* (Figure 4.6 bottom left);
- b) On Saturday 28 July, the We Face Forward Art Bus stopped at the museum during a tour across the city, alongside with four family paper sculpting workshops, taking inspiration from *Moving Into Space* exhibits;
- c) On August 16, at the *Moving into Space* exhibition gallery, poetry slam champion Mark Mace Smith hosted an interactive poem session;
- d) On Saturday 15 September, the curator of the exhibition, Martin Barlow, led a guided tour (Figure 4.6 bottom right).

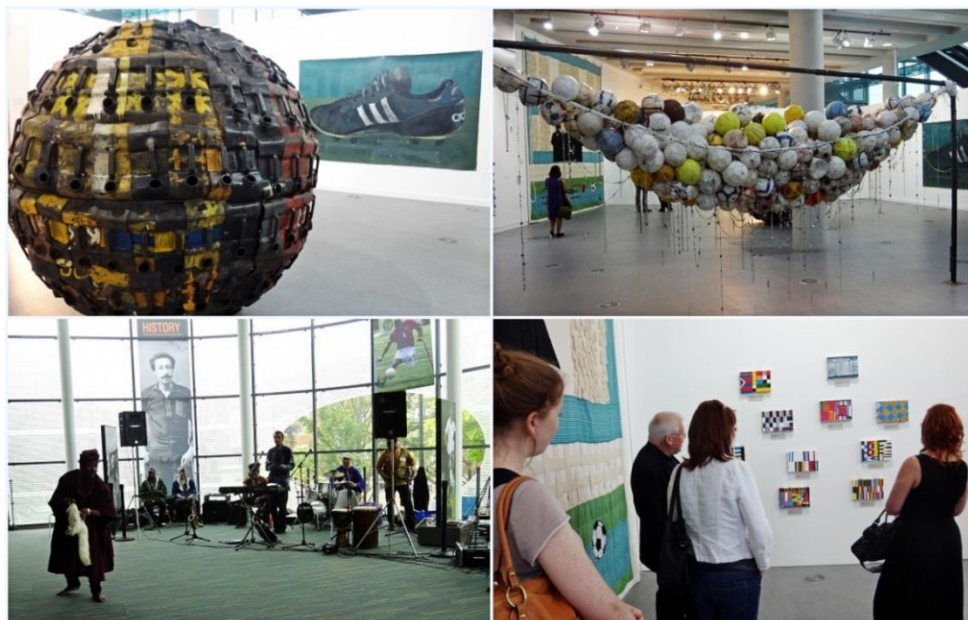


Figure 4.6 Top left: Exit Ball by Romuald Hazoumè;  
Top right: Gold Nuggets by Pascale Marthine Tayou;  
Bottom left: River Niger Orchestra's performance;  
Bottom right: the curator's guided tour of Moving Into Space.

In the afternoon of Saturday 15 September, the exhibition area saw a number of visitors (most of them were families) holding *We Face Forward* flags. A lady, visiting with her husband and two children, told me:

‘We enjoyed the music and performances at Piccadilly Gardens [not far from NFM, around 15 minutes’ walk]. Kids collected paper flags there. The festival is still on...Heard someone talking about the exhibition here, and here we are...A great day out!’

Another visitor appreciated the ‘group work’ by museums and art galleries in Manchester, and recommended me to see the exhibition at Whitworth Art Gallery. He also informed me that the artist of ‘Gold Nuggets’ (Figure 4.6 top right), Pascale Marthine Tayou, had a huge installation at Whitworth as well. The festival in the city ended on the next day, but the exhibition at NFM lasted until the end of the year, with more events relating to *Moving Into Space* were organised in the autumn and winter after I left the field.

### **Flora settings and Dig the City**

Partly overlapping with *We Face Forward*, Manchester hosted the city’s first ever garden and flower festival named ‘Dig the City’, from 24 to 29 July 2012, aiming to enlarge green space in central Manchester. The festival was launched and centred at Manchester Cathedral, and also featured NFM’s neighbours Manchester Arndale, Cathedral Gardens and Exchange Square as well as NFM itself. I heard this festival earlier at the NFM meetings, as the museum always kept an eye on ‘what’s going on in the city’ throughout my fieldwork period.

During the Dig the City week, the NFM instated a floral display of the core list of museum’s brand identity—Drama, History, Skill, Art, Faith, Style, Passion, Football (See Figure 4.7), a mix of football and flowers. Although wilting flowers caused problems later, the installation received high praises from museum audiences for a ‘flowery’, ‘horticultural’, ‘fresh’ feeling. On 25 July, the NFM also organised a family friendly event for visitors to make flower pots to take home. At the same time, outside the museum building in the Cathedral Gardens, visitors enjoyed larger flower displays as well as some athletes



shaped brushes. By the end of the Dig the City Festival, Olympic football arrived in Manchester.



Figure 4.7 Installation of flowers at NFM during Dig the City Festival.

### Olympic football

Manchester proclaimed its role in the 2012 London Olympics, as Old Trafford, the home of Manchester United hosted several Olympic football games. The museum celebrated the Olympics by emblazoning the London 2012 Olympics Football Logo on the Urbis building. As discussed at museum meetings, the team also successfully invited the Olympics Legacy and Growth Minister to the museum. On Level 4, a temporary exhibition entitled 'Our Sporting Life' was launched as an Olympiad celebration. More importantly, since the first game of the reunited Team GB<sup>30</sup> since 1972 (Marks 2010) was held in Manchester, my concern regarding NFM and Olympic football was, whether the **English** National Football Museum switched to perform **British-ness**, at least for the match day on 26 July 2012. Before the match day, the NFM tweeted 'Heading to see #TeamGB tomorrow? A shuttle bus stops near the museum, & we've

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<sup>30</sup> Here, Team GB means the men's Olympic football team of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland at the Summer Olympics. In international football tournaments other than the Olympics, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are represented by four national teams, as four football associations were founded for football governing in four nations in the UK (Duke and Crolley, 1996).

family activities for pre-match visitors' (@FootballMuseum 25 July 2012). As a ticket holder of two Olympic football matches (Uruguay versus UAE and Team GB versus Senegal), I decided to travel from the NFM to Old Trafford. On my way to the museum on 26 July, I saw a group of Argentina supporters wearing their national flags, and Olympic banners flying high above the streets. Entering the museum into the Hall of Fame atrium, an Olympic Torch Lady with her torch came into view, together with several visitors queueing to take pictures with the Olympic Torch (Figure 4.8 left). The NFM's Learning and Community Team organised a family-activity-table on the ground floor, offering blue, red and white (Union Jack colours) paper and paper craft tools. The area was buzzing with visitors, particularly youngsters, making paper decorations (crowns were the most popular) with the colours of Team GB (Figure 4.8 right).



Figure 4.8 Activities at the NFM on the match day of Olympic football.

Two learning officers of the museum were also on site, and one of them was wearing a vest top with the Team GB Lion Logo on. A number of visitors were in their white (home) or red (away) England shirts or club gear (in different colours, Manchester City's blue and Manchester United's red were the most popular), with only two Team GB T-shirts seen around the table over three hours of observation. I talked to ten adult participants [all with their child (ren) or grandchild (ren) of this pre-match activity]; seven were Manchester based, two travelled from Bolton (in Greater Manchester), and one from Oldham (in Greater Manchester). Eight of them were going to attend the Team GB's match



in the evening with their families; and they all believed Team GB was a home advantage of London Olympics (automatically qualified) and 'it will be Under 21 teams' (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) in the 2016 Olympic football qualifiers. Their motivations of visiting the NFM and going to Team GB's match varied. For instance, a local Manchester family (visiting the NFM for the third time) just dropped in before taking the shuttle bus outside the museum, and thought 'the tickets are not very expensive' and 'it's going to be a lot of fun at Old Trafford'. For another, an elderly couple and their grandson travelled from Oldham carefully planned their match day afternoon—visiting the newly opened NFM for 'a taste of history', and then watching the 'historic first game' of the reformed Team GB. I also heard a hard-core Manchester United fan and his son, in Manchester United shirts, purchased the tickets simply to watch Ryan Giggs (Manchester United player and former Wales captain) play, and they popped into the museum to 'warm up' for the game. The father, who made his son a Team GB coloured paper crown just for fun, said, 'We love Old Trafford, and England's second place', without mentioning Team GB.

The museum, at the same time, endeavoured to incorporate the London Olympic Games as well as the British-ness, and arousing a Mancunian feeling online. In the match day afternoon, the official twitter of NFM retweeted 'interesting bit of reading' of another Olympic team representing Great Britain in 1948, with Matt Busby acting the managerial role (@footballmuseum 26 July 2012). Busby is a renowned name in Manchester. Sir Alexander Matthew 'Matt' Busby as the manager of Manchester United, led the team to English and European football titles in the 1940s, 50s and 60s, developed an iconic managing style, obtained the media label of his team as 'Busby Babes' and created the 'mystique of Matt Busby' for Manchester football (Wagg 2004). Spectators attending 2012 Olympic football matches at Old Trafford could see the statue of Sir Matt Busby beneath the Olympic Rings decorated on the stadium. The Busby tweet indicated the 'Manchester United-Olympic football'

link, and on the next day, NFM associated the Olympics spirit with Manchester City FC in the bell-ringing ceremony. It was an event named 'All the Bells' across the UK, heralding the opening of the London Olympic Games. NFM brought the bell of Helen 'the bell' Turner, who was a huge fan of Manchester City and rang her bell at Maine Road (previous ground of Manchester City) to support the team over three decades. Helen Turner's grandson and Manchester City legend Joe Corrigan were invited to ring Helen's bell together in front of the museum entrance.

As seen from the above, the NFM joined in the celebrations of the London Olympics, especially Olympic football and Team GB's game in Manchester. For a short period, and to some extent, a sporting **British-ness** was showcased out of the footballing **Englishness** at NFM through museum activities, especially on the day when Team GB played in Manchester, within which, elements of local football clubs were also embedded.

### **Pigs Bladder Football and Abandon Normal Devices**

Following the Olympic fever, in late August, Manchester hosted Abandon Normal Devices (AND) Festival<sup>31</sup>, a celebration of innovative approaches in visual arts and culture, being held annually in Manchester or Liverpool. In 2012, Pig's Bladder Football, a project to record and to 'culture' the first bio-engineered football from cells to footballs (Pig's Bladder Football 2012), was involved in AND. Aside from an exhibition at Cube Gallery, Manchester, as part of the AND programme, the artist of the project, John O'Shea also delivered a talk to visitors at the National Football Museum, accompanied by a researcher from Loughborough University who spoke on the change and development of match balls. After an enthusiastic response from the audience, the NFM added an experimental workshop for visitors to make footballs, led by the artist in October 2012.

Staging the project in exhibition areas outside the laboratory walls, John

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<sup>31</sup> More information on Abandon Normal Devices at <http://www.andfestival.org.uk/>.

O'Shea called himself an artist rather than a scientist. For the NFM, the museum once again weaved itself into a Manchester's cultural festival by bringing the Pig's Bladder Football project in.

In the above four cases in the summer of 2012, the NFM was an active player: in 'Dig the city', 'We Face Forward', Manchester's Olympic celebrations and 'Abandon Normal Devices' in the city. A Mancunian feeling was inculcated through museum activities to coincide with other events in the city—even when expressing British-ness during the Olympics, Manchester ingredients (Manchester hosting Olympic football games, Manchester United legendary manager leading Team GB, Manchester City version of 'All the Bells') were mindfully planned, embodied and balanced (Manchester United FC and Manchester City FC). After finishing fieldwork on site at the NFM in October 2012, I also noticed, online, the museum still involved in a considerable number of local cultural events through football related exhibitions and/or activities; examples include Manchester Literature Festival (2012), Manchester Children's Book Festival (2014), Manchester Histories Festival (2014), and most recently, Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA) 'Harmonious Society' Exhibition at six venues across Manchester. The National Football Museum has stayed local and has mixed football with various elements in the cultural map of Manchester.

### **4.3 The museum and the learning environment**

According to the 104 individuals that I talked to during the first three months after the NFM's reopening, the three most appropriate words to describe the museum are 'free' (77 times), 'informative' (54 times) and 'fun' (42 times). The latter two are related to museum's twofold role as a learning place, to spread and bring forward knowledge as well as to yield enjoyment and pleasure (American Association of Museums 1969). Museums in Britain, to a

great degree, embrace an educational function—working with local schools to ‘mesh’ museum learning programme with the national school curriculum (Hein 1998), offering family learning packages, and supporting lifelong learning (Anderson 1997, cited in Hein 1998). This section explores the mainstream learning offering of NFM, and employs a ‘contextual model’ (Falk and Dierking 2000) to look at visitors’ learning experience.

### **Creating the learning environment**

The NFM has a vision ‘to inspire and support a learning society through creating opportunity, releasing potential and achieving excellence for the widest possible of audiences’ with the power of football (Evans 2011). The museum has constantly endeavoured to create an ‘accessible’, ‘fun’ and ‘inspiring’ learning environment. The foundation of this learning environment is accessible museum facilities as well as dedicated learning space—the under 5s’ discovery zone and the Level 4 for carrying out learning programmes. The first layer of the museum learning environment is, on the exhibiting level, providing accurate descriptions of museum objects and supplementary information, which depends on thorough research and reviews before the reopening. The second layer takes into account the installations of interactive items and games, allowing visitors to listen, to touch, to smell, to draw, and to play; especially the Football Plus activities, from which football skills can be performed and tested. The third layer contains the supporting activities within the museum’s mainstream learning offering, developed by the Learning and Community Team, to encourage visitors ‘to learn through play’ and to promote ‘healthy lifestyles, pride in community, self-esteem and sense of place’ (Evans 2011). Activities include a) National Curriculum related formal learning opportunities to school students, b) informal learning activities available to all the museum visitors (museum workshop, museum tours, objects handling and more) and c) outreach programme (Streetspeak and more). The fourth layer involves the museum’s academic engagement, ranging from hosting football

and/or museum conferences to supporting internal and external research projects. The NFM also introduces football lectures and panel debates into the museum, to share with museum audience research findings. The climactic period so far was a lecture series spreading out over the year 2013 to join the celebration the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the English FA, speakers including top scholars of English football/sport research institutions and the director of the museum<sup>32</sup>. In spring 2014, two lectures on Manchester's football and sporting history were also held at NFM. All of the above lectures were free for all ages, welcoming football enthusiasts to the museum and to join in the discussions. The fifth and top layer is to empower local people to learn to curate, evidenced by the temporary exhibition *Our Sport Our Life* (part of *Our Sporting Life Project*), which was developed and curated by young people from Greater Manchester with the help of NFM staff. Here, from circulating football knowledge, the museum stepped forward to share its authority with the local community and to partake in the role of 'the host of the museum' with locals.

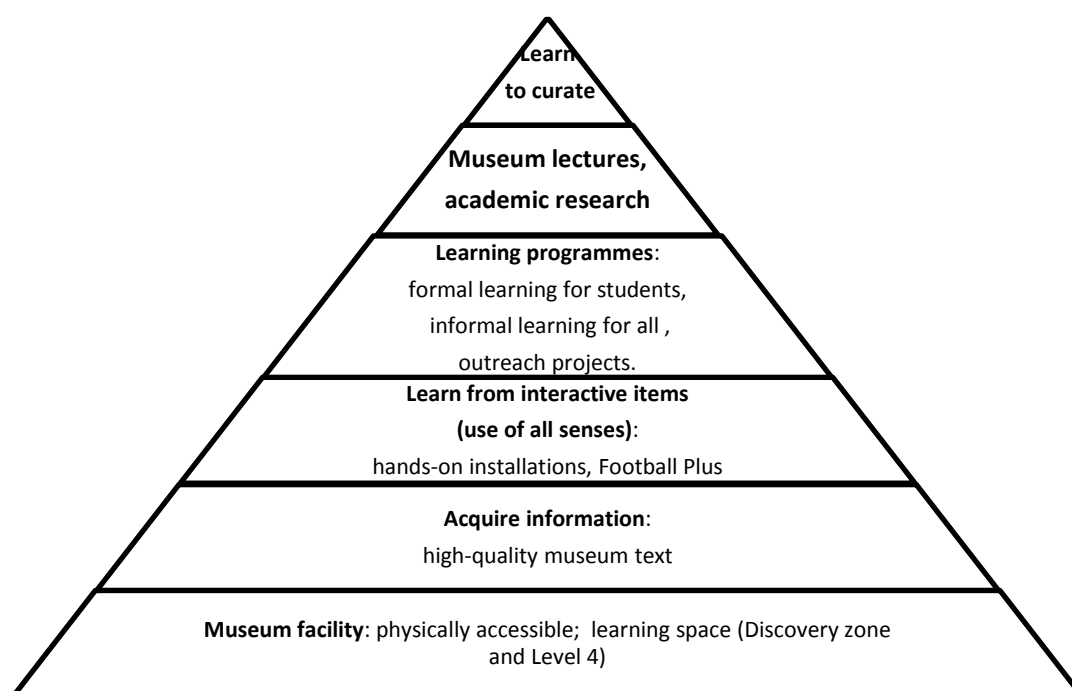


Figure 4.9 Temple of NFM's learning environment.

<sup>32</sup> For a complete list of the lecture series, please see <http://football150conference.wordpress.com/football-150-lecture-series/>.

The NFM has been creating a learning environment, as displayed in the multi-layered temple in Figure 4.9. I believe establishing a learning environment is still an on-going process at the NFM, and the temple may become higher in the future.

### **Streetspeak and a poetry workshop**

I move on now to look at a museum learning programme and a specific museum workshop. Streetspeak has been the NFM's leading learning project since commencing in 2008 in Preston. Engaging with five local poets (Craig Bradley, Terry Caffrey, Paul Cookson, Alan Gibbons and Mark Mace Smith), the project encourages the youth to take inspiration from football and to write poems, with the aim being to improve their literacy skills as well as their self-esteem (Streetspeak 2012). This NFM outreach project reached more than 1,000 local young people in three years (2008-2011) in Preston and has been moved to Manchester with the museum. The NFM, the Learning and Community team in particular, has been very proud of the project when talking about it, and Streetspeak flyers and a football poem are stuck on the wall of the team's Manchester office. The project was turned into an exhibition in 2013, displayed on the ground floor of the NFM.

It is a shame that, during my fieldwork period, Streetspeak in Manchester did not fully switch on to reach local schools; however, the museum did bring Streetspeak back into the museum site by offering football poetry workshops. As noted earlier when talking about 'Moving Into Space and We Face Forward' activities, an interactive poem session was hosted by poetry slam (poetry competition) champion Mark Mace Smith in the exhibition gallery on Level 3, and Smith is one of the five poets involved in Streetspeak. The workshop was named by Smith as 'Art Speaks', as we made poems inspired by one piece of artwork in the exhibition (On My Knees by Owusu-Ankomah, 2008). The poet started by asking and writing down participants' names, favourite clubs (apart from me, the ten other participants all named English clubs: four Manchester

United, two Manchester City, two Liverpool FC, one West Ham United FC, and one Newcastle United FC), and a random word. He also put down a few words on the whiteboard, which were free listed by the group to describe the art piece. After Smith's demonstration of playing with simple rhyming words, participants began to write their lines. I was sitting in the left corner in the back row and had a view of visitors besides the workshop participants strolling through the *Moving into Space* exhibition. A few visitors stared at the workshop group and quietly walked away, and two parents shushed the kids when noticing the activity. Despite the disturbances from the lower floors, the gallery was unusually silent during the seven minutes of writing time. After that, Smith encouraged volunteers to share their compositions in front of us. Not every piece of work was rhythmic and poetic enough, but those who read out loud received applause. From the second one who stepped forward, the atmosphere completely changed. The recitations started to attract audiences, and till the fourth presenter, there were fifteen visitors standing around the workshop area, listening and clapping hands. Soon, at least three of the fifteen spectators grabbed pencil and paper (offered by the museum), sat down and began to write themselves. The workshop group was getting larger and the atmosphere was vigorous. A boy in his Manchester City away shirt received a high-five from another participant after sharing his poem and he abandoned his previous seat to stay with the one who cheered him on. They, both from Manchester, told me after the session that they did not know each other before, but they knew they were both 'on the same side' (from the shirt and the introductions of one's favourite club). The boy, who visited the museum for the first time with his mother (his mother was not with him at the workshop) said to me, 'I didn't expect this. I just dropped in and tried my hands at poetry writing. I'll keep this paper to show my mum. And good to meet you, D.' He smiled at his 'Manchester City friend' D. 'You too', D replied. Unlike the boy, J had heard the poet before, and in order to take part in the workshop, he earned his second visit to the museum. 'I am glad I came. Interesting to learn from Mark

(the poet), he's entertaining...I think understand better the painting (the exhibit by which key words of the poems were inspired) ', he said.

In Preston, Streetspeak sessions were always for school groups or young people organised by charities, and were held in classrooms and/or the learning area at the museum. Here, the workshop at the NFM Manchester was a successful attempt to present it directly in the temporary exhibition gallery and to keep it open to visitors of all ages. In around one and a half hours, that workshop corner intensified the learning environment, like a classroom without walls. Participants (students) shared their thoughts with the group (the class), and communicated with the poet (the teacher) as well as other visitors (peer students). By saying 'a classroom without walls', I mean it also opened its doors to other visitors to join the 'class' and to contribute to the conversation. As mentioned in Chapter 3, visitors do notice and sometimes watch other people's activities at the museum, here, exemplified by the ones who were not originally involved in the poetry workshop but later sat in the class. In the workshop, a better understanding of the exhibit, improved literacy skills and poems are all significant learning outcomes; at the same time, borrowing from McLuhan's 'the medium is the message' (1964), the learning environment it provided is also a 'message' delivered by the museum, which attracts visitor to enter the museum and to participate in museum activities, and to learn.

### **Interview findings and contextual learning**

What I have described and argued in Chapter 3 and this chapter are mostly related to collective identities—the museum's efforts in representing and constructing Englishness, the sense of Manchester, the temporary British-ness, and more generally a celebration of the identity of football fans. However, from the museum visitors' perspective, as I heard and observed, these constructed collective identifications were only partially accepted, sometimes ignored.

Two weeks before the museum's reopening, the England national team was eliminated in the quarterfinals of the 2012 European Championships, and the



reunified Team GB had a draw in their first match in Manchester and lost in the quarterfinals of 2012 Olympic football. English visitors (69 out of 104 interviewees) did love to see the 1966 World Cup showcases, which represents 'English football's golden year', and 12 of them proudly named the Cup their favourite museum exhibit. However, the bitter disappointment of the present team and gloomy view of the future magnified the voices of 'England's second thing', 'It's not the 60s', 'Time to go back to reality' and 'my club is the most important'. When it comes to non-English visitors (35), especially non-British ones (21), seeing items of their national teams were 'unexpected' gratifications. For example, a shirt of Klinsmann (former player and head coach of the German national team, current head coach of the United States national team) was pleasantly identified by visitors from both Germany and the United States. Another interesting point is, more than a half of the non-British interviewees (13) mentioned that they learned about the history of 'British football' or 'British soccer', which British visitors clearly defined and regarded as 'English football'.

Dissimilar from the attitude towards the English national team, at that time, most Manchester City fans (24) remained delighted over the summer after winning the league title in May, only complaining of 'too much' United items on display; Manchester United fans (17) complained less, and were still so proud of their club. Trying to find every trace of the club was shared by all my interviewees who claimed themselves to be a football supporter (91 out of 104), although some fans (of non-English clubs in particular) failed to pick up any. Several visitors deemed it as 'a task' to take photographs of item(s) of their clubs. Overall, museum exhibits of clubs were more frequently chosen as favourites and more regularly featured in the photos they showed to me.

Another obvious feature among the museum audiences I encountered is the trend of returning. Around a half of them were returning visitors (26 out of 104 interviewees), or claimed they (24) 'can't wait to return', 'will visit again', because of 'too much to see', 'too much to learn'. Museum activities also

catered to the need for a return. A large proportion of participants in museum activities were returning visitors; and returning visitors as well as the ones willing to pay more visits (44 out of 50) were from Greater Manchester. As heard at the museum's senior management meeting, one extreme example is a visitor who said 'I would live here if I could' and started to 'talk to the front of house staff as if friends'.



Figure 4.10 Visitors in their football shirts at the National Football Museum.

The next characteristic of the NFM visitors, my interviewees and many more, is the football wear. Of course not everyone dressed up in football gear, but football shirts were commonly seen, especially among young visitors. Unlike a club museum, however, visitors of the NFM showed a wide range of team colours through their football shirts (see Figure 4.10 for some examples). Again, usually, club shirts of clubs were chosen over national team ones. Manchester United and Manchester City still seemed to be the two dominant colours, but shirts of other English and non-English clubs also emerged. Museum visitors' expressions of identities through football shirts unintentionally harmonized with the museum's idea of inventing the stadium feeling. Further, at times, football shirts prompted chemistry between visitors when they encountered one another—a thumbs-up, a smile, or a greeting—as football fans would also do on their way to a stadium, they identify one another with shirts. Football fans in their football wear served as the final piece to the museum's jigsaw in creating the stadium-like atmosphere. Even more

intriguingly, as noticed in interviews, visitors, non-fans in particular, acquire information from the shirts worn by others at the museum. Colours of football teams, big names in football, vintage styles as well as newly released shirts—fans become vivid exhibits to provide information about their clubs and the culture of football supporting.

Finally, I employ the contextual model (Falk and Dierking 2000) to sketch how the learning experience at NFM is defined and influenced by the 'physical context', 'sociocultural context' and 'personal context'. Firstly, as shown in the 'learning environment temple' earlier, the physical museum provides an enjoyable and accessible physical context of learning with facilities and a package of activities. Secondly, also reflected by the 'learning environment temple', the museum learning programmes foster interactions between the museum (producer of the learning medium/message sender) and visitors (user of the learning medium/message receiver) as well as within visitors groups. On the other hand, visitors spontaneously structure the learning experience in their own groups or families. For instance, according to my observations and talks with group leaders, local school groups or groups run by local football camps, led by local teachers/tutors, always toured the museum with a focus on 'Manchester's footballing achievements, while groups of young people from foreign countries aimed to learn the history of 'English football', or as they say 'British football'. Local groups, on average, spent a longer time at the museum, sometimes followed by a football playing session after the museum tour on the ground floor (as Level 4 for learning was taken from a temporary exhibition when I was there); and foreign groups typically finished sooner and made the museum shop their last stop at the NFM. Besides the physical and sociocultural contexts, the personal context of museum learning is rooted in personal identity claims and personal expectations. I heard various stories. A non-fan mother travelled from Liverpool just to accompany her football addicted son, but in the end she 'learnt a lot about English football' and promised her son to come back again and try more Football Plus activities. A

tourist who was attracted by the 'amazing building', entered the museum finding the exhibitions 'unbelievably amazing' and spent more than three hours at the museum with more than one hundred pictures to take home to 'digest the history of football'. I recommended a Chinese professor of Law to visit the museum, and she told me it was interesting and she was amused to see a player's contract for the first time. I was surprised that among my interviewees, nearly all (12 out of 13) the non-fans turned out to give positive comments, saying they had better understandings of the sport of football. Negative comments, including some very harsh ones, were all from football supporters who had higher expectations about the 'famous' 'new' museum. As I noted before, in terms of museum content, 'too much Manchester stuff' was the main criticism, while fans of Manchester City thought their club deserved more space at the museum. I also heard some completely opposite comments like 'we need more updated exhibits' versus 'the museum should focus more on the early history of football'. It illustrates that, visiting with family members, in a group or as individuals; the learning experience is eventually personal. Every museum visitor has a personal expectation, learning style, previous knowledge; and at a football museum, a club-identity-related motivation also counts in the learning process. The personal context cooperates with socio-cultural and physical contexts in shaping museum learning (Falk and Dierking 2000).

This section demonstrates that, the learning experience at NFM is defined and constructed by the museum and the visitors, and is both collective (museum visitor as a whole and/or museum visitor in a specific group) and personal. Every visitor has their own strategy of learning, of understanding the sport of football, and of envisioning themselves. The NFM has endeavoured to fulfil their needs by establishing a multi-layered learning environment, within which museum-visitors as well as visitor-visitor interactions have been generated. This learning environment provides both physical and sociocultural contexts for the audience to learn from the museum objects and to learn from museum

activities. Visitors also contribute to this learning environment, as they learn from each other. The learning environment is accessible by all. However, the museum still has the largest proportion of local visitors, both individuals and groups. In comparison to tourists, local people engage with the museum at a deeper level—they return to the free museum more frequently and are involved in more learning programmes. To a certain degree, through museum learning, the National Football Museum consolidates its local bond.

#### **4.4 Museum service: managing the brand**

In the first 13 months after the reopening, the National Football Museum attracted 500,000 visitors, far exceeding the yearly target of 350,000. The 500,000th visitor, who had published a book entitled *Route 66* on his visits to 66 football grounds in Yorkshire within one football season, received a replica shirt of the 1966 England national team from the museum. Again, a nice story composed and posted on the museum's web site by the Marketing Team. The team also manages the museum's official accounts on several social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and TripAdvisor. The museum's official twitter has been updated on a daily basis, and more than 13,000 followers by the end of September 2014. For the NFM, social media is not only a channel to release museum news and raise the awareness of the museum, but also a window to communicate with visitors as well as to receive feedback. Besides the social media, feedback via voice mail, email, comment cards on site, and comments left in person to staff members have all been logged, handled and reviewed by the team. The issues discussed at museum meetings were as detailed as the voice used for directing voice mail—'Should it be the voice of a famous one or not?' 'Which accent should be applied?' Finally, the voice of an ordinary female with a slight Northern accent was accepted. It reflects the museum team's effort in maintaining a decent public

image of the museum and in improving museum services.

Museum services have changed tremendously in recent years. In 2001, the year the NFM was born in Preston, Geddes wrote:

‘Managing a heritage attraction is about much more than traditional museological concerns like conservation, interpretation, education and access. It is about managing a shop, a catering operation, a wedding venue. It is about commissioning marketing research, choosing design agencies, preparing conservation plans, project managing, buying computer systems, applying to the Heritage Lottery Fund, persuading people to join a Friend scheme, lobbying politicians, organising special events that bringing more money than they cost, and so on and so forth.

(Geddes 2001: 318, cited in Dicks 2007: 163-64)



Figure 4.11 NFM's official shop. Left was taken in September 2012, right one (newly introduced 'Lowry' souvenirs) was taken in September 2013.

Ten years later in 2011, I came across this paragraph and found every single word may apply to what I saw before and after the reopening at the NFM. Although adopting a business plan at a museum still seems controversial today, it has been developed in theory (Falk and Sheppard 2006) and in practice. I consider the NFM as a good example. The museum claims that it harbours the world's best football collections, which serves as the foundation of NFM. At the same time, being a successful football museum is not as simple as hosting extraordinary football collections and well planned exhibitions; it also hugely depends on the museum services, including, as illustrated in this chapter,

engaging with the media world, organising museum activities, handling visitors' feedback, maintaining a shop and cafe, and of course delivering a well-trained Front of House team on site. The NFM has a 5-year business plan (2011-2016), which was handed to me by the team as one of the introductory documents in the first week of my fieldwork. The museum views itself as a museum, a charity, welcoming donations, as well as a tourism attraction, a business, a brand, generating profit. It went through financial hardship in Preston, and grasps the significance of money.

Through high-quality museum services under the well managed brand, 'visitability' has flourished at the NFM. This visitability, in Dicks's (2007) definition, refers to a production in the public sphere which encompasses economic and cultural domains to attract visitors, or say customers, through cultural display and performance. Everything in the museum is woven in the fabric of the meaning system—football urinal mats in the men's toilet (mentioned by male interviewees), the rosettes on the cover of the Friends scheme leaflet (it echoes the object in the introductory case of the Fans zone, as mentioned in Chapter 3), reproduction of Clark's Homes of Football photographs as postcards, Lowry's The Football Match limited edition print in the museum shop (Figure 4.11 right).

The NFM is an amalgamation of precious football collections, institutional power as a national standard museum, the engagement of a business model, and an influential brand in the arena of football/sports heritage. The complicated characteristics of NFM—fundamentally, the power overlapping between football and museums to reach a wider audience—have defined and empowered the museums in representing multiple layered identities, and in performing a distinctive 'visitability'.

## **4.5 Summary (Chapter 3 and 4): the localised national museum**

In two chapters on the National Football Museum, I began by illustrating the rich football atmosphere in Manchester, where the new museum is situated. The new museum project at the iconic Urbis building is the outcome of more than two years of hard work by the museum team as well as many external agencies and individuals involved. The museum experienced the rebirth in July 2012, carrying forward the history and brand of the Preston-born 'National Football Museum'.

The museum, harbouring the greatest football collection in the world, has the vision of reaching the widest audience using the power of the global sport. Improving 'accessibility' and 'inclusiveness' serves as the guiding principle within the museum organisation, and has been developed as 'Football for all, and NFM for all' throughout the museum exhibitions and museum activities. Claiming to be the world's best football museum, the museum has an international appeal and aims to engage with visitors from all over the world to celebrate football culture. Although distinct from a football ground, the museum furnishes a stadium-like atmosphere through physical and narrative devices; football fans, who perform their identities through football shirts and activities at the museum, enrich the stadium and match-day feeling. At the same time, bearing 'national' in the name, the museum not only endeavours to meet the national standard, but also takes the role of promoting English national identity. Overall, the museum is a grand story of English football's past and present, involving many English football clubs, and in the context of the globalisation of football. The English Football Hall of Fame on the ground floor is also a symbolic representation of the national pride. However, I would argue, the NFM is hugely localised. The localisation is rooted in: a) Manchester (and Preston, and more generally the North West) football's significant role in



English football, past and present; b) the museum's approach in developing activities for the local community; and c) the museum's partnership with Manchester City Council and the museum's responsibility in contributing to the city's economic and cultural growth. Besides Manchester football items and stories in museum exhibitions, more importantly, the museum has woven itself into the cultural map of the city through external networks, 'satellite exhibitions', citywide festivals and the museum's learning and community programmes. Local school groups, families, and individuals are a large proportion of the museum visitors; and they return to the free museum to participate in museum activities, which strengthen the museum's local connections. The National Football Museum represents multi-layered identities, but above all, it stays local.

According to interviews with more than one hundred visitors, together with my observations in the first three months after the reopening, museum visitors, on the other hand, do not simply take in the museum's grand narrative, but hold their own means to seek and select information as well as to make their identity claims. They have a personal visiting experience. Telling the grand history of English football and representing Englishness and the city, the NFM employs the approaches of interactive devices, story-telling and diverse activity programmes, which, I consider, also promotes personal learning and personal identities. The National Football Museum constructs collective identities, and simultaneously encourages personal identity seeking.

Finally, as a tourist attraction, the NFM strives to survive and prosper in this age. The museum team has developed a business model, including marketing and commercial plans, to provide good-quality museum service. Combining its building environment, organisational culture, external networks, exhibiting practices, activity packages, and service strategies, the museum turns into a 'visitable entity' (Dicks 2007: 14). Through its 'visitability', which brings visitors into the conversations with the museum, identity processes multiply.

## Chapter 5 Welche Farbe hat dein Herz?

### (What colour is your heart?)

#### —club museums of the Ruhr rivals and the future German Football Museum

##### 5.0 Fieldnotes

22nd October 2013, St Andrews

I have cleared my schedule for this evening's UEFA Champions League matches featuring two London teams versus the Ruhr duo - Schalke taking Chelsea at home and Dortmund facing Arsenal in London. Interestingly, the two English Premier League clubs both have German national team representatives in their lineups, which has added new points of interest.

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Just finished watching the Schalke-Chelsea game. My team, Schalke, lost 0-3; while Dortmund's Polish forward Lewandowski scored a winner for his team. At the same time, Schalke's top striker Huntelaar posted a photo on Facebook showing his team mate Marco Höger and himself both lying on hospital beds and said ' Steht auf wenn ihr Schalker seid' (Stand up if you are Schalker) (Huntelaar 22 October 2013).

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I am worried about my injury-ravaged team when looking at the 'Schalke corner' on my pin board (including a Schalke banner, a Schalke mascot key ring, postcards and players' photos). I wrote a line on Weibo (Chinese version of twitter) saying 'There's always the next match'. Promptly, a friend of mine in Taiwan commented on my post, at 4 a.m. local time. I then checked the Schlake table calendar she sent me and found the Ruhr Derby's just four days away. The calendar is personally designed with the photos she took throughout her trip in Gelsenkirchen last summer and is dedicatedly marked with match day fixtures and players' birthdays. That is her way of memorising.

## 5.1 Football in Germany and in the Ruhr

### 5.1.1 '54 '74 '90: landmarks of German football (Post-war, pre 2006)

1 und 2 und 3 und... '54, '74, '90, 2006  
ja so stimmen wir alle ein. Mit dem Herz in der Hand  
und der Leidenschaft im Bein werden wir Weltmeister sein  
Beim ersten Mal war es ein Wunder beim zweiten Mal war es Glück  
beim dritten Mal der verdiente Lohn und dies' Mal wird's 'ne Sensation

1 and 2 and 3 and... '54, '74, '90, 2006  
We all join in With heart in hand  
And passion in the leg We will be the world champions  
The first time, it was a miracle The second time, we were lucky  
The third time, it was a deserved reward And this time it will be a sensation  
—Lyrics of '54, '74, '90, 2006 by Sportfreunde Stiller

'54, '74, '90, 2006 is an unofficial fan song for the 2006 Germany World Cup by the German band Sportfreunde Stiller, which was a big hit during the 2006 World Cup in Germany. Four years later, as the mission did not succeed in 2006, the band rewrote it into the '54, '74, '90, 2010 version and gained great popularity once again. The anthem is not only a forecast of Germany's subsequent success, but also, as indicated in both the lyrics and the music video, a reminder of their three World Cup wins.

Football has been crucial in the making and remaking of national identity in modern Germany (Hesse-Lichtenberger 2003, Tomlinson and Young 2006), exemplified by three resounding successes in particular cultural and historical backgrounds. To start with, in 1954, West Germany came from behind and beat the outstanding Hungarian team in the World Cup final. Commentator Herbert Zimmermann's passionate voice spread through radio waves, and the victory became a shared memory, a collective sense of national pride, a symbol of dignity (Hesse-Lichtenberger 2003, Gebauer 2006, Pyta 2006) and

the notion that 'we're back' (Krauss 2003: 199) in post-war Germany. Many years later, a commentator stated that the real birth of the Federal Republic of Germany was in 1954 rather than 1949. In the field of football, it functioned as a decisive point for football to promote its importance on a national stage.

Nine years later in 1963, the German professional football league was founded, known as the Bundesliga (Tomlinson and Young 2006), and in 1974, West Germany hosted the World Cup for the first time and successfully won the championships at home. Football became the 'new face of Germany after the war' (Gebauer 2006: 243) in the first half of the 1970s: energetic, confident, rebellious. With the help of television and newspaper appearances, key players of the top clubs and the national team such as Beckenbauer and Netzer, grew into role models and cultural icons in Germany. Beckenbauer, who lifted the World Cup as the team captain, bathed in the golden glory again as the team coach in 1990, a few months before the German reunification. The disciplined team and memorable victory provided 'a founding myth' (Pyta 2006:17-18) for the new Germany and fostered a collective self-assurance for the renaissance.

In 2003, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder attended the premiere of Sönke Wortmann's film *The Miracle of Bern* and was moved into tears (Pyta 2006). In spite of the German team's disastrous international campaigns after 1990, the stories of the '54, '74, '90 have been constantly told and retold in the media, which constitutes an essential force in building a German national identity.

### **5.1.2 New issues in identity-making: 2006, 2009, 2010, 2014**

Football is still the best ambassador for Germany's reputation.  
—Franz Beckenbauer (Krauss 2003: 214).

I arrived in Germany for fieldwork on March the 3rd, 2013, and met my roommate in Berlin. She is from Stuttgart, a second-generation Turkish migrant.

After telling her about my plan and research in Berlin, she said:

‘Fussball (football). I am not a fan. But every man in this country is crazy about Fussball. Going to the stadiums, watching TV, beers, car whistles, very very loud. And the flags. From 2006, you know, die Weltmeisterschaft, ah, World Cup, people started to hang national flags, everywhere. The Turkey/German game in the Euro [Championship], we saw flags of both.’

Evidenced by 6.8 million members of the Football Association<sup>33</sup>, good average attendance of the Bundesliga, and a well-maintained youth training system, the sport of football secures its cultural and social relevance in Germany. Changes have taken place gradually over years, and the global football party is the time to (re) discover it. Towards the 2005 Confederations Cup and the 2006 Germany World Cup, the German national team coached by Jürgen Klinsmann, conveyed a young and attacking style and a new self-image. The 2006 Germany World Cup also marked a 'normalization' trend in the German patriotism and the sport of football itself inevitably changed in a more commercialised way (Gebauer 2006). The cinematic expression of the changes is the documentary *Deutschland. Ein Sommermärchen* (Germany. A summer's tale) screening the journey of the national team in 2006 World Cup, by Sönke Wortmann, the director of *The Miracle of Bern* film as well. The film premiere was scheduled on the German Unification Day, with a red carpet featuring the national team players and Chancellor Merkel (Buchner 2006). Strikingly parallel to the 'Miracle of Bern', the Germans forged another football myth, a fairy tale in a festive atmosphere, even without a trophy.

2009 was the year when I ventured into anthropology and started to bring football issues in my research. What firstly interested me was the multi-cultural character of the young German teams played and crowned in the 2009 Under 21 and Under 17 European Championships. In the U21 final against England, seven players in the line-up had their origin in countries other than German (Yang 2010b) and several of them are now playing for the German national team (senior), including Jérôme Boateng, Sami Khedira and Mesut Özil. It is

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<sup>33</sup> Please see the official site of the German Football Association (DFB) for more information: <http://www.dfb.de/en/about-dfb/members/>.

obvious that the national football teams have become melting pots in Germany, as the German footballer Dennis Aogo said: 'Regardless of your roots, you can live together and achieve great things' (Tucic 2009). It shows football's integrative power (Tucic 2009).

My first visit to Germany was in summer 2010 during the South Africa World Cup, accompanied by two friends who were supporting the German team at that moment. Sadly, Germany did not go through to the final, but we were all very much impressed by the festive atmosphere and football fever in every city we visited in Germany. Germany offered us terrific experience as distance supporters. One of my companions told me:

'The team is no longer far away from us. We are sitting among local fans in the stadium, doing Mexican waves and cheering on the team... We have stepped into the former German national team's bus in the Benz Museum (in Stuttgart), bought black-red-gold coloured souvenirs. The team we support seems reachable, wearable and portable. Great memories.'



Figure 5.1 Public viewing of the Argentina-Germany match, 3rd July, 2010 at the Olympiastadion, Munich.



Figure 5.2 A ‘the 4<sup>th</sup> star for Germany’s pin I collected at a Mercedes-Benz showroom in Munich on the 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2010. The words on the back: Pin and support the German National Team on their way to the four stars. Register and win prizes with Mercedes-Benz.

I am updating this chapter as the Germans just clinched the 4th star in Brazil, winning the first World Cup trophy for the reunified Germany. The BBC commentator said after the final on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2014, that the triumph ‘has been planned, crafted, taught, and from a German point of view, was meant to be.’ The new batch of German talents, including the ones with multi-ethnic roots, are emerging into the national team, and have been put together as a whole. On July the 16<sup>th</sup>, huge crowd gathered near the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. The homecoming celebration was aired on major German TV channels as well as the official site German Football Association (DFB). As with the football summer in 2006, Berlin was transformed into a euphoric atmosphere again with the national flags flying high in the fan mile and beyond. The trophy itself might find its place in the future German Football Museum in 2015.

### 5.1.3 The Ruhr Valley, the Ruhr rivalry

The Ruhr means hard work. It is incredibly important to these fans that the players work hard on the pitch. This fighting and working are rooted in the area.

—Benedikt Höwedes, captain of Schalke 04 since 2011

We don’t like each other. We are fire and water.

—A Schalke fan on the relationship between Schalke and Dortmund



Figure 5.3 Left: The Ruhr in the North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Germany.  
Right: Gelsenkirchen (blue icon) and Dortmund (yellow icon) in Germany.

The Ruhr Valley, 'Ruhrgebiet' in German, located in the North Rhine-Westphalia, West Germany, is geographically defined as a mining area. It bloomed into an industrial district in the 19th century, and enjoys a rich history in coal and steel production. As a consequence of the heavy industry, the Ruhr Valley has been haunted by environmental contamination; and mounting unemployment has emerged since mid-20th century (Percy 2003, 'Ruhr' 2013). Striving to forge a new image, the Emscher Landscape Park International Building Exhibition (1989-1999) and European Capital of Culture 2010 "Essen for the Ruhr" programme are two innovative models for the integration and regeneration of the Ruhr Metropolis. In addition, Ruhr sporting culture, especially football culture, deploys new complexity in this area.

With solid fan bases, top league teams and countless derbies, the Ruhr Valley is the heartland of the German football map. The derby games between Schalke 04 and Borussia Dortmund are the most sensational occasions in this area. It is called 'the mother of all derbies' in Germany, and other meetings between two teams in the region are all Kleines Revierderbies (small derbies in the area).

Several local fans told me the Ruhr derby has a fifty-year-old history, and it is always there. At the same time, research (Heck et al. 2012) indicates the long-term Ruhr Derby, to a certain extent, is a media-manufactured myth. The



high-tension rivalry between the Ruhr duo has only been formatted since the 1980s and evolved into social-cultural phenomena in the 1990s. The history of the derby may vary in the world of fans and academia, but in this day and age, the atmosphere of the Ruhr Derby is fiery. As both teams have been competitive in the Bundesliga and representatives of German football in the European field, the intensity is reaching a new level, and that shapes the Ruhr what it is.

#### **5.1.4 Excitement and cautiousness: a Schalke fan in the field**

This year (2014) marks the tenth year of my career as a German Bundesliga follower. Throughout these years, the German league has reached one of its high peaks, exemplified by Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund (BVB) being top two on the league table and pulling out an all-German Champions League final in 2013.

However, during the 2012/2013 season, for a Schalke fan, there was something worth celebrating—Schalke (professional team, Under 19 and Under 17) crushed BVB eight times in one single season. In March 2013, I arrived in Gelsenkirchen for the fourth time and for the first time so close to a Ruhr derby. I remember the sweet smell of victory.

Living in Gelsenkirchen, no doubt, was the best part of my research. I benefited enormously from being a fan myself, with such a background and a certain amount of knowledge regarding the club and local culture; I did feel the observations and communications became more efficient in and beyond the museum space. I got opportunities to sit (or stand) together with local fans in training sessions after the museum visit and to explore some fan-generated programmes initiated by fan leaders. Some recognized me on the tram to the arena, and we waved to each other; some were curious about my project and my journey; some shared with me stories about their Schalke collections; some told me to quit researching the BVB museum and we laughed out loud. It

was filled with enjoyment, and I always tried to behave properly as a field worker, not to be over stimulated.

Dortmund was an entirely different story, full of dramas. Apart from my key informant who is a member of staff at the BVB Museum and my local hosts, I almost hid my fan identity. Every time before travelling to Dortmund, I took off all my Schalke insignia at the platform of the Gelsenkirchen Hbf (train station) to stay safe. Endeavouring to play neutral, I admit that the BVB Museum was an eye opener the first time I stepped in, although the colours still seemed not that pleasant.

Blue and white of Schalke or yellow-black of BVB: which colour is your heart? Welcome to the Ruhr Valley and the Ruhr rivals.

## **5.2 Ein Leben Lang Blau und Weiss (Blue and white for life)**

### **5.2.1 The city, the arena and the museum: going in**



Figure 5.4 Tram 302 at the 'Veltins- Arena' stop, Gelsenkirchen.

This is the first picture I took in Gelsenkirchen on the 31st of July 2010. The good luck of having a ride on the specially painted Schalke tram made my

first Schalke trip more memorable. After hopping off the tram, I joined the crowd of fans to march towards the Veltins Arena of FC Schalke 04 to watch a pre-season match. Just a few more steps and I saw the arena, white roof and a blue lining. I purchased my first Schalke scarf at the fan shop and proudly wore it to show my support, and then earned thumb ups from Schalke fans. I clearly remember that summer day when I overwhelmingly enjoyed seeing 'Schalke' throughout my walk going in and out of Gelsenkirchen.

In comparison to cities like Essen and Dortmund, Gelsenkirchen is small in scale. Situated in northern Ruhr, it enjoys a long tradition of coal mining. The Schalke District in central Gelsenkirchen houses FC Schalke 04 (S04), fully named Fußballclub Gelsenkirchen-Schalke 04 e. V., with blue and white as the team colours. The club was founded in the year 1904 and nicknamed Die Knappen (The Miners) demonstrating the strength it has drawn from local coal miners both as players and as fans. Around 800 meters above a coal mine lies the home ground of S04, Veltins Arena, a multi-functional arena opened in 2001<sup>34</sup>. The Schalke Museum, opened after renovation in 2009, is located in the east stand of Veltins Arena, easy to access through the stairway in Block 12. Currently, the price for an adult ticket is 5 Euros. I made my first research visit to the museum on the 30th October 2012, three hours before a DFB Pokal (German Domestic Cup) game. With the help of my local informant Matthias (he will be introduced later in 5.2.3), a member of the museum staff met me at the entrance and guided me through. In spring 2013, I returned in the Ruhr and made several revisits on non-match days.

## 5.2.2 The Schalke Museum: live the Mythos

Kennst Du den Mythos vom Schalker Markt, die Geschichte, die dort begann, der FC Schalke wurde Legende, eine Liebe, die niemals endet.

(Do you know the myth of the Schalke Markt, the story that began there, FC Schalke then became a legend, a love that never ends.) —Schalke fan chant

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<sup>34</sup> More information regarding the Veltins Arena, please refer to the official site <http://www.veltins-arena.de/>.

## Exhibition layout and the Schalke Mythos

The Schalke Museum is compressed and intensive in terms of gallery space—my first impression; and I received many responses from the visitors, one of whom said ‘it symbolises the density of the local population’.



Figure 5.5 Schalke Museum exhibits.

The 600-square-metre exhibition hall harbours six glass showcases, a coal compartment, a replica of a Schalke fan's living room, a small football stand, audio-visual rooms as well as wall displays of shirt evolution, match posters, player portraits, the Schalke Team of the Century voted by fans. Next to the main hall, on the way leading to the dining lounge, posters for the kids training camp campaign are showing, which many visitors would miss out. One of the best features of the Schalke Museum is a superb view into the Veltins Arena at one side of the hallway.

In my point of view, the axis running throughout the museum narration is the ‘Schalke Mythos’. In a visitor’s words ‘obviously the main thing in this museum is the Mythos’, and ‘the Mythos shows the history of our club and the club lebt (lives) the Mythos’. But what is the Schalke Mythos? Like the founding myth of a nation, the Schalke myth finds its roots in its early years. Starting in May

1904, a group of coal miners founded a football club in Gelsenkirchen. In 1927, the Glückauf Kampfbahn became the home ground of the team and the spiritual home of supporters. That ground saw the rise of the legendary Ernst Kuzorra, who led the team into a central force of German football by sweeping six German Championships in the 1930s and 1940s. Together with his teammates, Kuzorra, son of a local miner, delivered a rapid-short-flat passing style called 'Schalker Kreisel' (Schalke Gyroscope, which is now the title of Schalke's match day programme). The archetype of the Schalke Mythos is quite straightforward, the football hero from a working class family spending all his career in this club, achieving greatness through personal efforts and the support from the team and fans. The story of Kuzorra's life and career can be heard in the museum's audio room, of course. But it is not a final verse of the Schalke myth. The concept of the Schalke Mythos has become a comprehensive one. I quote the museum texts under the title 'Mythos' and translate into English with remarks:

'Schalke ist mehr als ein Fußballverein. Schalke ist ein Mythos, ein Symbol für das Ruhrgebiet, die Region, die aus harter Arbeit in Bergbau und Industrie entsteht. Schalke ist eine Geschichte aus dem Ruhrpott, die von Triumphen und Tragödien erzählt. Und von den Fans, den Menschen, die sich mit dem Klub identifizieren. Schalke, das ist vor allem die Leidenschaft der Millionen Anhänger.

Auf Schalke werden Sportler zu Legenden. Ernst Kuzorra und das Ruhrpott-Märchen—vom Pütt in die Fußballnationalmannschaft. Der unvergessene Flügelstürmer Stan Libuda und die Mannschaft von 1972. Schalke sorgt für Jahrhundertfiguren des Fußballs: Torjäger Klaus Fischer, Olaf Thon, die Eurofighter von 1997, die Meister der Herzen von 2001.

Schalke ist auch der Trotz, wenn es nicht rund läuft, wenn wieder Streit herrscht im Verein. Schalke macht Kultfiguren: Oskar Siebert, erst Stürmer, dann dreimal Präsident. Mannschaftsbetreuer Charly Neumann. Rudi Assauer, 18 Jahre Manager bei den Königsblauen, sagt es so: Entweder ich schaffe Schalke oder Schalke schafft mich. Das gilt nicht nur für ihn.'

Schalke is more than a football club. Schalke is a myth, a symbol of the Ruhr area, the region, which is rooted in hardworking, in mining and industry. Schalke is a story from the Ruhr telling about triumphs and tragedies. And (a story) of the fans, the people, who identify themselves with the club. Schalke, this is the passion of millions of followers.

Players become legends at Schalke. Ernst Kuzorra and the Ruhr fairy tale—from the coal mine (Pütt, in the original German version is the Ruhr dialect) to the national team. The unforgettable winger Stan Libuda and the team of 1972. Schalke provides the football figures of the century: top Scorers Klaus Fischer, Olaf Thon, the European fighters in 1997 (UEFA Cup), the Champions of the Heart in 2001 (when Schalke's title dream was vanished in the last minute of the final round in 2000/2001 Bundesliga Season).

Schalke also means defiance when undergoing hardships and facing disruptions in the club. Schalke makes iconic characters: Oskar Siebert, started as a striker, then became the club president three times. Team staff member Charly Neumann. Rudi Assauer, manager of the Royal Blues for 18 years, puts it this way: 'Either I influence Schalke or Schalke influences me'. It applies not only to him.

Here we see the official interpretation and the guiding statement of the Schalke Museum. It indicates, at least, three principles of the 'Schalke Mythos' concept: 1) the club values the strong connections with local working class culture; 2) supporters have a major role in defining Schalke culture and 3) the Schalke Mythos is ongoing, being created by its people (players, staff and fans). Exhibiting practices at the museum reflect the above principles. I will explain specifically below.



Figure 5.6 Left: Fan's Room Right: Coal compartment



The first example is the coal compartment, a massive object in front of the main showcases, through which background scenes of the Schalke story are visually set up. It successfully shows the club's close bond with the miners and local mining culture and the origin of the club's nickname. Then, after the glass boxes, comes the fan's room dedicated to Schalke fandom. It is stuffed with Schalke memorabilia, a sofa and a TV set showing football programmes. The small room received many compliments from the museum audience, for being 'cute', 'interesting', 'very Schalke' and for being their 'favourite part of the museum'. Even the director of the museum of Dortmund did mention the fan's room when talking about the Schalke Museum.



Figure 5.7 Left: Raúl's and Hunterlaar's shirts in the showcase. Right: The 'Stadium' section.

The cheerful mood continues when seeing the shirts of Raúl and Hunterlaar displayed together in one of the showcases (Figure 5.7 left), especially for those visitors wearing Raúl's or Hunterlaar's number. They both joined Schalke in 2010, Spanish star Raúl played for Schalke for two seasons, and the 'Hunter' from the Netherlands is still wearing the blue shirt. Both strikers helped the team in delivering good performances on German and European stages and gained popularity for the club. To introduce their shirts into the museum shows the international face of the team culture, and furthermore, situates the museum contemporarily. A few minutes after seeing Hunterlaar's No.25 shirt in the museum showcase, you may watch him play in the 'same' shirt in this arena. That is the magic of museums of everyday lives. Also, that is

exactly the idea conveyed by the Schalke Mythos and by this museum—the history of the club is being written right here, right now; and the museum visitors, fans are part of it. The section about the home ground is another example. On the one hand, the ‘mini stand’ in the museum furnishes banks of seats from two former home grounds (Glückauf Kampfbahn and Parkstadion) of Schalke as well as the seats of Veltins Arena; on the other hand, this sitting area in the museum offers a view of the interior of Veltins Arena. Again, the past and the present are so ‘close’. Thon, on the opening day of Schalke Museum, noted that he was pleased to have played in all of the three grounds and all those good memories flashed back when visiting the museum (Buschmann 2009). Players, fans, stadiums and the museum are all witnesses to the club history and active figures in the encompassing Schalke Mythos.

### **Museum Experience**

Not only a focus of the museum narration, there is a noteworthy programme being held in the Schalke Museum named ‘Mythos Schalke’ as well. Funded by the sponsors of the club, local school children as well as members of The Knapp Kids Club have joined in this programme. The ‘Mythos Schalke’ experience contains a museum and arena tour, film shows and question-and-answer sections with players from the current squad or retired team legends, often followed by autograph signing and photo shooting. Sometimes, the students, as ‘little journalists’ of local press, also conduct interviews with Schalke players. The series of activities would contribute in building a stronger connection between the team and local youth as well as for the youth to build team spirit within their own groups.

Group visits are one side of the museum experience. More museum visits are completed by individuals or families. They may not have the opportunity to meet up with a football star, but they may still experience a variety of personal highlights at the museum; they may not have a museum guide to follow, but still share some interests in common.





Figure 5.8 Showcase featuring replicas of the UEFA Cup, the DFB Pokal (the German Cup), the Meisterschale (the German Championship Plate since 1949), the Viktoria (German Championship Trophy 1903–1944)

Taking a picture of or with the trophies is the all-time favourite activity in a football museum, sharing the glory and dream of a newcomer. It is no exception in the Schalke Museum, and in front of the trophy showcase, a visitor told me he was lucky to have a special memory. In 2011, after victories in the German Domestic Cup final and over the old rival Borussia Dortmund in the German Super Cup, Schalke swept two trophies, and winning the extra derby at home made it more commemorative. Shortly after the derby, these two trophies were displayed in the Schalke museum and made available for pictures.

‘On the very next day of the news released on the website, my son and I were here queuing and waiting. The ‘two trophies and me’ photo is still my Facebook profile picture. That was so great. Hope one day I change the picture with a new one, standing by a new trophy.’

Others found the other popular spot for pictures, the ‘fan’s room’. For example, a visitor told me:

‘My friend and I had a selfie sitting on the sofa in the room. I saw on TV, Klaus Fischer and Vitali Klitschko<sup>35</sup> shake their hands on this sofa, so we copied the pose. Do you know the names? (I answered yes.) Oh, you are a Schalker.’

<sup>35</sup> Klaus Fischer is a Schalke legend (in the Schalke Team of the Century) and was a member of the German National team. He has participated in the ‘Mythos Schalke’ programme as well. Vitali Klitschko is a Ukrainian boxer who had a great win in the Veltins Arena and he has been seen associated with Schalke 04.

Not only generating new moments to remember, the museum visit also ushers in aspects of the past. Facing the panel of the Schalke Team of the century and the life-size cardboard cut-outs of those plays is the perfect image of nostalgia.



Figure 5.9 Schalke Team of the Century.

To be honest, the team members of the last century are all the ‘hearsay’ ones for me. But for those elder Schalke fans, and maybe local fans at my age, who witnessed the winning match of 1997 UEFA Cup finals and even great moments in earlier times, it would be emotional to look at those big names voted by fans.

I remember a Schalke lady in her forties told her daughter and me, how Wilmots scored in the first leg of the 1997 finals—pointing at his name. She continued to enumerate her heroes, Olaf Thon, Michael Büskens, Andreas Müller, Martin Max, Thomas Linke. It was emotional when talking about the ‘unexpected’ crown. I responded by saying ‘it is good to see Andreas Müller’s son Miles and Martin Max’s son Phillip are both playing for Schalke youth teams’. They were surprised at my piece of knowledge, and her 21-year-old daughter started to talk about the young talents.

This Team of the Century part is displayed at the entrance/exit gate, and as I observed, more visitors chose to make ‘pilgrimages’ to the ‘shrine’ of trophies and went through this part by the end of their visits. Typically, one more move

before leaving the museum was to take a look at their 'most beautiful arena in the world'. Before the museum closed ahead of the match, one would see supporters entering the arena and hear the Nordcurve (North stand for hard-core fans) screaming 'Schalke'.

Fans seldom made complaints about the museum in their talks and interviews with me. They mentioned two points mainly: 1) the current gallery is narrow and sometimes crowded, with a suggestion of a larger or an extra space for hosting more exhibits and visitors, and 2) nearly no information in other languages has been provided for non-German speaking fans. The latter, of course, are from foreign visitors, especially Japanese fans<sup>36</sup>. The museum texts, film subtitles and even the museum leaflet are all in German language. I saw local visitors who can speak English kindly assisted in interpretations (they also helped me out when I had problems). Football is a universal language, but for certain museum visitors, language stays as an obstacle in learning the history and culture of the team.

### **5.2.3 Matthias and the 1904 Geschichten (1904 Stories)**

I shall elaborate further by mentioning my informant Matthias and an ongoing S04 fan project initiated by him, which I believe is a fascinating extension of the Schalke Museum. I would say Matthias is a Schalke historian, and many Schalke fans call him a big name; however, Matthias said 'I am just a Schalke supporter like you'.

He maintained a blog titled 'Auswärtssieg!' (Away win) to keep updated reports, short reviews and photos of the games he (always with his wife) watched, most of them were the youth teams' matches, from U23 (Schalke II), U19, U19 down to U9. It was the best, and nearly only recourse for me to obtain information about players in the Schalke Academy other than the professional

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<sup>36</sup> Japanese footballer Atsuto Uchida is a full back of Schalke 04. I met plenty of Japanese fans travelled all the way from Japan to support him and the team.

ones. Although the blog was closed (which is a shame), Matthias's 'away' trips are continuing, with photos and reports posted on Facebook. I firstly contacted Matthias via a Facebook message to inform him of (English) National Football Museum events I thought might interest him.

Facebook Message sent by me 09/07/2012 19:32

Dear Mr. xxx

Greetings from Manchester! Please excuse my presumption in writing to you.

I am a Ph.D. student of St Andrews University with a research project looking at the identity issues in football museums and currently conducting fieldwork at National Football Museum in Manchester.

I am also a huge Schalke fan and followed your blog for years. It is your blog that cultivated my (and my friends') interests in young players at S04 who have made us so very proud. Many thanks!

I am writing to let you know that...

I will head to Schalke next spring for my research project and hope to meet you and learn from you in the future.

With very best wishes

Jing

Facebook Message received from Matthias 13/07/2012 20:38

Hello Jing,

Well that's a surprise. Didn't know my blog had regular readers in the UK and it's really a pleasant surprise. You and I obviously share a passion for those players who have not yet made it to the professional level and are just on the brink of a (hopefully) great career.

I remember having knocked on the doors of the NFM in Manchester when we visited there for the Champions League-Semis a year ago. Obviously it hadn't been opened back then, so our intention to donate a nice Schalke scarf proved futile.

Please contact me -email xxx@xx is probably better than Facebook messages -once you're attending a Schalke game. We'll meet up and have a glass of whatever.

Cheers + best regards

Matthias

Matthias kindly replied and greatly helped me in establishing contacts in the Schalke Museum. In addition, I really appreciate his idea of 'donating a nice Schalke scarf' to the NFM and his enthusiasm in adventuring into the behind stories of those away games by taking pictures of the tiny exhibition rooms and so on. We have kept in touch since then and finally met each other on the 7th of April 2013 in Cologne, at the ground of one of Schalke U19's away games.

We had a photograph in front of the Schalke team bus and watched a dramatic game in which our team made an 'away win' by 4-3. I bought *The Damned United* book by Phil Rostron for Matthias as a little present and gladly received the 1st and 2nd issues of the *1904 Geschichten* (1904 stories) from him.

*1904 Geschichten* is a fan project led by Matthias, endeavouring to make a collection of 1904 real stories written by Schalke fans about their club. In the beginning, more than 100 stories were sent and posted online in a dedicated blog. Then, paper books have started to be published. As each book contains about 40 stories, *1904 Geschichten* will be a very long series. In summer 2014, I am pleased to know the 4th issue has been published. The covers, the subtitles, and indeed the stories are composed and decided by Schalke fans.



Figure 5.10 First issue of the 1904 Geschichten, a present from Matthias.

Having found plenty of fascinating stories in the first two books, I quote and try to translate my favourite paragraph in the 68th story about trading and collecting Schalke tickets:

‘Eintrittskarten. Jede Einzelne erzählt ihre ganz eigene Geschichte. Über sich, über Dich. Den Tag, das Spiel, die Aufstellung, die Stimmung, das Wetter, den Geschmack von Halbzeitwurst—und Pils, das Ergebnis, die vielen lebenswerten Geschichten die nur Du selbst kennst.’ (Kruschinski 2012:108)

‘Tickets. Each ticket tells its own story. About oneself, about yourself. The day, the game, the line-up, the atmosphere, the weather, the taste of the sausage during the half-time break and the Pils (beer), the result, those various endearing stories that only You know.’

Several stories are closely related to Schalke objects, such as tickets, newspapers, scarves, shirts, photos, from which memories have been refreshed, and emotions have been expressed. Those individual stories from ordinary fans are all very personal, but at the same time have been collected and woven into a wider story of ‘our Schalke’, especially when they are being shared after the publication.

Although Matthias said he did not have any special Schalke collection, he holds a huge amount of Schalke-related books and programmes at home. The match reports/photos and the stories he has composed, collected, edited and published could all contribute to the Schalke Museum and/or the virtual museum of Schalke. Many Schalke fans much appreciate Matthias's efforts and dedication, as one of them told me: ‘I love the books. Thanks to Matthias, and to all the contributors. I would like to write one, be part of it. I will.’

The 1904 Gelsenkirchen books have been on sale in Schalke official fan shops. This series, ideally with the complete 1904 stories, would be a great exhibit in the Schalke Museum in the future. Moreover, as it will need a long time spread (around four decades, I suppose) to collect and publish a large number of issues (about 40), to participate in the project entails a ‘Self-Community’ interaction. Getting involved not only means to share your stories with the fan community, but also means to build and arrange your own collections.

#### **5.2.4 Schalke on display: around the arena, the Schalke Meile, the ‘Offene Kirche Schalke’ and the fans**

Based on my observations, on non-match days, most of the museum visitors would directly go for shopping and/or to watch the training sessions after (sometimes before) their visits, as the training fields and official fan shop are



just steps away from the Veltins Arena. Remarkably, wandering around the arena seems to be an extension of the museum visit, called a 'Schalke fashion' by some fans I talked to. The displaying of Schalke beyond the museum and stadium does not stop either.



Figure 5.11 Left: A coal wagon. Right: Charly's Schalker restaurant.

On the left side above, we can see a mine wagon which is standing in front of a car park, besides the main training field for the Schalke professionals. This particular blue and white mine wagon is a popular picture point for first-time visitors. Once following a group of Japanese female fans who took photos with it, I asked them: 'Do you girls know what is this about? And what is 'BERGWERK HUGO?' They answered 'It seems from a coal mine to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Schalke. The 'BERGWERK HUGO' may be the name of the mine, we don't know '. They called it 'a very cute Schalke thing'. They were right. Also, we all understood 'Glück auf' is the way the miners greet each other. Moreover, a couple of local supporters had lengthy stories to share.

'Bergwerk Hugo, usually known as Zeche Hugo (Hugo Colliery) is the symbol of Gelsenkirchen. The coal mine was closed in 2000, but still stands as our landmark. [Did some players take their portrait pictures there? And the team visited this site to experience the miners' lives? —I recalled something and asked.] You are right. Bergbau und S04 gehören zusammen (Mining and S04 belong together). And you know the 'Kaue' (bird cages), for holding miners' clothes? We now have the replica of the Kaue in the new fan shop (opened on 6th April 2013).'

‘I know Zeche Hugo quite well, as it is part of club’s history. Professional miners from Hugo became great Schalke players, and so did their sons. It has been our tradition that current players take an underground tour there with full sets of garments...Der fan club Zeche Hugo is a famous one.’

I did dig a little bit into the rich history between this colliery and S04 after hearing from my German informants and found that, Zeche Hugo actually has a museum named ‘das kleiner Museum’<sup>37</sup>(the small museum) on its own history and history of mining. An interesting fact is that the museum harbours a Schalke fan room stuffed with Schalke items which links back to the similar one in the Schalke Museum. Zeche Hugo has also furnished a new exhibition room, ‘the treasure room’, for hanging autographed football shirts, gloves and pictures, including kits from Schalke legends, Hugo miners’ sons, and even from the club’s new talent, Max Meyer (born in 1995).

As well as the mineral wagon, by the training fields, Charly’s Schalker restaurant carries a story. It is named after the much-admired Karl-Heinz ‘Charly’ Neumann, a true Schalke legend, a member of the Schalke hall of fame (Die Ehrenkabine des FC Schalke 04), who worked more than thirty years for the club until his death in 2008. Taking a glance at the right photo (Figure 5.11), portrait paintings of Charly, poster of the arena, and a miner’s lamp are hanging on the wall, and a selection of Charly-Schalke related objects are on display. The cold wind and snow in March and April 2013 made Charly’s a perfect place after a museum visit or a training class. It received many commendations as a ‘heart-warming’ and ‘vintage’ place with ‘good food’, ‘a view of the training pitch’ and ‘a taste of Schalke history’. Most importantly, ‘you are always sitting alongside Schalke fans in blue’. Extra bonus—‘it’s a pleasure to meet and greet players when they are snacking here’. I heard that, when the summer heat returns, the restaurant opens the terrace on the second floor from where everyone can have a good view of the training pitches while enjoying a beer or so.

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<sup>37</sup> For more information, please visit <http://www.zeche-hugo.com/> (in German language).





Figure 5.12 Left: The Mascot of Schalke greets a fan in front of the fan shop.  
Right: Entrance of the Schalke fan shop featuring two derby winners scorers.

In fact, Charly's is located in the same building as several headquarter offices of the club. In my fieldwork days and my earlier visits as well, sometimes I spotted Mr. Holst Helt, general manager of Schalke 04 since 2010, overlooking the training sessions from the window or balcony on the upper floor of the building. With a huge spinning S04 logo on its roof, on the other end of the building is situated the official fan shop, which was newly refurbished and reopened in April 2013, featuring Huntelaar and Höger—two Ruhr derby scorers in that season, at the entrance. The fan shop was always crowded during training times and after group visits to the Schalke Museum as I observed. Around the arena (including inside the museum), I always saw happy fans holding official Schalke shopping bags decorated with a colliery picture; some of them could not wait to try their scarves on; some got their merchandise signed by the player after training. Lucky fans would meet and hug the Schalke mascot Erwin at some point around the arena on special occasions. The Schalke displays exceed the museum and the arena, and in an accumulation of symbols, colours and interactions, such that the distance between the club and fans is nullified.



Figure 5.13 Left: The building by the main training field.

Right: Schalke U19 team training on the pitch next to the main one, with a view of the white-roofed Veltins Arena in the background.

All of the above merge into a picture of Schalke 04—a coal wagon telling a story of the roots and the value of the club; a restaurant in memory of a Schalke legend and at the same time serving the fans and players; a delicately decorated blue-and-white fan shop<sup>38</sup>; headquarter offices seeing club authorities passing through; training pitches welcoming players from various age groups bearing the Schalke badge; and most importantly, Schalke supporters wandering around and showing their love. The Schalke display that exceeds the arena and the Schalke Museum I see as a ‘Schalke complex’: a larger museum of Schalke within the context of the club’s culture and its history.

Dare to go three kilometres further from the Schalke Complex and enlarge the museum of Schalke in terms of what I call, the ‘Schalke Circle’ (see Figure 5.14). The northern part of the circle lies the Schalke Meile, in between the Schalker Markt (the cradle of the club) and the Glückauf Kampfbahn (the former home ground of the club). In the past, it was the epicentre and the birthplace of the club. Organised by fans and partly financed by the sale of a ‘Schalke Meile’ version Knappen Card (the playing card in the Veltins Arena), the Schalke fan mile, dotted with fan clubs, pubs and shops, is now a meeting

<sup>38</sup> As mentioned before, pictures of the derby scorers are seen at the entrance, and on the second floor are the replicas of the bird cages of the coal mine, together with the wall-hanging with surnames and numbers of legendary and current Schalke players, and so on. As one could imagine, the fan shop is a showcase of the team colours and logo.

point for Schalke fans in their everyday lives and a gathering place for the Schalke Ultras to have drinks before home games and then to march towards the arena.

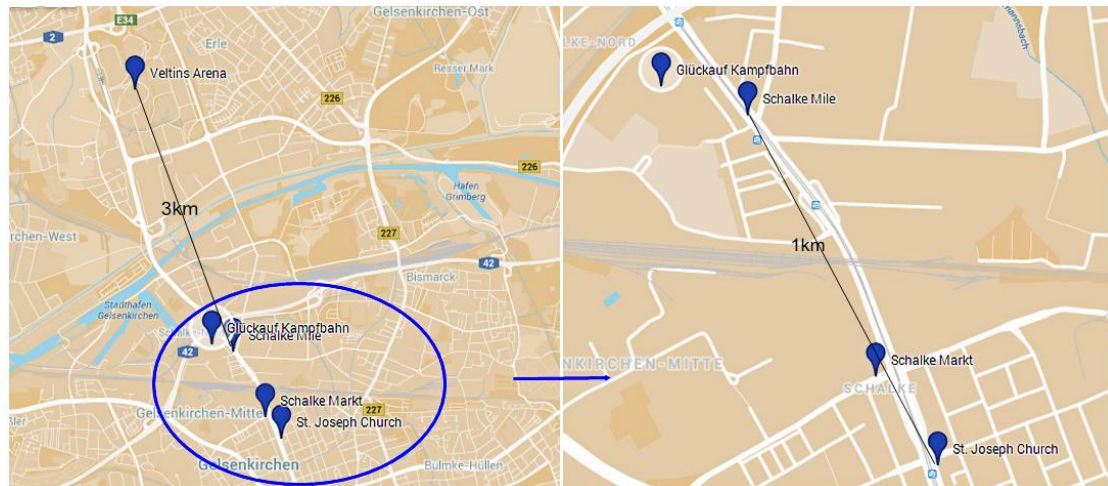


Figure 5.14 The Schalke Circle.



Figure 5.15 The Auf Schalke Pub on the Schalke Meile.

The most eye-catching spot is the 'Auf Schalke'<sup>39</sup> Pub right opposite the 'Schalke Meile' tram station. The external wall above the pub has been intensively brightened up with Schalke banners demonstrating brief information regarding the club, including the achievements of the club in

<sup>39</sup> Formally, the Veltins Arena of Schalke was named Auf Schalke.



Germany and on the European leagues, a long and solid friendship with FC Nürnberg, the evolution of the club logo, the title of the fan chant, and a finishing touch claiming 'Wir sind stolz auf unser Team' (We are proud of our team).



Figure 5.16 Window displays, Schalke Meile.

Also, it is very common to see the pubs and fan clubs in the fan mile not only crowded with fans, but also holding and displaying their own Schalke collections, from shirts, autograph cards, scarves, match day magazines, books, posters to diverse fan arts of player portraits, newspaper clippings and photos. Typically, they also have Schalke goods on sale. I bought several Schalke/Gelsenkirchen postcards for my friends who are Schalke fans in China, and it was refreshing to drink a can of arena drink called Knappen Power and/or a bottle of beer by the Schalke sponsor Veltins. Once a Schalke fan who travelled from China and I visited the Schalke Meile but found all the pubs and shops were closed as a result of the national holiday; therefore, we did window shopping. We were surprised that walking down the quiet fan mile took us around an hour, for looking at and talking about those display windows

only. The memories of the huge wins, the goal scoring moments of former players flashed back when seeing certain items. When reaching the end of the Schalke Meile, he concluded by saying 'they have been creating the fan version of a Schalke museum through these displaying windows, unofficially, but a lot of fun'. I agreed. Those Schalke windows indicate how the fans remember their club and their fan career. Schalke fans surely cherish their winning of the UEFA Cup in 1997 and the good old times by displaying the Olaf Thon's No. 10 Shirt and pictures of the trophy, by drawing and showing the cartoon characters, the Eurofighters. Back in 1997, my friend was a ten years old boy not knowing the name of Schalke. The glory in 1997 is 'a pleasant history class' for him. While, Christian Pander's (joined Schalke youth team in 2001 and played in Schalke shirt for eleven years) autograph card in the window, reminded him of the 'golden left foot' and those magnificent free-kicks by the 'Panda' (Pander's nickname among his Chinese fans). The Schalke Mile is full of tradition and history to be learned and shared.

Just 15 minutes' walk from the Schalke Meile, is situated the St. Joseph Church of Schalke (der Schalker St. Joseph-Kirche), which has a strong connection with football and the club. As will be described below, we will see how S04 is displayed in a religious context.



Figure 5.17 The football window. Credit: Schalker St. Joseph-Kirche.

The church is the home of the 'football window', depicting Aloysius Gonzaga, the patron saint of students, a young Christian, in football boots and with a football in blue and white. This makes the church noticeable for visitors and football fans. More interestingly, they are running a programme called 'Offene Kirche Schalke'—on Bundesliga Saturdays, when Schalke plays at home, the church opens its doors from 12 o'clock to offer a place to discuss 'über Gott und die Welt und den S04' (about God and the world and S04). Initiated in 2012 by the pastor of the church, who is a Schalke fan himself, the programme has been kept running successfully by a group of volunteers. The church also provides a wall for Schalke fans to put down their messages to God and blue and white candle sets as well. They also work closely with the fan club 'Mit Gott (with God) auf Schalke' to support the team (Offene Kirche Schalke, 2014).

In this part of the chapter I have not only focused on the official Schalke Museum in the stadium, instead, I wrote on and endeavour to frame fan-centred projects and 'unofficial' displays of Schalke as an enlarged 'museum' of Schalke, an 'ecomuseum' greatly maintained and renewed by the fan community with the support of the club. The enlarged football museum itself is the product of identity formation. The process consists of two interdependent parts. First: picking a fan identity, and developing a sense of belonging with the help of objects, exhibitions and sites that bear upon the club's history and value and/or symbolise the team (a process of learning and understanding). Second: making commitments to the identity of the fan group and club culture through participating in activities, making collections, wearing team colours in order to communicate with others and to crystallise one's own experience and memory (a process of sharing and displaying).

Interviewed by the Schalker Kreisel (the match-day programme of Schalke), Jody Strauch, a Schalke fan from the U.S. wrote after her trip:

'Being dipped, if even briefly, into this history and tradition helped to solidify me as a true Die Knappen fan. I was beginning to really feel like I belonged

now' (Strauch, 2013).

Long distance supporters say the exploration into the Schalke Mythos feels like homecoming. As for local fans, visiting the Schalke sites is in their weekly routine.

One can sense the density of Schalke 04 in the air, in many aspects of the city. The history and culture of Schalke 04 are being conveyed not just within the Schalke Museum, or the arena, but through the devices near the Arena, the Hugo coal mine, the Schalke Meile, the old ground, the St. Joseph Church, and many more I have not mentioned or did not have time to explore.

At the same time, Schalke is being displayed through the Schalke fans, who are entering the home ground, visiting the Schalke Museum, watching their players training, taking photos and filming, getting autographs, shopping club merchandise, waving and greeting fans in Schalke shirts, sitting and singing in the fan pubs, praying for more wins in the church, making their own football collections, initiating and participating in fan projects, sharing the stories of the club and their own. They are living and breathing the club's past and present. They live Schalke 04. From this point of view, the distance between the club, the team and the fans, the community is nullified. Seeing from outside, Schalke fans are, consciously and unconsciously, weaving themselves, their everyday, into the fabric of the enlarged museum of Schalke. The Schalke fans are the active audience of the museum, at the same time, they display themselves in the museum under the name of Schalke fans.

## **5.3 Echte Liebe in Schwarz-Gelb (True love in black-yellow)**

### **5.3.1 Dortmund, BVB and the Borusseum: going in**

It only took me around one hour by public transport to reach the 'Dortmund Signal Iduna Park' Station from Gelsenkirchen. My first time at the

epicentre of BVB was on the 2nd of April, 2013. The atmosphere changed when seeing the Borussia Dortmund's home stadium with its conspicuous bright yellow pylons. Before incorporating the sponsor's name in 2005, the stadium was originally named Westfalenstadion. It is the largest football venue in Germany, famous for hosting more than 80,000 spectators and for its south terrace, the 'Yellow Wall'. In 2009, the Times newspaper ranked it first in the top ten European football stadium, believed to be 'the best atmosphere on the Continent on a game-to-game basis' (Evans 2009).



Figure 5.18 The winged rhino, and the stadium in the background.



Figure 5.19 The Borusseum.



On my way to the museum, the sculpture of a black-painted winged rhino sitting on a football came into my sight. This rhino is among dozens of variously decorated rhino sculptures dotted all over the city of Dortmund, as the rhino is the unofficial heraldic animal of the city.

The museum of Borussia Dortmund is located in the Northeast corner of the stadium (just round the corner from the rhino sculpture), with a distinguished name 'Borusseum', a combination of 'Borussia' and 'museum'. Entrance to the museum is via the museum shop, so the 'black and yellow' immersion starts even before entering the museum. Opened on the 99th birthday of BVB in 2008, the Borusseum has witnessed a growing number of visitors in recent years, and enjoyed a record-breaking 100,000 visitors in 2013.

My key informant at the Borusseum is, as mentioned before, a member of staff who I invited to and met at the NFM Sport Heritage Conference in Manchester, 2012. I was fortunate enough that she helped tremendously with my research in Dortmund—even after knowing I am a fan of the blue side. So on my day one at the Borusseum, although she seemed annoyed by my Schalke talk and derby jokes, she elaborately guided me through the 800-square-metre exhibition hall and treated me with a one-to-one VIP stadium tour in English (normally the museum and stadium tour is in German only). In the end, she handed me an English audio guide which made my own exploration much easier.

### **5.3.2 The Borusseum: layout and features**

#### **Layout**

The permanent exhibition area of the Borusseum consists of six exhibiting islands as follows:

**The 'Borsigplatz'** (top left, figure 5.20) is a reconstruction of the tavern called 'Zum Wildschützre' near the Borsigplatz, where the club was founded and

named after the 'Borussia brewery' in 1909. Today, this vintage bar, always shown on TV, is a popular set-up for interviewing team legends and players.

**The 'Weiße Wiese'**<sup>40</sup> (top right, figure 5.20) is about the team's first home ground and that time era. Without many exhibits, yellow cardboard cut-outs of the club's early protagonists, including the first manager and the first coach, are on display.

**The 'Rote Erde'**<sup>41</sup> (middle left, figure 5.20), the 'Red Earth Stadium', was opened in 1926 and served as BVB's home ground from 1937 to 1974. This museum island demonstrates, during this time period, the ups and downs of the club, together with a brief history of the founding and development of the Bundesliga through an abundant supply of objects.

**The 'Westfalenstadion'** (middle right, figure 5.20) area is dedicated to BVB's current home ground, with exhibits stretching back to the 'Westfalen' years as well as stories describing the contemporary 'Signal Iduna Park' era.

**The 'Schatzkammer'** (bottom left, figure 5.20) means the treasure chamber. This part is for showcasing the trophies and plaques won by the team. Near the treasure room, there is also a huge map tagged with the places where BVB played away games on the international stage.

**The 'Borussen-Wiki'** (bottom right, figure 5.20) is the interactive audio-visual databank of the BVB experience. A video guest book and an e-story book are waiting for new entries from the museum visitors.

Besides the six islands, the Borusseum also furnishes a three-thousand-panel honour wall of donors, the **Borusseum Wall of Fame**, a 'Derby Station', a film area, the **Yellow Wall** and several hands-on devices, and a **temporary exhibition room**. Next, I will explore, more specifically, three features of the Borusseum: 1) the Yellow Wall, 2) the empty cases and 3) the temporary exhibiting area.

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<sup>40</sup> 'Weiße Wiese' means 'White Meadow' literally, due to the fact that the white seeds and fluff from those cottonwood trees near the stadium rested in the grass and turned the pitch white. This story is told in the museum, and as we can see in the picture, this exhibition island is surrounded by a wall of white trees.

<sup>41</sup> The pitch, side by side with the Signal Iduna Park, is the home ground of Borussia Dortmund II today.



Figure 5.20 Six exhibition islands of Borussseum



Figure 5.21 The Yellow Wall.

## 1. The Yellow Wall

The Yellow Wall is the 'load bearing wall' of the Borusseum. Some of the visitors who are BVB fans called it a 'replica of our great Südtribüne (South Stand)'; some said 'it is the spine of the team' and even 'our spiritual home'; some visitors without BVB backgrounds mentioned 'no doubt, the Yellow Wall is the most impressive thing, the whole wall'; some told me 'it shows the true colours of the city, black and yellow'.

The bottom picture of Figure 5.21 provides an overview of the Yellow Wall: a panoramic picture of the South Stand as the background image with plugged-in screens showing fan films as well as rotating cases presenting individual objects and related stories. 'Underneath' the wall there are three small exhibiting/interactive rooms. First is the 'Black and Yellow Chamber' (top left, Figure 5.21) with a whole array of exhibits from individual fans and fan club. A list of more than sixty names and a special thanks for all the exhibits and stories from anonymous contributors are on display alongside the objects. The second room is dedicated to BVB fans' talismans (top right, Figure 5.21), through objects, pictures and texts. As it was relatively quiet here during all my visits, I did not conduct any interview inside in such an atmosphere and such a low light level. A visitor also noted it:

'[They] reduce the light and it feels more solemn, like a shrine, open to every BVB fan... Most of us fans have our Do's and Don'ts at home and in the stadium, too. To keep a talisman, a lucky shirt or a flag or something, sometimes a special drink before the match, like those stories out there. Then something magical happens and it makes us believe more...I like to visit this little room. I share the feelings.'

Contrariwise, the third room is a loud one, a fan chant karaoke room (middle left, Figure 5.21). Two microphones are provided to sing a duet of selected BVB fan songs, popular among family and group visitors. This is one end of the Yellow Wall, with some quiz machines (middle right, Figure 5.21) leading to the honour wall of fan donors in the entrance/exit lobby. Visitors can take a 10-question Borusseum-Quiz and receive printed paper slips stating the quiz results and fan rankings, from 'Herzblut (Lifeblood) Borusse', 'Diplom (Diploma)

Borusse', 'BVB Experte (expert)' down to 'BVB-Sympathisant' and 'Neu im Verein? (New to the club?)'. Visitors loved it. Some said 'it is good to test my kids with the quiz and see how much they have learned from the museum tour'; some expressed the excitement of 'being verified as a supporter on top of the fan rankings'; and some regarded the small piece of paper as 'the best souvenir' of their museum visiting. Opposite the other wall end, as an extension of the Wall, comes another huge object—the 340x240cm quilt made of more than 100 blocks of black and yellow textiles. It is named 'Our city is black and yellow', and as said in the museum text, is the 'Liebeserklärung an die Stadt Dortmund und den BVB—100 Jahre echte Liebe' (declaration of love to the City of Dortmund and the BVB—100 years true love).

The Yellow Wall in the museum setting offers a tremendous visual impact as well as a huge memorable exhibit, at the same time; it conveys detailed sketches of personal objects, stories and experience from the fans, for the fans, and therefore, maintains authenticity. BVB fans said: 'glad we have two great Yellow Walls in the best stadium of the world'—one at the South Stand, the other in the Borusseum.

## 2. The power of emptiness

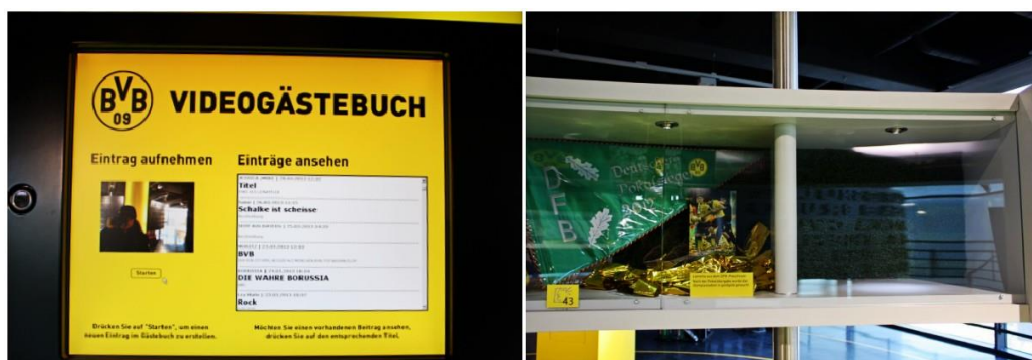


Figure 5.22 Left: Video Geustbook. Right: The empty case.

The second feature of the Borusseum is the empty cases dotted throughout. The most noticeable one is the empty case at the very end of the 'Westfalenstadion' section (right, Figure 5.22); to put it in words, it is in

between the past and the present. As I discussed before, the Schalke Museum keeps pace with the 'contemporary' by changing and updating museum exhibits. Here, in the Borusseum, they have pushed one step further—the empty case is where the past meets the present and the future. Earlier, the BVB ritual room (top right, Figure 5.21) also houses several empty cases looking forward to new objects and memories. In addition, in the multi-media the 'Borussen-Wiki', guest books, story books are all in digital versions. In a few minutes, even seconds, one museum visitor could easily make an entry through the touch screen (left, Figure 5.22). This kind of open-ended, or say, never-ending data collector is the advanced version of the empty case. The data collectors not only provide interactive museum activities, more importantly, they are made into museum objects, as advanced version of the empty cases: open-ended, never-ending. The power of emptiness, the openness, helps the museum to connect with its fans and situates itself in the present day and age.

### 3. The temporary exhibition area.

A temporary exhibition area is not common for a football museum on the club level. The short-term changing exhibitions in a football museum may bring new sights and thrills to the permanent ones, and may open up new opportunities for communications beyond a certain museum. It also overlaps with the power of emptiness, as an empty space to be set up. The Borusseum does have a temporary room, and has hosted several exhibits since I started my research there in spring 2013, which will be reported in the following section.

## **5.3.3 Museum Experience**

As with many football museums, the Borusseum is family friendly and provides an opportunity to take a close look at trophies. During my stay, the real DFB Cup and the real Bundesliga Meisterschale won by BVB in the past season were on display. Yet, the museum has a greater amount to offer, including



temporary exhibitions, events on special occasions, and also the 'museum' beyond the walls.

### 1. Temporary exhibitions

The temporary exhibition called FanFoto—von Fans für Fans (Fan photos—from fans for fans) was closed a month before my first visit to the Borusseum. The museum staff who helped me with my research handed me the museum catalogue (Figure 5.23) as a gift, from which I got an overview of it. It was an exhibition of photographs through the lens of six amateur photographers who are all BVB supporters. One of my interviewees, who was showing the Borusseum to his friends from the Netherlands, provided me with some information when seeing the catalogue in my hands:

'I was here just for a special photo show last winter. That was awesome... and simple. Just photos arranged on the walls and two models of the stadiums in the middle of the room. Like, you stand in the middle, surrounded by these black and yellow photo walls, and you can hear the fans roaring in the stadium. And look closer, you see the faces, happy faces and sometimes sad ones, cheering the team; the players applaud for us after the match. Beautiful... I bought the book (catalogue) too, for my son at Christmas.'

He said he appreciated special exhibitions organised by the museum and would come visit again for a new temporary exhibition in the near future.



Figure 5.23 The catalogue of the temporary exhibition 'FanFoto—von Fans für Fans'.

Unsure whether this BVB fan made his revisit or not, I did witness a temporary exhibition here, a quite noteworthy one, with a starting point on 9<sup>th</sup> of April, 2013. On that day, I was couch surfing at a BVB fan's house, with a single mother and her kids from Dortmund, not very far from the 'Signal Iduna Park'. After patting her kids to sleep, she sat down with me in the living room to watch the decisive second leg of BVB's Champions League quarterfinal game versus the Spanish side Malaga. She was wearing her No.5 BVB shirt and tied a yellow team scarf on her wrist. 'That was a thriller', in the lady's words. Let me skip to injury time<sup>42</sup> when BVB needed to score two goals to stay in the competition, and the team made it in 69 seconds, and Felipe Santana who scored the winning goal became the hero. My host burst into tears and hugged me<sup>43</sup>, saying 'that's a miracle'. So how quickly can a football museum reflect a great football moment? The Borusseum offered an answer. In just a month's time, decisions were made, the exhibition was designed, the museum's call for submissions was sent online, objects were accumulated and the temporary exhibition '69 Sekunden für die Ewigkeit' (69 seconds for eternity) was made available to the public. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of May, at the invitation-only preview, Felipe Santana, the hero of the miracle, opened the exhibition by signing his shirt and handwriting the name of the exhibition at the entrance. The special exhibition reproduced the historic night, with a mini version of the choreographed spectacular of the yellow wall for that match, picturing a man holding binoculars, looking for the 'Cup'; a yellow sonic chair reliving the sounds of the thrilling injury time; photos, audio and video records from the stadium stands and from pubs, fans' houses, from different parts of Dortmund and from other cities of Germany; plenty of hanging yellow cards of fan accounts, describing their feelings during that 69 seconds; and a wall of yellow stickers for museum visitors to share their memories and comments. As we could see from the

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<sup>42</sup> The first leg of the quarterfinal was goalless, and Malaga was leading 2-1 after 90 minutes in the second leg. In the 4-minute added time, Reus scored the equaliser and Felipe Santana scored a dramatic winner in only 69 seconds.

<sup>43</sup> She did not know I am a Schalke fan (I pretended to be a fan of German football in general), and ironically, she would not expect that her hero Felipe Santana would join Schalke later in 2013.



above, in addition to the museum team's quick reaction time and hard work, there were many BVB fans who made their input into it. Fans also showed their support by paying a visit to the museum. At the time when this temporary exhibition opened its doors to museum visitors, the BVB team had just triumphed over Real Madrid and reached the Champions League final. This exhibition room became a temple to remember yesterday and to dream an even bigger dream.

'That final moment of the game is unbelievable and unforgettable. Seeing all of this brings me back to that night, that overwhelming night. It's not only Marco (Reus) or Felipe (Santana) out there winning this, it's the whole team and all of us. I am proud of my team and hopefully, we can do this all over again at Wembley<sup>44</sup>. '

The moment in time soon fades, and a museum is here to crystallise it—69 seconds for eternity.

Since leaving Germany in summer 2013, as far as I know, the Borusseum has held two more temporary exhibitions. The first one, in spring 2014, was the '*TRIKOT 09*' (Shirt 09) Exhibition, a collaboration between the museum and the Department of Cultural Anthropology of Textiles, Technical University of Dortmund (TU Dortmund). Initiated by a seminar series on football shirts and cultural identity led by Dr. Viola Hofmann<sup>45</sup>, the exhibition is the outcome of students' explorations, about the change and development of the BVB shirt, and the stories about fans and their shirts (TU Dortmund 2014). The second one, in summer 2014, still open at the time I am updating my script, is a Brazil World Cup related one, called 'Brazil meets Borussia Dortmund 2014', providing information on the Brazilian players of BVB within the context of the Brazilian people living in Germany, along with an introduction of the World Cup host country. On the premiere evening of this exhibition, the infamous and beloved former BVB player Dede attended, and delivered a talk on his home country Brazil and his BVB career. On July 14, the day after the World Cup

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<sup>44</sup> On May 25th, The 2012/2013 Champion League final was held at the Wembley Stadium in London, where Dortmund lost 1-2 to Bayern Munich.

<sup>45</sup> For more information on these seminars, please see <http://www.fb16.tu-dortmund.de/textil/>.

final, the Borusseum offered free admission (including the temporary exhibition) to visitors, as a celebration of the German team's achievement—and of four BVB players in the German squad in particular.

The four temporary exhibitions mentioned above epitomise how the museum has incorporated itself into the fabric of the city, and the living history of the team and the fans.

## 2. Special occasions

Besides the changing exhibitions, the museum offers diverse events for special occasions as well. On the one hand, it has planned a rich body of activities to commemorate the anniversaries of the club and the stadium. In addition, from 2009, Traditionsabend (Evening of traditions) has been held once a year to introduce new members into the Wall of Fame. Similar to the Schalke Museum, the Borusseum keeps an intimate relationship with former players and club legends, who frequently participated in museum events to share their memories of the past and their stories with the museum objects. On the other hand, in close coordination with the art and museum circle, the Borusseum has planned festive episodes and/or special night openings in order to celebrate Museum Night and to embrace the achievements by local artists. For example, Dortmund based artist Uli Haller was invited to the Museum Night in 2013 to present his artwork of lights, and he embellished the museum with black and yellow light rays.

Among all the annual occasions and events, the museum staff as well as many museum visitors spoke about the 'Tag gegen das Vergessen' (Day against Forgetting) and regarded it as the most distinguished one. This yearly memorial day coincides with the International Holocaust Remembrance Day on the 27th of January. On that day, the museum holds a 'forum', or in some visitors' words a 'very important get-together'. The reason it has become a significant day on the calendar of this club dates back to the year of 1945. The stories were told by museum visitors at the 'Rote Erde' museum island:

‘In 1945, the goalkeeper of Borussia Dortmund, Heinrich Czerkus, was caught and murdered among about 300 victims, buried at Bittermark. That was from March to April, the Good Friday Murder. He’s a communist, the club tried to protect him but failed.’

‘BVB Fans do the Heinrich Czerkus Run every year on Good Friday, from here to the Bittermark Memorial in the south, this year (2013) is the...9th time, I think. And we have the Against Forgetting Day here at the museum every year. That’s very important, especially for the youth.’

‘We now have the neo-Nazi problems in Dortmund, and some banners in Westfalen (the stadium), you know. So we need the Day Against Forgetting, you know, officially, at this historical place, and the anti-discrimination declarations from the club.’



Figure 5.24 Left: Flyer of the 9<sup>th</sup> Heinrich Czerkus Run.

Right: Flyer of the Day against Forgetting. Courtesy of the Borusseum.

The Borusseum closes on Good Friday to show respect for the victims. In past Day against Forgetting Forums, speakers from various backgrounds touched upon the life and career of the BVB players who joined the resistance to the Nazis, also upon the project between the museum and local schools to help school groups have a better understanding of the club’s and the city’s histories in the dark years, and the integrating power of football. In a word, against forgetting and against racism: from this perspective, the museum serves as a stage to convey the values of the club and also the community, the community that has been connected, and to a certain extent, united by the club, by football.

### 3. The museum beyond the walls

The Borusseum, as a football museum on the club level, also has an outreach service beyond the museum walls. According to my knowledge, and among all the football museums I visited, it is the only one that produces podcasts. Started in September 2012, the Borusseum Podcast comes out on a monthly basis, ranging from a descriptive account of the club history, the changing faces of the Ruhr Derby, to fan stories on following the team to away games and opera plots of the 'Leuchte auf mein Stern Borussia' (Light on my star Borussia).

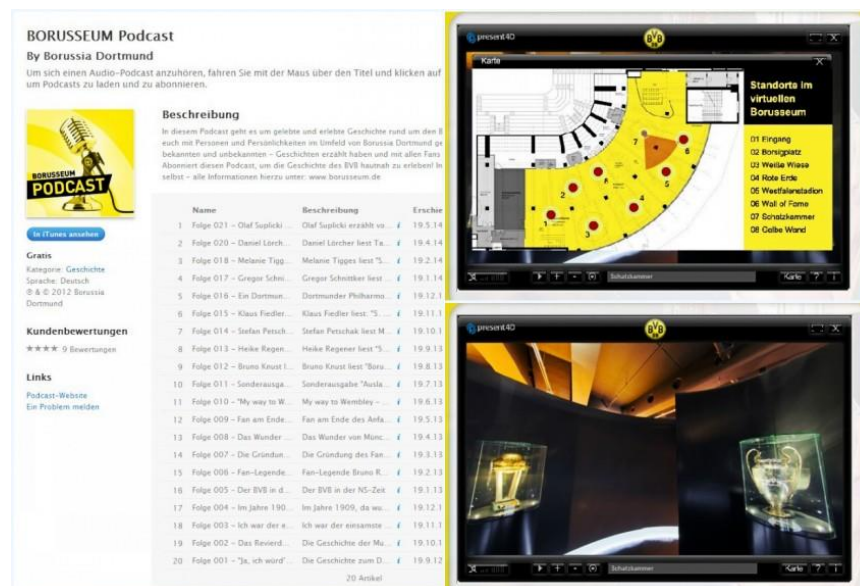


Figure 5.25 Left: Borusseum Podcast on iTunes. Right: Borusseum Virtual Tour.

In addition to the free audio collection which one can enjoy on the move, the official website of the Borusseum also creates a virtual tour, with an interactive museum plan and 360-degree multi-media view of the main exhibiting islands. I learnt of the existence of the online tour from a teenager who really enjoyed the online museum tour before making his first 'real' visit.

This is almost the end of my account of the Borusseum. I have to admit that it is far beyond my imagination, from the six islands exhibiting plan, the idea of the empty case, the huge Yellow Wall, to the high quality temporary exhibitions (especially the '69 seconds or eternity', one planned and carried out in one

month), the Day against Forgetting Programme, and its digitalised, portable features. I saw the museum team's efforts in making the museum a most dramatic and accessible one, and also the fans', as active participants in museum activities and as visitors soaking themselves in the club's history, visiting once and again. Different from the Schalke Museum in Gelsenkirchen, the Borusseum in Dortmund—a large city that attracts many more visitors from all over the world—has visitors from diverse backgrounds, fans and non-fans, BVB supporters and supporters of other teams. It was typical to hear a local BVB fan talking to his/her non-native friend(s), or even to strangers, about the 'best team', 'best stadium', 'best museum' and 'best atmosphere' in the world. Many local fans also willingly shared their knowledge, stories and insights with me. Sometimes, I felt those fans—old and young, male and female, different skin colours and backgrounds who wandered around the museum, wearing shirts, scarves, cups in the same colours, pulling those wide smiles and their confident tones when talking about their team's history and glory—became the most precious exhibit of the Borusseum.

#### **5.3.4 Exit from the Ruhr: collecting football in the city and the foundation stone of the future German Football Museum**

Dortmund Hbf (Central Station) was the spot where I left my field sites in the Ruhr at the end of May 2013. On the train from the Signal Iduna Park to the Dortmund Hbf, I saw several passengers wearing the BVB shirts getting on and off. At that time, the city was experiencing the ups and downs of football as BVB reached and then lost the Champions League Final. Fostering the special exhibition on the quarterfinal miracle and the expectation of the arrival of a new trophy, the Borusseum became the time's witness, with a higher number of visitors than usual.

The presentations of the BVB passion include, but are not limited to the Borusseum. Before leaving the city, I went to Dortmund's central library

opposite the train station and glanced through a whole shelf of books dedicated to the history and culture of the club. What interested me most regarding the library was not the book collection, but an external steel column of the building with thirteen stickers on, and as far as I could identify, six of them were football related<sup>46</sup>.



Figure 5.26 Stickers on the external column of the Central Library, Dortmund.

Beside the library, I found the Dortmund Tourist Information Centre and made my final purchase in the city—a postcard featuring landmarks and symbols of the city, including the Dortmund U Tower, the Dortmund Zoo, the Westfalenhallen, the Dortmund Opera House, the Zollern Colliery and the floodlights of BVB's Red Earth Stadium, the heraldic animal. All of the elements are connected by football players in black and yellow kicking with yellow balls. Football is transmogrified into the sun shining down.

<sup>46</sup> Specific information on the stickers:

—Two featuring the Ultra group called 'Desperados Dortmund', with the 'man in hat and balaclava' black logo (one of them is stamped on a yellow DHL sticker advertisement).

—Two slogan stickers, saying 'Ultras- Freiheit, Freundschaft, Kampf, Leidenschaft, Leben, Rebellion, Liebe' (Ultra-freedom, friendship, fight, passion, life, rebellion, love) and 'Fuer immer Westfalen Stadium' (Westfalen Stadium forever)

—One with English words 'Love Borussia hate fascism'.

All of the above are yellow-black coloured, and there is another sticker against the DFB (German Football Association) with insulting words (F\*\*\* you DFB) .





Borussia Dortmund and Schalke 04 as 'siblings'. Although many local fans winced and said they 'won't bother to visit' the museum of their opponent, the existence and excellence (I dare say) of the Schalke Museum and Borusseum provide, not only official voices to the history and traditions of the football culture in the Ruhr, but also ever changing self-representations of two great football fandoms. In a broad sense, both Gelsenkirchen and Dortmund, being the homes of football teams, display and perform the colours of the teams in tangible and intangible ways. Each of them, like an enlarged museum, bears the values, characteristics and pride of the football team and the city. Also, through the sport of football, the two neighbours, separately and together, become a major power in defining, expressing and renovating a Ruhr identity—hard-working, participatory, passionate and dynamic, the industrial heartland to the football heaven.

Indeed, Dortmund and the Ruhr will play an even more influential role in German football, as Germany's national football museum will open its doors in central Dortmund, directly facing the central train station. Not surprisingly, in April 2010, the final battle of the bid to host the museum was between Gelsenkirchen and Dortmund. Unfortunately, surrounded by a fence bearing the museum motto 'Wir sind Fussball' (We are football), the museum was only a construction site when I was conducting fieldwork in Germany.



Figure 5.28 The museum site in April 2013.



In April 2013, the foundation stone of the museum was laid by representatives of the German Football Association, the German League and authorities of the city and the region. At the same time, the name of the museum changed from the 'DFB-Fußballmuseum' (the DFB Football Museum) to 'Deutsches Fußballmuseum' (the German Football Museum). The museum also unveiled the logo of a honeycomb football in black, red and gold, the national colours of Germany. After a year, in April 2014, the museum had the topping-out ceremony of the building<sup>47</sup> and announced the opening delay from 2014 to 2015, due to financial and constructional problems. Several visitors of the Borusseeum actually expressed their concerns about the postponement early in 2013, and told me they 'look forward to having national-level football collections in the city', and 'believe the German Football Museum will become a crucial component of the Dortmund Kulturmeile (Dortmund Culture Mile)'. Hopefully, the 2014 World Cup crown for Germany will provoke a positive response towards fastening the completion of the museum project.

## **5.4 A sneak peek of the future German Football Museum**

My final stop in Germany was the design agency of the German Football Museum, Triad Berlin. Again, thanks to the fieldwork at the National Football Museum in Manchester, I established some contact with the managing partner ahead of my visit the agency.

Triad Berlin is 'the brain' of the German Football Museum in Dortmund, in charge of the museum design and graphic work. Following the time flow of a football game, the original exhibiting plan consists of five main parts entitled 'Vor dem Spiel' (Before the Game), '1. Halbzeit' (1st Half), 'Halbzeitpause' (Half-time Break), '2. Halbzeit' (2nd Half), and 'Nach dem Spiel' (After the Game), along with the German Football Hall of Fame (Triad Berlin 2014). It is

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<sup>47</sup> Livecam of the museum site available at: <http://www.dfb-fussballmuseum.de/aktuell/livecam>.

promised to provide multi-sensory experiences by innovative technologies. Besides the visualization concept trailer, I also had a chance to enter the offices of the 'German Football Museum' project.



Figure 5.29 Visualization of the German Football Museum. Credit: Triad Berlin.



Figure 5.30 Offices of the 'German Football Museum' project team at Triad Berlin.

Certainly, big names of the 54' 74' 90' World Cups will be in the grand narrative of German football in the future German Football Museum. Yet, to my surprise, the shirt and pictures most frequently seen were Mesut Özil's. He is a player currently playing for the German national team, with a club career representing both German and other European clubs at a young age, and he is a Turkish-German. Despite the fact that it was only a very limited sneak peek of the future museum, the appearance of this 'new' face reflects both the changing face of German football and the team's effort in bringing the latest museum content. In addition to this German Football Museum project, I was informed that Triad Berlin had just won the bid to design the 'FIFA World Football Museum' in Zurich. Great news to end my research journey in Germany.

## **5.5 Summary: the museum, the fans, the city**

All the stories above indicate the growing awareness of framing and performing football in the museum context, on local, regional, national and international levels. I believe the opening of the future German Football Museum and the FIFA World Football Museum (by the same Berlin-based design agency and in the context of Germany's recent World Cup success) will propose novel scopes for examining the relations between the local, the national and the international.

We have seen the ways in which the Schalke Museum and the Borussia Dortmund Museum stage the past and the present and the ways in which the football museums are experienced by the visitors. The fans, local fans in particular, serve as the key component of the audience of the club museums. Revisits are very typical among local supporters, and the special exhibits, exhibitions and events increase the frequency of their revisits. Through providing personal objects and stories as well as participating in museum activities, they further engage

(besides the matches) themselves with the fan community and share the authorship of remembering the past and the traditions. For distance supporters without the locality bond, experiencing the 'historical', the 'authentic', the 'official' is crucial. The museum experience, usually followed by the stadium tour and shopping at the fan shop, provides a 'rite of passage' for foreign fans to obtain a sense of belonging.

The history and ethos of a football team like these is rooted in and reflects the spirits of the city. In a wider sense, the city being home to one dominant team, such as Dortmund and Gelsenkirchen, has become the enlarged museum of the club. Their fandom, including love, passion, devotion, pride and self-representations, situates the fans in the enlarged club museum, their city. The competitive nature of football, the rivalry, manifests the process of defining and understanding the Self. The communications among the club museum, the fans and the city greatly construct the sense of being local.

# Chapter 6 Going Back to the Cradle of Football: cuju, the Linzi football Museum and nostalgia

## 6.0 Fieldnotes

2 July 2013, Xi'an, China

A friend of mine who is a huge fan of Kaká<sup>48</sup> sent me a text message this afternoon from Beijing: 'Did you see those pictures of Kaká playing cuju? He looks funny in Hanfu (汉服, traditional Han Chinese costume).' I then looked it up online and saw photos of Kaka kicking a cuju ball besides a traditional goal of cuju in front of Beijing National Stadium, surrounded by fans and flashlights.

The Brazilian football star is making a tour in China<sup>49</sup> promoting the China-Brazil friendly and the 2014 Brazil World Cup as well. As my friend mentioned, Kaká's outfit is the traditional Han Chinese garment with a number eight written in traditional Chinese.

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I did some internet research and found Messi<sup>50</sup> did the similar Hanfu-cuju show early in 2007 in Jinan (capital city of Shandong Province, not far away from Linzi) and he wore 'Qiutou' in traditional Chinese (球頭, meaning 'captain, key player' in cuju terminology) instead of a number.

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I talked to Mr. Ding (my local informant in Linzi) online, and he appreciated the appearance of cuju with an international appeal.

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<sup>48</sup> Known as Kaká Ricardo Izecson dos Santos Leite is a player of the Brazilian national team and a part of the AC Milan squad.

<sup>49</sup> The word 'China' is referred to mainland China unless otherwise stated.

<sup>50</sup> Lionel Andrés Messi is a forward playing for FC Barcelona and representing Argentina as a national team player.

## 6.1 Linzi Football Museum

### 6.1.1 Approach the museum: the location and the story of the Cuju Boy

I initially came across the Linzi Football Museum online in December 2009 when working on my research proposal and finally made my first visit at the beginning of 2011. A friend of my acquaintance living in Zibo welcomed me at the Zibo Train Station and drove me directly to the museum.

On our way leading to the museum he told me the museum would be quite empty as a result of typical cold weather in the northern part of China during the winter. The Linzi Football Museum is located in Linzi District, Zibo City, Shandong Province. Zibo neighbours the Shandong Peninsula in the east, sees the Yellow River meandering through not far away in the west, faces the Bohai Sea in the north and the Tai Mountain in the south, being called ‘a city in-between the sea and the mountain’ (‘临淄亦海岱之间一都会也’) by Sima Qian. With its distinctive geographical location, ancient Linzi served as the capital of the State of Qi<sup>51</sup> and enjoyed a resplendent history. Although Zibo is not an extremely popular tourist city nationwide, ‘Linzi is bustling in autumn, especially around the National Day holiday<sup>52</sup> these years, with some festivals celebrating Qi culture. The tourist industry is developing rapidly here. You know for sure, cuju is a big selling point’, the one who accompanied me continued.

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<sup>51</sup> The State of Qi (1046 BC–221 BC), 齐国 in Chinese, existed as an ancient state in Zhou Dynasty. More information on Qi and the culture of Qi will be offered in the following sections.

<sup>52</sup> The National Day falls on the first day of October. Being called ‘the National Day Golden Week’ (国庆黄金周), a seven-day public holiday has been implemented for celebration since 2000. Tourism destinations in China always experience one of their tourist peaks and face several issues in transportation, management, service, etc., which has grown into a socio-cultural phenomenon in mainland China.



Figure 6.1 Location of Linzi District.

After spending around half an hour on the road, the name of the museum in both Chinese and English versions came into my sight. At a second glance, two statues called Cuju Boy (蹴鞠娃) in front of the building attracted my attention. These two six-metre tall statues have been placed here since September 2010, on the occasion of celebrating Zibo as the host city of the 2010 Asian Football Confederation U-19 Championship Finals.



Figure 6.2 One of the Cuju Boy statue and the entrance of the Linzi Football Museum.

The statues depict two plump baby boys playing Cuju, one kicking the ball (see Figure 6.2) and the other balancing a ball on his head. Wearing red ribbons and Chinese belly bands with the character 'blessings' (福), the boys look very jovial as they smile with their mouths wide open. The sculptor of the Cuju Boys is a Linzi local named Wang Dexing, who has been working closely with the museum. Inspired by his museum visits and observations on cuju movements pictured in the museum, he later created a group of twelve cuju boys, each

demonstrating a move with the ball in the game of cuju. Mr. Wang said:

‘The Cuju Boy is not only a model standing still, but also an image that conveys a lot more meanings. Somebody once told me the ball with my Cuju Boy seemed different than **football**. I replied that what I presented is **cuju**, and I explained the origin of cuju; in this way the history and stories of cuju are being recited. Living in the birthplace of cuju, I believe it could be a strong motif in promoting our city if the image of the Cuju Boy can go aboard.’

His hard work has paid off as the image of Cuju Boy has served as a representative figure of Zibo and has been widely loved in his city and beyond. Besides, from one episode of the local TV programme named Our City (The Cuju Boy is coming 2012) I know Mr. Wang opened a souvenir shop in Zibo one year after my visit, and has brought the Cuju Boy into the market.

I personally very much liked the Cuju Boy Image at first sight and heard compliments on the cuteness of it. As taking photos was not allowed within the museum during my visits in 2011, I saw some visitors had their pictures taken with the Cuju Boy statues. One of them from a neighbour city mentioned to me the cuju boys obviously looked like ‘Shandong boys, Chinese boys’. One of my key informants in Linzi and I also noticed the connections between the Cuju Boy Image and the traditional Chinese New Year’s painting and between the Cuju Boy statues and the Chinese Door-gods (门神, decorations put on both sides of an entrance in order to keep evil things away). The only foreign visitor I talked to, a Briton, saw the Cuju Boy statues as indicating goalkeepers from both sides guarding their goals.

I also take the Cuju Boy statues as the first item of the museum exhibition. The story of the creator and visitors’ readings of it all reflect their cultural backgrounds, which could be seen as epitomising the issue between football museum and identities.

### **6.1.2 The ‘museumisation’ of cuju**

After seeing the joyful Cuju Boy statues for the first time I entered the building and met one of the staff members as my tour guide. The person who drove me



to the museum was absolutely right about the quietness within the museum. Moreover, the enclosed building minimised natural light and sunshine, which made me feel a noticeable chill. I remember my guide rubbed her hands together to stay warm while I started my first visit. In the following paragraphs I endeavour to recap briefly and reflect on what I saw, recorded and heard during my museum visits.

The first floor of the museum chiefly provides the backgrounds of the birth and development of cuju in ancient China and is believed to be the main body and the most valuable section of the museum. The exhibition begins with '**the origin of cuju**', drawing evidences upon two masterpieces *Zhanguoce* (战国策, *Strategies of the Warring States*) and *Shiji* (史记, *Historical Record*). A big panel shows a page of *Zhanguoce*, written in traditional Chinese and a vertical setting of types, with some highlighted lines stating:

(More than 2300 years ago, the State of Qi was very rich and busy.) The capital Linzi was fertile and wealthy, with a relatively large population (70 thousand households). Activities including playing yu(a traditional wind musical instrument in China), se, qin and zhu (ancient string musical instruments in China), cockfighting, walking dogs, playing board games/chess game and **kicking balls** were all very popular among local people.<sup>53</sup>

Following the earliest written records of the formation of cuju game are stone rubbings of jousting and horse racing scenes. People in the territory of Qi were brave, courageous and martial, which is 'a corroboration of the birth of the competitive cuju game', as my guide stated. What comes next is a group of sculptures said to be a miniaturised restoration of Qi according to the historical material. She followed with, 'as the strongest force among the Five Hegemons during the Spring and Autumn Period (ca. 770 BC-476 BC), and one of the Seven Powerful States in the Warring States Period (ca. 475 BC-221 BC), the State of Qi was a real metropolis situated in the east'. Plenty of manual workshops can be seen in the reconstructed 'mini city' which reflect the

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<sup>53</sup> Translated from *Zhanguoce*, '临淄之中七万户……临淄甚富而实，其民无不吹竽、鼓瑟、弹琴、击筑、斗鸡、走犬、六博、蹋鞠者'. *Shiji* records the same scenery (Wang 2006).

advanced skills of the manufacturer and the development of the handicraft industry at that time in Linzi. This path leads to a larger scale sculpture featuring craftsmen making ball-shaped stuff in a leather processing workshop. This part ends with a stele (as a monument) of the 'Jixiaxuegong' (稷下学宫) site, like a university, described as the 'Silicon Valley' in ancient times.

Then we moved to the section concerned with '**the development and prosperity of cuju**' spanning over 1000 years of history from Han dynasty (202 BC-220 AD) to Song (960 AD-1279 AD). In the Han dynasty, a man named Li You wrote a short passage entitled 'Juchengming' (鞠城铭, Inscription on the ball field), which is regarded as the earliest description of the rules of the game<sup>54</sup>. I try to translate the first line (8 Chinese characters) in order to provide a taster of its broad implications:

The ball is round, and the field is rectangular (relating to the Chinese conceptual thinking of space),

Resembling the (system) of yin and yang (according to a Chinese cosmological perspective).

It not only contains complicated cultural connotations, but is also literally hard to comprehend due to the classic style of written Chinese. Such literature is so important that FIFA provides an English version on its website. However, in my opinion, even the translation of the title is not right<sup>55</sup>. The museum, instead, brings out another restoration, the mini ball field in Han dynasty. Nonetheless, not all textual material can be converted into visual forms. The museum texts, ranging from football-themed poetic masterpieces from two peaks (Tangshi and Songci) of ancient Chinese literature to jargons and slangs prevalent inside the field of cuju. Sadly, for some visitors, especially foreigners, it seems too complicated to read and understand these lines of Chinese.

As covering such a long period, two uniting threads run throughout this 'development and prosperity' part of the exhibition. The first one is the

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<sup>54</sup> 圆鞠方墙，仿象阴阳。法月衡对，二六相当。建长立平，其例有常。不以亲疏，不有阿私。端心平意，莫怨其非。鞠政犹然，况乎执机。(Li, cited in You 2000:79.)

<sup>55</sup> It is translated by Helmut Brinker into English on the FIFA, available online at <http://www.fifa.com/newscentre/news/newsid=94490/>.

popularity of the game. On the one hand, cuju, there developed a game played in the imperial court and among the upper class. Paintings hanging in the museum show emperors and court ladies playing cuju in Tang and Song dynasties. At the same time, as the emperor became fascinated by the game, skilful cuju stars could obtain social status and/or even positions as officials in the bureaucratic system. Among the same-sized portraits of cuju stars in the Song dynasty, nearly every visitor I talked to or observed recognized one character. The protagonist is Gao Qiu (高俅), who climbed to very high rank as a Grand Marshal under Emperor Huizong (1100 AD-1126 AD), and more commonly known as a villain in one of the Chinese Literature canons *Shuihu* (水浒, *The Tale of the Marshes*). In both historical and literary works, the emperor appreciated his football talent and then promoted him. He is so widely known in China and almost everybody stopped in front of his portrait. I saw some smile slightly; some pointed out the picture to his/her companions, some read his name, some shouted 'Look at this! It's Gao Qiu!', some talked about seeing the cuju scene in the adapted drama of *Shuihu*, and two young mothers told the story of Gao Qiu to their children. The story of Gao Qiu and the name of the book *Shuihu* were also mentioned in every museum tour I witnessed. As one of my informants said to me 'Gao Qiu was a cuju star, and is a museum star now.'

On the other hand, the popularity of cuju was corroborated by its enduring appeal among ordinary people. Playing cuju gradually grew into the one of the folk tradition in the land of China, evidenced by paintings, as well as images on ivory pen holders, ceramic pillows and copper mirrors, picturing individuals or groups of different age playing cuju. Lines of verse also depicted cuju as a form of conviviality around the Qingming festival<sup>56</sup> in spring. The game was less competitive when spreading and growing as a kind of folk culture in ancient China.

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<sup>56</sup> Qingming festival is a traditional Chinese festival in early April, sometimes known as Tomb Sweeping Day. It also is a good occasion for family reunion and spring trips.

Other than the popularity of cuju, the second thread running through this part is the development of three main forms in this game in ancient China, namely 'confrontation of two sides' (Fendui, 分队), 'single-goalmouth indirect confrontation' (Jianjie, 间接) and 'skill show-off' (Baida, 白打). In order to describe the second format, here comes the goal itself. It is a replica being scaled down to half size, but still a giant among other exhibited items. The goal is mainly in red, inlaid with gold lines and decorated with Chinese knots; and most importantly, there is a cavity near the top, which is the real target for scoring a goal. Under the goal showcases four replicas of leather balls indicate how the manufacturing skills improved through history, from four-panel-stitching to twelve-panel-stitching, from being filled with human/animal hair to an animal's bladder), 'getting increasingly closer to modern football'. I noticed the area around this goal is an unofficial gathering point for group visits and the noisiest place within the whole exhibition. During museum events and special museum tours, some well-trained cuju players wearing traditional cuju costumes performed live cuju here. Also, as mentioned by several visitors, this huge museum object reminded them of the TV drama *Kick To Decide Their Fate*<sup>57</sup>. One of them told me:

'I have seen similar goals in *Kick To Decide Their Fate*, about... ten years ago. Have you watched that before? (I answered yes.) Starring Ren Quan and Li Bingbing (names of the leading actor and actress), quite interesting drama. That was the first time I saw cuju in action, so cool! The leading man seemed like a Kong Fu star, moving fast and having the skill to make the ball through [the goal], in the air. (She pointed to the hole on the top part of the goal, and we both laughed.) I remember he made it to the national team and became a better player with the help of his teammates, right? We played so well in the past, and are so terrible now. China will win if the competition is called Kong Fu Football.'

Interestingly, an English visitor, the only foreigner I met in this museum, mentioned J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*, saying the goal of cuju, to some extent, looks similar to the one in the Quidditch game in Harry Potter books and

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<sup>57</sup> *Kick To Decide Their Fate* (2001) is a 30-episode Chinese TV drama about the plays, lives and loves of a group of cuju players during the Song dynasty.

movies'. Including this English visitor, this cuju goal had been chosen as the most impressive object by 19 out of 25 visitors I chatted to. From a symbol the game of cuju which has been featured in the TV drama and news (the 'Kaka and cuju' news at the very beginning of this chapter as an example), the cuju goal has also become a symbol of the Linzi Football Museum. It is not only a must-see item, but also acts as a montage spot within the museum, to watch cuju in action and to imagine the old game.

The final section in 'the development and prosperity of cuju' is the rebuilding of Qiyun She. Established in the Song dynasty, Qiyun She (齐云社) was the first cuju organisation, like a guild in the past and the football association in this day and age. The game Qiyun She literally carries auspicious meanings, as shang-yu-yun-qi (上与云齐, aligned with the clouds) implied that the cuju player could be promoted to higher positions and achieve great successes. Cuju insiders called this organisation Yuan She (圆<sup>58</sup>社), and players involved in the cuju circle were believed to be respectful and admirable (Xie 2006). The reconstructed Qiyun She hangs alongside a plaque with its name and a silk banner written Shanyue Zhengsai (山岳正赛)—the name of the domestic championship at that time. In the middle of the museumised Qiyun She stands the statue of Qing-yuan-miao-dao-zhen-jun (清源妙道真君), a young and valiant Taoist figure, regarded as the venerable master of cuju. For every member of Qiyun She back in the Song dynasty, to worship the venerable master was actually a ritual (Xie 2006). Joss sticks and a pair of candles as well as fruit tributes displayed in front create a religious atmosphere, which made the museum version of Qiyun She 'look like a temple', in a visitor's words. By enshrining the cuju master inside, the museum furnishes a holy hall for the old game.

Exhibits that demonstrate cuju's peak time are followed by '**the quiescence of cuju**' theme. Surprisingly, my museum guide summarized the decay of cuju in

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<sup>58</sup> The character 'yuan' (圆) in Chinese means round, circle, etc. More information about yuan and cuju will be provided later in 6.1.3.

Yuan (1260 AD-1368 AD), Ming (1368 AD-1644 AD) and Qing (1636 AD-1912 AD) dynasties in one line: ‘because of the invasions of ethnic minorities<sup>59</sup> and the boundaries set by feudal ethics’. She was right about both influences. On the one hand, Mongolian people and Man people, both greatly depending on horse-riding and shooting, partly banned and remoulded cuju during the Yuan and Qing dynasties, especially among the upper class; on the other, the concepts of altruism contained in Confucianism as well as a set of codes of etiquette and good manner largely weakened and impeded the competitiveness of the game. Both reasons led to the decline of cuju. However, the words she used and the similar tone presented in the museum texts seemed highly problematic to me. Firstly, the museum narration reflects a **Han Chinese-centred** reading of history, seeing Han Chinese as being equivalent to ‘Chinese people’. The difficulty of specifying the Han Chinese and Chinese within the flows of history makes the statement of ‘invasions of ethnic minorities’ an inapt one. Also, the Han Chinese-centred perspective is also not friendly to the ethnic minorities in China in this day and age, and may undermine the inclusiveness of the museum. Secondly, the museum’s negative attitude towards various aspects of the long-term feudal society in Chinese history is rooted in the political ideology in contemporary socialist China. However, while the **feudal ethics** and **traditional codes of ethics and morality in China** do have overlaps thus should not be confused. Actually, artefacts depicting cuju activities from Yuan to Qing dynasty showcased in this area are outstanding in aspects of aesthetic and archaeological values among all the museum’s pieces, including a national first-class cultural relic—an ivory carving of the cuju game. However, it is obvious that, this ‘downtime’ in the

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<sup>59</sup> The Mongolian Kublai Khan established the Yuan dynasty and the Qing dynasty was founded by Manzu people. Nowadays, Mongolian people and Manzu people are two large compositions of ethnic minorities (Shaoshu Minzu) in China. Fifty-six Minzu, or say ethnic groups, are living in China. The Han Chinese constitutes more than 90 percent of China’s population. The other fifty-five are called ethnic minorities (Shaoshu Minzu). The Hans and the minorities live scattered all over China (Fei 1981). The translation of ‘Minzu’ remains unsettled, shifting between ‘a nationality’ and ‘an ethnic group’. This is also a confusing issue for people in China as well. In China, the nationality on the resident ID cards is Han or Manzu, etc.; while the ‘nationality’ on the passports are all shown as ‘Chinese’. As far as I know, ethnic minority is more commonly used in the field of social sciences, and I will use ‘ethnic minority/minorities’ hereinafter.

history of cuju is not a key point in the interpretation plan. In turn, as I observed, it was a less popular section in the exhibition area, and visitors I interviewed never raised any issue regarding the exhibits under this period.

The final section on the first floor is **‘the spread of cuju culture beyond China’**. It mainly harbours pictures and a ‘ball-costume’ set in traditional Japanese cuju, influenced by the ‘skill show-off’ (Baida, 白打) cuju of China. The exhibition on the first floor ends with a map showing the transmission of cuju, from its birthplace in China to Egypt, Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, France and England.

I would argue that the first floor of the Linzi Football Museum demonstrates the museumisation of cuju. The museumisation process includes a) chronicalisation, b) restoration, c) symbolisation and d) text reproduction. Firstly, as we can see from the above, the exhibition follows the route of ‘the origin–the development–the prosperity–the quiescence–the spread’. Like most historical museums, the first floor of the Linzi Football Museum has been organized chronically to trace the 2000-year history of the ancient sport. Within this timeline, the focal point is clearly the development of cuju rather than its decay. Moreover, according to the exhibition’s own narration, it was a prosperous society that flourished and enlarged the sport of cuju, from which derives images of a thriving and powerful Qi State (ancient Linzi) and ancient China. Secondly, one of the traits of this museum is the restoration of large-scale scenarios, such as the miniature of daily life in the ancient Linzi City and the reconstruction of the ‘Cuju Association’ named Qiyu She, representing a flourishing city and the vigorous growth of the sport. This kind of restoration therefore endowed the imagination with notions of the good old days. Thirdly, I deem the museum has wisely chosen and manifested the ‘goal’ as a key object and as a symbol of cuju. Mr. Pontus Forslund named his football museum blog ‘Balls & Boots’<sup>60</sup>, which summarizes a stereotype of a (modern) football museum. Unlike a museum of modern football, Linzi Football

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<sup>60</sup> Please see <http://footballmuseums.blogspot.co.uk/>.

Museum, to a certain extent, could be represented by this Chinese version of a goal. Although it is a replica, it stands not only for the history and uniqueness of cuju, but also implicates the skill of playing cuju in Chinese style. Last but not the least, the museum embraces a larger Chinese literary heritage and written culture. The Chinese word 蹴鞠 (cuju) literally means kicking a ball; more specifically, the semantic radicals ‘足’and ‘革’stand for ‘foot’ and ‘leather’. The beginning of the exhibition shows pictures of history recorded in the Chinese classics, from which Linzi and China were verified as the birthplace of cuju. Compared to simplified characters in horizontal texts in this day and age, the vertically arranged traditional Chinese characters showed on the museum panel offer a sense of history. Besides the visual objects and symbols, written records and literary masterpieces are crucial for museum visitors to approach and understand the sport of cuju. Sadly, without multi-language audio guides and tour guides the museum’s implied audience has been whittled down. According to my Chinese informants, their knowledge and imaginations of cuju are greatly linked with the history and literary works. With the long historical roots of cuju, and the significance of written elements in Chinese civilization, the museum has not only reproduced a large number of textual materials, but also employed written accounts to rebuild ancient world. In a word, the museumisation of cuju is an interdependent process which reflects several strategies commonly used in the museum world. Objects and texts are relocated with an assigned narrative significance (Marciniak 2011) and are allocated as metonymic indications of the past as well as identifications of local cultures.

### **6.1.3 The museumisation of the Linzi as the birthplace of football**

The gallery on the second floor is named ‘Football in the Modern Age’. Although the items on display are far fewer in number, the exhibition contains a



short history of Chinese football in the People's Republic China, starting with a photo panel of Chinese political leaders watching football games shortly after the birth of the new country in 1949. It also pictures famous players, referees, coaches, fans and achievements in the history of Chinese football. Interestingly, no personal story has been illustrated here, and those active participants in Chinese football are portrayed as several groups: a group of football stars, a group of outstanding coaches, the 'red sea' on the terrace created by hundreds and thousands of Chinese fans. The only individual name mentioned by my museum guide is 'Milu' (nickname of Bora Milutinovic) among the foreign coaches of the Chinese men's national team, who greatly contributed to Team China's first and only (until now) appearance in the World Cup in 2002. Associated with the World Cup as well, the highlight of this floor's exhibition is the Chinese women's team's silver medal won in the 1999 FIFA Women's World Cup. The exhibition also has space for the theme of world football, incorporating a very brief history on the development of modern football's format, rules and equipment, photos depicting football fans around the world cheering on their national teams, an updated list of FIFA World Cup Champions and runners-up and World Cup mascots.

All of the above are what one might expect from a football museum, and here comes Linzi Football Museum's unique point: the exhibition on the second floor kicks off and ends up with the procedure of asserting Linzi as the birthplace of football, which is regarded as the very foundation of the museum itself. Let me explain specifically. Different from the chronically arranged exhibits downstairs, the stories on the second floor begin on the date of 9<sup>th</sup> June 2004. Museum pictures and texts show, on that day, a group of Chinese football experts and scholars together with local authorities gathered in Linzi in the 'Origin of Football Forum', and the consensus achieved to name Linzi as the birthplace of cuju, ancient football. The exhibition continues with the press conference of the 3rd China International Football Exposition on 15th July 2004 in Beijing, where the Cultural and History Commission of National Sports Bureau General

of China, the China Football Association and People's Government of Zibo Municipality jointly claimed that football originated in Linzi, China. The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and FIFA made the same announcement during the exposition. As evidences, the museum showcases certificates and a commemorative trophy received from the AFC and the National Sports Bureau General of China, alongside photos of the celebrations held in Zibo city afterwards. In May 2005, Linzi, as the birthplace of cuju, achieved an historical highlight. A delegation from Linzi attended the closing ceremony of FIFA's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and cuju made its appearance on the international stage of modern football. Also, a certificate was issued by the FIFA President J. S. Blatter in both English and Chinese stating:

‘On the occasion of the FIFA Centennial  
In honour of China  
—the cradle of the earliest forms of football—  
Chinese football, and Linzi, Zibo, China ’

This certification, then obtained a place in the Linzi Football Museum, surrounded by the inscriptions written by several FIFA officials. The FIFA President Blatter wrote:

‘To the people of the city of LINZI  
My high appreciation,  
my gratitude for having been at the origin of football,  
with best wishes.’

Incumbent FIFA General Secretary Linsi's message:

‘To Linzi city  
As my name is Linsi, I am of course more than proud that football has his origin in Linzi city. Thank you China to have offered football to the world.’

From Blazer, incumbent American Soccer Administrator and a member of the FIFA Executive Committee:

‘To Linzi city  
Thank you for your contribution to football. We recognize the origin of our game and your role in our history. ’

The exhibition ends with a ‘cuju and FIFA’ story as well. The main object is a sculpture named ‘Birthplace of Football’ (圣球之源) —a full sized replica of the

bronze sculpture situated at the headquarters of FIFA since May 2007. The original 100-kilogram one was bestowed upon FIFA on its 103<sup>rd</sup> anniversary, unveiled by the FIFA President. It depicts (see Figure 6.3) the ball, traditional outfits, and movements of the cuju game, with four tiny cuju balls and modern balls demonstrating the development of the game.



Figure 6.3 The original 'Birthplace of Football' at FIFA. Credit: <http://www.zbnews.net/>.

Some of my informants also informed me that in September 2007, Linzi welcomed another 'Birthplace of Football' sculpture at the People's Square. A larger one with a 2.004-metre hemisphere sculpture base featuring the map of Linzi, and the total height is 7.15 metres. The numbers together mark the date of July the 15<sup>th</sup>, 2004, when, as mentioned at the very beginning of the exhibition on the second floor, the FIFA confirmed Linzi's role in football. The name of the object plays another trick. The Chinese version of 'Birthplace of Football'—'圣球之源', especially the last Chinese character—unfolds three meanings through three homophonic characters. Firstly, '源' itself means 'the

origin'; secondly, the character '圆', with the meaning of 'circle, round', represents the ball of the game; thirdly and culturally, '缘', 'the happenstance, coincidence', expresses the sense of 'binding together by fate' (Yu 2011).

The sculpture has become another symbolic object other than the cuju goal. On the one hand, the object claims Linzi as the birthplace of football through its physical appearance, name and design; on the other, through the original, the replica, and the bulky version of FIFA's, the Linzi Football Museum and Linzi, the sculpture connects the ancient game of cuju with modern international football, and Linzi with the world as well. For visitors with a certain knowledge of Chinese language and Chinese culture, the '圣球之源' sculpture, apart from its physical nature, may provide extra assurance that football originated in Linzi.

Palpably enough, bearing the birthplace of the world's most popular sport means to unlock a cultural and economic potential. In fact, until recently, scholars argued the link between the game of cuju and modern football was weak, and suspect the motives of FIFA in proving Linzi's claim (Agence France-Presse 2014). As noted before, the words written on the FIFA certificate are 'the cradle of the earliest forms of football', which seems quite ambiguous. While for Linzi, in creating the sculpture, it is clear enough, the 'Birthplace of (World) Football' (see Figure 6.3). Instead of 'the origin of football', what interests me is how Linzi deals with the controversial issue of proclaiming the key title. To a great extent, the answer is—museumisation, the museumisation of Linzi as the birthplace of football.

To locate the game of cuju as well as Linzi itself in the modern age and in a globalized scope is a necessity for the museum. In this 'Football in the Modern Age' exhibition, the strategy is to emphasise Linzi's efforts, and achievements in getting verified and authenticated from academia, the press, political authorities, and most importantly, the governing bodies of modern football, FIFA in particular. Museum staff in their talks with me as well as in the museum tours highlighted 'the significance of the certificate issued by FIFA' which

‘provided the appropriate occasion for building a football museum in Linzi’. Here emerges the most problematic issue—with the aim to receive the ‘birthplace’ title, Linzi staged itself with external authority; and as manifested in the museum context, ‘we have a history of cuju’ is, to a certain degree, authenticated by ‘FIFA power’. Some museum visitors were also fully aware and critical regarding this and told me they felt ‘bizarre to see the FIFA president as a star in the football museum’ and ‘sad the museum laid the foundation on the FIFA certification instead of our own cultural facts and traditions of cuju’. The museumisation of ‘Linzi as the birthplace of football’, from this perspective, seems like the weakest link of this museum.

#### **6.1.4 Twofold museumisation and Chinese-ness**

As described above, the Linzi Football Museum illustrates two kinds of museumisation processes: on the one hand, through the means of chronicalisation, restoration, symbolisation and text reproduction, the history of cuju is placed in the museum; on the other, to rationalise Linzi role in the history of football, the museum records how Linzi was verified as the birthplace of football by FIFA. I consider that the first process of the museumisation is to ‘ancientise cuju’, to project its uniqueness; meanwhile, the second process of museumisation is to ‘modernise cuju’, to connect the game with modern football and to claim itself as the origin.

The museum exhibition has another characteristic which is the engagement with texts and literary devices. The museum narration kicks off with the written records of cuju in Qi State, and reconstructed ancient scenarios are in reference to the historical accounts; the name of the cuju organisation, Qiu Qi-yun She (齐云社) expresses a desire for fame and success, as well as the name of the sculpture, ‘Birthplace of Football’ (圣球之源) conveys Linzi’s bond with cuju and football; cuju game and cuju stars are appearing in famous literary classics which helps in understanding the museum contents. Although

many of the cultural meanings are too restrictive for non-Chinese and illiterate visitors, incorporating those textual devices into the representations of cuju endows the museum with a sentiment of Chinese-ness.

The double museumisation and the 'textual' Chinese-ness arouses nostalgia. The prosperous soil of the ancient State of Qi that cultivated the game of cuju, the high cuju goal and requirement of excellent Kong Fu skills, the pride of being the origin of football, all accommodate a wistful desire for the good old days.

Although having some shortcomings, like the Han-Chinese centred narrative voice and the 'FIFA certificate-dominated' second part of the exhibition, the Linzi Football Museum is a unique football museum in respect of both the museum content and the display methods. Standing in between the ancient and the modern, the museum and cuju culture have also become the attraction points of Linzi and influenced the people there. The following part is about how the museum is seen through the locals' eyes.

## **6.2 'Cuju is a gilded brand for us': the museum and its connections**

### **6.2.1 Meet Uncle Ding and Xiao Ding**

I met Uncle Ding for the first time when I was trying to puzzle out a quicker way to the museum for my second visit in 2011. The reception in the hotel where I stayed was busy in the morning, so I turned to the man who was standing right by the reception desk bearing a staff badge. He promptly told me how to reach the museum by bus and told me he had fun there a few months earlier. 'It will be more interesting if you are a football fan', he said to me with a heavy local accent. I explained to him my research, and we made arrangements to have a chat later.

It was fortunate to have Uncle Ding as an informant, a very cheerful man in his

mid-fifties, and very knowledgeable about his city. Even better, he brought his daughter Xiao Ding to our meeting as well, five months younger than me and in her fourth year at a local university. As Uncle Ding might have expected, his daughter and I have become friends. Xiao Ding not only resembles her father in looks, but also has inherited her father's enthusiasm for football. Both of them were huge fans of Shandong Luneng and the Chinese National Team at the time we met<sup>61</sup>. There are striking similarities between Xiao Ding and me as well: same age, same major as undergraduates and, most especially, her football hero and my first football idol are said to be good friends<sup>62</sup>. The three of us talked for hours and had dinner together. We also spent a lot of time together during my stay in Linzi: Xiao Ding visited the museum again with me, showed me around the city and invited me to their home. Xiao Ding and her father provided me with a wealth of information on activities in, and related to, the Linzi Football Museum. For more than two years after my field trip, their comments, through emails and instant message online, helped me in partly overcoming the deficiency due to a limited time for field work in Linzi.

### **6.2.2 Cuju, Linzi Football Museum and Linzi**

Xiao Ding told me that I should have gone to Linzi in September to see the International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture 'storming' Linzi. As the capital of the ancient Qi State, Linzi remarks and brands itself through this annual festival since 2004. One may have noticed that the year of 2004 is a decisive one, the year when Linzi was titled as the 'birthplace of football'. 'Cuju is the selling point of the festival', said Xiao Ding, the festival programme changes every year, but 'cuju' is a settled component. During the festivities in the

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<sup>61</sup> Xiao Ding and I first met in February 2011 when her 'one and only football hero' was playing for 'her club' Shandong Luneng. Li Jinyu's career as a footballer came to an end in the end of 2011 and then he returned to his parent club as a coaching staff. Xiao Ding and I chatted online in July 2012 and she told me she found herself 'gradually disassociated with Shandong Luneng' and she could only see herself as a fan of the player but not the team anymore.

<sup>62</sup> The two players are Li Jinyu and Wu Chengying. Xiao Ding and I both remembered, these two players were reported to be close friends in Chinese media.

autumn, the Linzi Football Museum is the highlight of the '*Linzi in a day tourism route*'. The museum is also associated with a professional cuju team (the team was formed in 2004, again), and the team members perform in the museum and at other venues throughout the festival in Linzi. The logo of the festival also depicts a football movement, with the player featured in the shape of the Chinese character 'qi' (齐).



Figure 6.4 The logo of International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture.

Credit: International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture.

I did some research into the festival and list below the cuju and Linzi Football Museum related events in the *International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture* from 2004 to 2013<sup>63</sup>:

- |  |
|--|
| <p>2004 The 1st International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/>The Linzi Football Museum Construction Launch</p> <p>2005 The 2nd International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/>The Unveiling Ceremony of the Linzi Football Museum<br/>Book Launch of Qi Du Cuju (Cuju in the capital of Qi)<br/>The 1st Primary School and Middle School Cuju Tournament</p> <p>2006 The 3rd International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/>The Charms of Qi: Achievements in Safeguarding Cultural Heritage<br/>Exhibition<br/>The 1st China International Cuju Performance Contest</p> |
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<sup>63</sup> For more information, please see <http://www.qwhlyj.gov.cn/>, the official website of the International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture. In Chinese only.



|   |
|---|
| <p>2007 The 4th International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/> Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of the 'Birthplace of Football' Sculpture<br/> The Light of Cuju Exhibition<br/> The 1st Linzi City Football League Finale (part of the Asian Football Confederation 'Vision Asia' Programme)<br/> Opening ceremony of the Youth League</p> |
| <p>2008 The 5th International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/> Launch- The Cuju Culture Research Base of Centre Sports Culture Development Centre, National Sports Bureau General of China<br/> The 1st Cuju Culture Symposium</p>   |
| <p>2009 The 6th International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/> Cuju Performance Contest (Cuju costumes in the Song Dynasty style)</p>  |
| <p>2010 The 7th International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/> Cuju Culture Exhibition<br/> Cuju Performance (Han Dynasty version and Tang/Song Dynasty version)<br/> Host of 2010 Asian Football Confederation U19 Championship<br/> Host of the 22nd Shandong Province Sports Games-Football</p>                                 |
| <p>2011 The 8th International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/> World Record for Juggling Football Challenge on 17TH September</p>  |
| <p>2012 The 9th International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/> Symposium on Intangible Cultural Heritage in Asia and Cuju Culture<br/> International Youth Summer Cuju Camp</p>  |
| <p>2013 The 10th International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture<br/> Cuju Performance (Han Dynasty version)</p>   |

Table 6.1 Cuju/football-related and Linzi Football Museum-related activities in the International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture (2004-2013).

As we can see from the list, the logo and the timeline, the festival is planned with 'cuju' as the central theme and has witnessed the founding of the Linzi Football Museum. The festival has been organised by the People's Government of Linzi District, by which cuju is officially promoted not only as a game that originated in the ancient Qi State, but more importantly as the

cultural symbol of Linzi in this day and age. Besides intensively showcasing cuju at the festival, 'growing' a cuju culture has become a year-round work in Linzi. Again, since 2004, as Uncle Ding informed me, the local government has endeavoured to popularise and formalise the presence of cuju among school children, by providing equipment, organising cuju teams and competitions, and visiting the football museum. Beyond the museum building, cuju-related objects have been woven into Linzi's landscape, such as the replicas and re-formations of the Cuju Boy and the 'Birthplace of Football' sculpture. Within this government controlled process, the Linzi Football Museum, housing a tangible collection of cuju as evidence of its history, and furnishing the ideal stage for an intangible cuju performance, has served as a vital site of local identity. The museum also stands as a visitor attraction under its 'gilded brand', in Uncle Ding's words.

Aside from the top-down channels, local people relived the past folkways by constituting the Linzi Cuju Culture Club in 2012, with the help of the Linzi Football Museum. The main missions of the club are collecting objects and stories from both locals and enthusiasts nationwide and helping cuju culture gain publicity. After learning this information from Uncle Ding and Xiao Ding, I contacted one of the organisers of the club, who is a lyricist himself and wrote several songs about Linzi and cuju. I was notified by him that the club had successfully organised an online writing competition on cuju culture in the summer 2013. He appreciated my interest in cuju and said, 'as a part of the Qi Culture Museum Complex (齐文化博物院), a new Linzi Football Museum is under construction, and there will be a football theme park as well'. The new museum is now assembling exhibits from individuals in China, from football players to ordinary fans. Here, the museum shows its effort to shed new light. Instead of depending on the verification from the FIFA, a smarter way to connect the ancient cuju game with modern football is through the people, from the bottom up, through their collections of modern football and the stories of experiencing cuju culture in the modern age. I look forward to seeing how

the exhibition of modern football will be transformed in the new Linzi Football Museum.

‘Linzi has been shaped by cuju’, Uncle Ding said: ‘from 2004 onwards’, his daughter added. In this ongoing process, the current Linzi Football Museum is an active player and a witness of how Linzi has structured itself with the cuju culture, turned itself into ‘a city of cuju’. Also, the building of the new Linzi Football Museum reflects the significance of the football museum’s role in marketing and celebrating cuju culture in Linzi.

### **6.2.3 ‘A bridge to the world’: making connections through the Linzi Football Museum**

Under the motto ‘Cuju of Linzi, football of the world’, and as evidenced by the name of the museum—a ‘football’ museum, not a ‘cuju’ museum, the museum is vigorous on the stage of world football.

Putting aside its frequent appearances at FIFA, the museum made its mark in Germany during the 2006 World Cup. As one of the World Cup host cities, Hamburg staged a temporary exhibition called ‘Fascination Football’ in the Museum of Ethnology (Museum für Völkerkunde) (FIFA 2006, Ma 2010). In the exhibition hall of ‘ancient football’, more than ten replicas of the exhibits in the Linzi Football Museum were on display, including a reproduction of the cuju goal (Ma 2010). The director of the Linzi Football Museum, Mr. Ma, participated in arranging the Chinese exhibits in Hamburg and posted online an engaging personal account regarding his Hamburg experience. I translate some lines as follows:

‘Finally, the day came when the hosting country of the World Cup knocked on our door—they visited Linzi...Linzi, Zibo is the birthplace of football, and our role and character should be seen at the World Cup...I think, although we did not qualify for the World Cup Finals in terms of the competition, we do enter the World Cup stage through our history and culture.’

The conversation between the German officer and himself at the visa

application centre:

- ‘— What is the purpose of your trip to Germany?
- To assist the Hamburg Museum of Ethnology with a football exhibition.
- Do you have football at your place?
- We are, as claimed by the FIFA, the birthplace of football, and in Linzi we have a football museum of more than 2000 square metres.’

He continued:

‘The distance from home indicates our power of influence as the birthplace of football... This is an exhibition about the World Cup and will provoke interest all over the world.’

‘They (staff members from the German side) are very interested in the cuju goal in the Linzi Football Museum...The director (of the Hamburg Museum of Ethnology) discussed with me: the Chinese goal (the replica) from 1500 years ago will be the most significant attraction of this exhibition; it is bulky, ancient and magnificent, beautiful and full of Chinese characteristics; people will be amazed by this Chinese creation and it has allure for German and European visitors...’

‘At a press conference, I felt very proud of Linzi, Zibo and China as the birthplace of football... The image of the cuju goal and the logo of this exhibition were shown on the screen in turn, emphasising the symbols and themes of ancient Chinese football and modern football.’

I found the notes by the director very intriguing in understanding the ways in which the museum and cuju are located globally. The Linzi Football Museum has roots deep in Linzi, in the locale. At the same time, through its uniqueness in representing the ancient and original as well as Chinese-ness, the museum always switches into the ‘Chinese’ football museum, especially in cross-cultural circumstances. From this perspective, the museum is in-between, between the tension of the ancient and the modern, and shifting between the local and the national.

I shared the director’s notes with Uncle Ding and Xiao Ding, and they both deemed the museum to be ‘a bridge’ connecting Linzi and the outer world. However, the father and the daughter sometimes hold separate opinions of the museum.

## 6.3 ‘I am proud of Linzi’: dreams of the Ding family

‘Sometimes it (cuju) is like a dream for me, far back, simple, a lot of fun. Not like what we are facing right now.’  
—Xiao Ding

### 6.3.1 The marketing of the museum and the dream

Uncle Ding and Xiao Ding are proud of Linzi, the birth place of cuju. Generally, they both love the Linzi Football Museum and are fully aware of the museum's role in promoting their hometown. However, they hold different opinions of the marketing and branding of cuju and the museum.

Unlike the National Football Museum, Manchester, as an independent institute, which has a professional marketing team to maintain the brand, the marketing of the Linzi Football Museum is basically in the hands of local government authorities. Uncle Ding has seen a growth in visitors from other parts of China, and even overseas at his workplace, the hotel, especially during the annual tourism festival. ‘So the history and culture of Linzi and cuju are popularised’, said Uncle Ding with a smile. He supports the marketing of the museum and cuju, which brings ‘visible economic growth to Linzi’ and attracts ‘more football events’. Meanwhile, Xiao Ding remains suspicious about ‘the controlling’, ‘the money flows’, ‘overly reproducing of cuju’ and the ‘tourism-centred tendency’. In her opinion, for the museum, ‘having national and international appeal is good, yet most crucially, it should engage with local people, especially the youth’. She ‘would love to pop into the museum more often in leisure hours’ with her younger relatives, with the prerequisite that there be ‘a reduction in the ticket price (30 yuan for now) or the seasonal/annual tickets’. ‘Our culture should be enjoyed more freely by us’, Xiao Ding mentioned.

I perceive a shared dream through these two different attitudes. A dream about a better understanding of the history and culture of their place, about the growth of their district, their city (rich and prosperous as the capital of Qi State in ancient times), and about celebrating and experiencing cuju as a folk culture

(with locals or with a larger crowd of tourists).

### **6.3.2 Uncle Ding's dreams**

On the 15th of June 2013, I finished my fieldwork in Germany and travelled back to China. The first news I watched on TV at home was that the Chinese National Team lost 1-5 to the young Thailand side at home, being called 'a match of humiliation'. It was not the first time that the national team deeply hurt fans' feelings. It reminded me of Uncle Ding. Unlike his daughter who walked away from the national team, Uncle Ding, undergoing agonizing moments, is still standing his ground. As he put into words:

'I am one of those fans who shouted 'Disband the national team!' out of anger and am also among the ones who believe in the national team once again.'

On the optimistic side, the Chinese domestic league is facing its turning point at this very moment. On 9 November 2013, Guangzhou Evergrande Football Club (广州恒大足球俱乐部) was crowned winner in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Champions' League, the first time a Chinese team has earned this achievement. The final matches (first leg and the second leg) attracted great attention in China, taking over the headlines in Chinese media, trending dominantly online and being celebrated nationwide. The Champion team, coached by the Italian Marcello Lippi and starring both Chinese and foreign players, is believed to be a boost in the recovery of Chinese football. Although the winning team is a huge rival of his team in the Chinese league, Uncle Ding, in his online message to me, praised Guangzhou Evergrande for 'winning glory for Chinese football', and he is hoping his club and his national team will 'usher in this springtime'.

As a football fan who works at a hotel and meets many visitors, Uncle Ding always has one particular topic to start a conversation: his hometown Linzi is the birthplace of Cuju and Linzi holds a museum telling the history of the game. In 2011, he told me:

‘I am proud of living here as a football fan... The (Linzi Football) Museum is a good place to discover and read the history of our football. History is important, isn’t it? Unlike (modern) Chinese football itself, the stories in the museum are merrier...I hope the national team might reach the World Cup finals in 2014 and, maybe, in the near future, we will be the host city of the World Cup. The ‘birthplace’ will be an advantage ... and Linzi may accommodate a larger football museum, more updated football stories and, of course, more tourists into our city.’

Three years have gone. I saw the disillusionment of Uncle Ding’s dream of the Chinese team qualifying for the 2014 World Cup. But at least one of his dreams has come true—the brand new Linzi football museum is planned to open its doors in the near future. In June 2014, Uncle Ding told me he knew from a local newspaper that the Linzi Football Museum welcomed by crowds of visitors, thanks to World Cup fever.

‘Cuju is special. In Linzi, people could feel the heat of the World Cup while wandering around the museum. Let’s wait and see what will happen when the new museum is ready. I am sure it will be a better one.’

### **6.3.3 Xiao Ding’s dreams**

Not as positive as her father when it comes to the Chinese football league and the national team, Xiao Ding is no longer regularly following Chinese league games. At the same time, she has found and informed me of some compelling activities in her city. In April 2013, Shandong Luneng Football Club invited six players from Brazil and founded the Luneng Freestyle Football Team to promote a ‘cultural football’ concept at the club, which emphasises not only competitive results of its team, but also a celebration of football with its fans. In spring and summer 2013, this football troupe toured the Shandong Province to perform freestyle (street style) football in schools, factories, squares, parks, streets and lanes, and received warm welcomes and loud applause from the locals. Xiao Ding told me on 21 June 2013:

‘I really love this. Juggle, combo, panna<sup>64</sup>...the players have excellent street football skills. And we are finally having some fun, some football-related enjoyment. For a certain period in the history of cuju, the game was not that

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<sup>64</sup> These are names of freestyle football tricks/skills.

competitive, but full of joyfulness and excitement...Football Night<sup>65</sup> gave coverage to it yesterday-this special football team is becoming famous. What may interest you is that the freestyle team visited the museum last month and played along with the museum's cuju performing team in a school in Zibo. Brazilian freestyle meets Chinese cuju! That's a brilliant idea to put both our ancient cuju and modern football together in this way...and hope it will further help flourish the grassroots football in Linzi. Very promising.'

Throughout this three year period, Xiao Ding has seen one of her nephews and one of her neighbours attend local football training camps for the youth. Born in the city of cuju, football is always a choice for the children. As a must-see for local school groups and for nearly every youth football team in Linzi, the museum itself, to a great extent, serves as a starting point for cultivating football enthusiasm and for inspiring football talents. I at times shared with Xiao Ding a few of my fieldwork photos taken in British and German football museums when I was in the field, photos of those hands-on activities, family programmes, school visits, match day events and so on. Xiao Ding was surprised and amazed, and she also recognized that children play a crucial part among the football museum visitors. Both Xiao Ding and I consider that the Linzi Football Museum should have a stronger educational role and a more developed and attractive way of exhibiting for visitors, especially the younger generation. Hopefully the new football museum in Linzi will fulfil our expectations.

Apart from the professional leagues, football celebrity and international tournaments, Xiao Ding's football dreams are about the younger generation and the delight that cuju/football game will convey, about bringing football back to a grassroots level and retrieving the relaxation and pleasure of the game. She believes her city, with a rich football history, a football museum and an open mind towards the sport, will contribute to the 'promising' future of the game.

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<sup>65</sup> Football Night is one of the CCTV's (Chinese Central Television) main football programmes. It is shown on CCTV5 (CCTV Sports Channel) on Thursday evenings.



## 6.4 Summary: local and national, modern and nostalgic

蹴鞠屡过飞鸟上，秋千竞出垂杨里。—王维 《寒食城东即事》

The Chinese poet Wang Wei (王维 699–759) wrote about the scenery in the Chinese Hanshi Festival (寒食节) —‘cuju balls are floating above birds; swings are flying high among willow trees’. In his day, during the Tang Dynasty, cuju enjoyed great popularity, which coincided with the peak period in imperial China. The history of cuju is longer. According to written records and archaeological discoveries, the museum traces it back to the prosperous capital of the Qi State—Linzi—where cuju originated. By claiming and being acknowledged by FIFA as the birthplace of football, and through the museum’s display of the concrete illustrations, Linzi has attained a ‘gilded brand’ which constitutes the world’s recognition of the place. Since the year of 2008, cuju has been increasingly woven into the fabric of local culture. On the one hand, officially, cuju and football-related events have been planned and held in Linzi, with the museum as the central stage; the new Linzi football will be opened as a significant component of the Qi Culture Museum Complex. On the other hand, for the locals, being at the centre of cuju provides a feeling of pride, and brings them better opportunities to understand and celebrate football culture and the wider history of this particular place.

Although named the ‘Linzi’ ‘Football’ Museum, it is mainly about cuju, the ancient version of football, and it exceeds a local scale, bearing upon a sense of the national. As I have described, through a two-folded museumisation, the museumisation of cuju and the museumisation of Linzi as the birthplace of football, the museum represented the history of the sport in Chinese cultural settings. Its ‘ancientness’ and ‘origin’, the distinguished cuju goal (风流眼), the trio of ‘Birthplace of Football’ (圣球之源) sculptures in and beyond the museum, the records preserved in masterpieces of Chinese literature and Chinese history, and even the word ‘cuju’, all carry rich cultural connotations and

contribute to the feeling of 'Chinese-ness'.

Besides the historical aspect of cuju, the other side of the story is to locate it in the modern world, in the family of world football. The museum offers an exhibition hall regarding football in its modern era, in which the process of obtaining the verification issued by FIFA is highlighted. More importantly, on the international level, the exposures of the museum's representative exhibits (sometimes replicas) and the history of cuju itself traverse time and space.

Also, cuju is about nostalgia, about feelings for those good old days, and about reliving the tradition at the present time. With a deficiency in competitiveness and poor management, the present circumstances of Chinese football strengthen the nostalgia. Uncle Ding, a die-hard supporter, still imagines a brighter future of Chinese football as 'what they did right here thousands years ago, the leading role'. At the same time, he anticipates his hometown to be more developed and well-known both economically and culturally, 'like the affluent ancient capital of Qi'. Also, he expects the football museum and other museums in his city to have a larger scope for himself and for a growing number of visitors to 'indulge in the great history'. His daughter, Xiao Ding, on the other hand, has visions of grass-roots football, of playing the game (ancient cuju and modern football) for pleasure, of the folkloristic tradition of cuju, 'as described in the poems'. The word 'museum' (博物馆) in Chinese is actually closely connected to the concept 'Bo wu ti' (博物体). Rather than an institution, an authorized voice, the Chinese 'Bo wu ti' is a 'genre', a 'living culture' that includes a whole set of values and styles, and incorporates indigenous knowledge and witness (Peng 2010). Xiao Ding's dream of establishing her ideal football museum reflects this conception—a museum that fulfils the needs of the natives and engages local families and schools, a celebration of folk culture.

The Linzi Football Museum, in between the local and the national, materialises the pride of Qi culture and the ancient Chinese sport. In China, the phrase 体育, meaning sports and physical education, bears upon the consciousness,

anxiety, effort, experience in communicating ideas in this globalised modern world (Morris 2008). The museum demonstrates the tensions in corresponding to modern football, world football, on the one hand, and maintaining the history and tradition, and Chinese-ness, on the other.

## Chapter 7 Football objects beyond main field sites: public and private

In this chapter, I go beyond football museums discussed before and provide an overview of football items, themes and exhibitions I have encountered in recent years. Also, stories of four football supporters and their football collection(s) /object (s) are presented, to enrich this project with an individual perspective.

### 7.1 Football is everywhere: football on public display

As a football supporter, a museum lover, and an anthropology student undertaking a project on football museums, visiting sports museums, sports exhibitions and seeing football items at general museums are all exciting experience for me. I cite a few examples.

**Football sections in national sports museums and national sports exhibitions.** In the Estonian Sports Museum (Eesti Spordimuuseum), Tartu, only one showcase is dedicated to football, containing seven items. All of them are relatively new acquisitions, including the Estonian 'Team of the Year' Prize won by the Estonian National Football Team in 2011 and mementos from the 2012 European Championship qualifying games against Italy and Serbia (Figure 7.1 top). The permanent exhibition '*The history of Polish Sport and Olympic Movement*' at the Museum of Sports and Tourism in Warsaw possesses more football objects, containing two objects in remembrance of the 2012 Poland & Ukraine European Championship—a giant football and the statue of the mascots (Figure 7.1 bottom). At the National Memorial in Prague, the exhibition '*Sportsmen in the Czech Lands*' took place in 2012 and 2013, as a part of the Monarchy exhibition series. The exhibition encompasses the

emergence of football in the country during the Austria-Hungary period as well as the kit of the Czech National Football Team in the modern age. In Estonia, Poland, or the Czech Republic, football culture is not as rich as it is in England or Germany, and consequently, 'football' is only a small proportion in their national sport museums or exhibitions. I talked to several staff members of the Estonian Sport Museums about the National Football Museum in Manchester, and they all admitted it would be hard to imagine a 'national' museum dedicated to football culture in their country. At the same time, as reflected in the national sports museums and exhibitions, football, the national team in particular, is still an integral part of a nation's sporting life and history, bearing upon national symbols and pride.



Figure 7.1 Top: Football showcase at the Estonian Sport Museum, Tartu.  
Bottom two: Football related objects at the Museum of Sports and Tourism in Warsaw.

**Football theme(s) in sport exhibition(s).** Informed by a Polish friend, I travelled from Germany to the Polish city of Kraków for a temporary sport exhibition in spring 2013. The exhibition was named '*Maccabees of Sport:*

*Jewish Sport in Kraków* and was held at the Old Synagogue in Kraków. Football is one of the primary subjects in this exhibition, comprising detailed descriptions of football history in Kraków. A panel (Figure 7.2 bottom left) also emphasis local fans' self-identification, providing examples of graffiti with Jewish elements incorporated. In this exhibition, football and other sports as well represent the identity of the Jewish community in the city.



Figure 7.2 Top: Old Synagogue in Krakow, with posters of the ‘Maccabees of Sport: Jewish Sport in Krakow’ exhibition.

Bottom two: football-related panels of the exhibition.

**Football items in non-sport museums.** According to my experience, it is common that a city or regional museum of local history and culture includes a sport section. The scale of sport sections differs, but football items are typically on display. For example, the Doncaster Museum furnishes a ‘Sport in Doncaster’ area. Surprisingly, more than thirty objects in two cases are all football related (Figure 7.3 left), featuring local football hero Ernest Crawford,

Doncaster's 'Busby baby', David Pegg of Manchester United, as well as local team Doncaster Rovers. It is a completely 'football in Doncaster' display, which represents 'sport in Doncaster'. Compared to Doncaster, football exhibits in the Museum of Liverpool enjoy a larger scale, depicting two great teams in the city, Liverpool Football Club and Everton Football Club. One last example of football items at local museums is from Preston, not at the National Football Museum, but at the Museum of Lancashire (MoL). MoL hosts showcases of objects of the Preston North End (PNE) Football Club and Sir Tom Finney, as one could imagine. Moreover, in the 'Preston Lamb'<sup>66</sup>: the symbol of the proud city' case, a PNE shirt featuring the Preston Lamb is on display together with a background picture of PNE players in the 'Lamb' shirt meeting Queen Elizabeth at the 1954 FA Cup final (Figure 7.3 right). It demonstrates how a football item can be integrated into and then express the pride of the city in an exhibiting context.



Figure 7.3 Left: 'Sport in Doncaster' showcases at Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery.

Middle: Hands-on items (Liverpool and Everton shirts) at the Museum of Liverpool.

Right: 'Preston Lamb' showcase at the Museum of Lancashire.

**Football event(s) and the museum world.** The final instance of football on public display considers the online 'World Cup collection'<sup>67</sup> created by the British Museum during the 2014 Brazil World Cup. Basically, on every match day during the football tournament, the museum tweeted pictures of pairing objects (for example, see Figure 7.4) from the 32 countries that competed in

<sup>66</sup> The Lamb is the emblem of Preston.

<sup>67</sup> For the whole collection, please see <https://storify.com/britishmuseum/worldcup>.

Brazil (Shore 2014). Although the exhibits adopted were not really football objects, in the broadest sense, this example illustrates the influential power of football and how ‘football’ has engaged with and has been accepted by the museum world.



Figure 7.4 One of British Museum’s World Cup tweets for the England-Italy match (@birtishmuseum 14/06/2014).

As seen from above, football objects and themes on public display contribute to the popularity of football and evidence the growing significance of football in the cultural establishment. Next, I move on to an individual level by looking into my friends’ stories with their football objects.

## 7.2 Football is forever: four stories

### 7.2.1 ‘The calendar is on my desk’: Y and her Schalke photos

My friend Y works in a university in Taiwan. Most of her students may not know she has such a passion for football, for Schalke, and especially for Schalke Under 19 (U19) team. It is difficult for fans who follow the youth teams of a foreign club, because live coverage of games, match pictures as well as information regarding the teams are all very limited. We firstly knew of each



other online, both supporting Schalke U19 as distance fans. In the 2011/12 season, she was in Taiwan, and I was in Manchester; while we accompanied each other online throughout the whole season and witnessed the team crowned as the German U 19 Champion<sup>68</sup> in June 2012. In that summer, Y made her first visit to Gelsenkirchen and watched the U19 team play, with her semi-professional photographic equipment. After coming back from Germany, she shared with me her match day stories and plenty of high-quality photos. In winter 2012, I received a parcel from Y—a beautiful photo album and a photo calendar of Season 2012/13. The photograph album is really precious because she only produced three copies, one for herself (Figure 7.5), one for me, and one for the team. Y shipped it to the team together with photo calendars for each Schalke U19 player in that season.

In spring 2013, when I was doing fieldwork in Germany, we finally met in person and followed Schalke U19 at their training sessions and games for a week. The coach of the team, for whom Y and I both have the highest respect, remembered her when she mentioned the photo album. Then we had an extremely special moment with the team—the coach gathered his players in front of us and said ‘Thank you for your support from Taiwan and mainland China, and thank you for those amazing pictures’. That was overwhelming for both of us. Later, Y was all smiles when the players said ‘We really love the pictures’ and ‘The calendar is on my desk, thank you’.

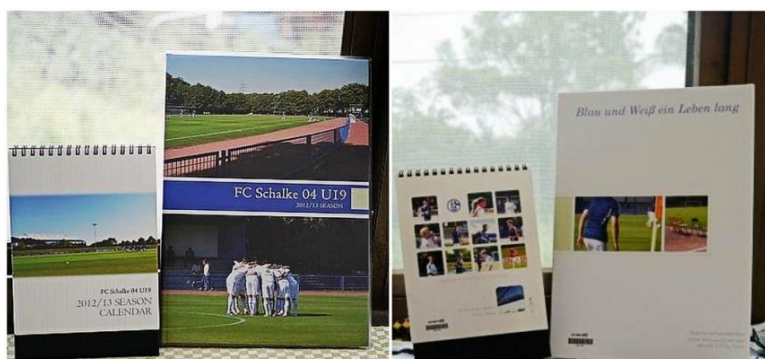


Figure 7.5 Schalke U19 album and calendar, designed and made by Y. Courtesy of the owner.

<sup>68</sup> Schalke U19 is playing in the DFB (German Football Association) A-Junioren-Bundesliga West (west region). Every year, after the regional competitions, four teams qualify for the national finals. Schalke U19 qualified for three successive times from the year 2012.

This is not the end of Y's story with Schalke U19. She travelled again to Germany in June 2014, when the team competed on the national level, carrying her cameras. Although the team did not manage to win the title this time, Y had her sights and her photos. A Schalke fan we met in a U19 match in 2013 recognized her, and posted on Facebook calling her 'Hero of the day', who travelled half the globe only for the matches of the youth team. Once again, I got a photo calendar for the new season from my 'heroine', and a match ticket of Schalke U19's final home match of the season.

I appreciate Y's dedication, and also her awareness of saving the moments and memories for herself, and I am pleased to have been the person (and maybe the only one) to share in her joys and pains. She understands the youth team is full of uncertainty and possibilities. Her photos have recorded some boys who will probably not make professional careers, as well as those starting steps of the shining stars who have already made appearances with the professional team of Schalke. Travelling more than 9,000 kilometres twice, she created photos as evidence of this fast-changing team in this period of time. Those photos are also, in her words 'something absolutely unique' for herself, to sustain the precious memories.

### **7.2.2 'The album grandma sent me': M and his Real Madrid album**

My young friend M shared with me a Real Madrid album from his collection after I showed him the Schalke U19 photo album Y sent me. M is a 13-year-old boy, half English and half Spanish, and a Real Madrid and Spanish national team supporter based in Britain. We started our football conversations from the first time we met, and every time seeing him wearing Spanish coloured (red and yellow) ear pin or hand-made bracelet reminded me of my teenage years as a football fanatic. His allegiance to the Spanish club Real Madrid has a deep root in his family—Madrid is the hometown of his mother and where his

grandmother still lives. The album his grandmother sent him from Madrid is a history book of the club (*Historia del Real Madrid*), from the Real Madrid official merchandise. In fact, it is not simply a printed book, but a sticker album. One has to collect hundreds of stickers and attach them to the empty slots, a really well designed product which encourages fans to get their hands on and to piece together the club's history.

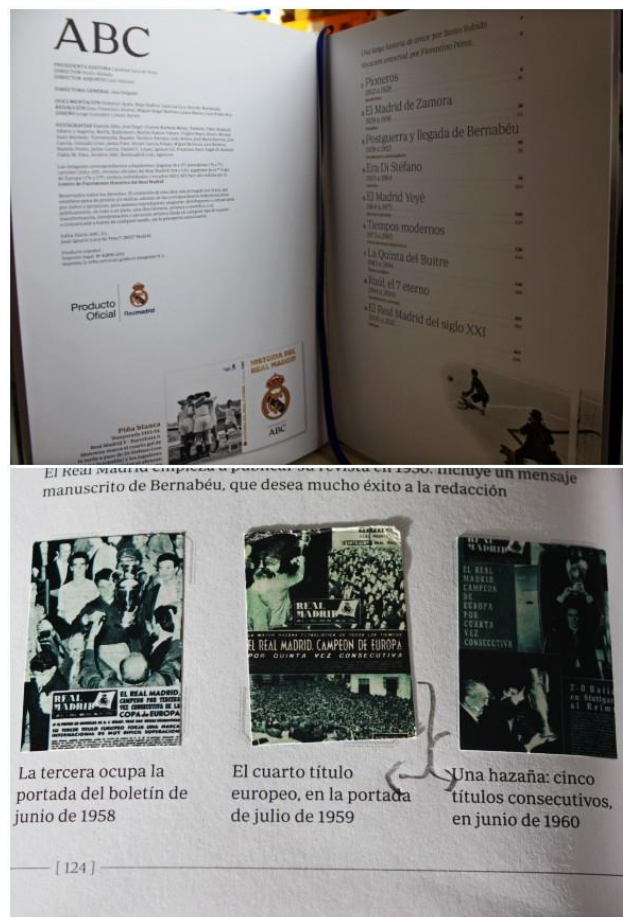


Figure 7.6 M's Real Madrid album. The 'mistake' page at the bottom. Courtesy of the owner.

M mentioned how his grandmother dedicatedly collected every single sticker through weeks, completed the album, and sent it to him as a present. I flicked through the album and found something interesting on page 124, where M's grandmother made a mistake between two stickers and marked with pencil to correct it. M and I both laughed when talking about this 'lovely' mistake, which made this album even more special and unique. Grandmother perceives her grandson's football passion and sent him a football present from the home of

his favourite team; the boy supports the local team in his grandmother's and mother's hometown and cherishes the present his grandmother sent him. It is not only an official product of the football club, but also a personalised object that cultivates the sense of home and family through football supporting.

### 7.2.3 'That shirt stands for a period in his career': S and her football shirt collection

Football fans express their fan identities through football shirts. A football shirt refers to a team, and fans also buy and wear shirts with a name and a number to show their love and support for a specific player. My friend S said, 'I support my favourite players by purchasing their shirts'. S is a free-license editor based in Taiwan, a follower of the Italian football league. Her favourite footballer is Daniele Dessena, who played for Parma and Sampdoria before, and is currently representing Cagliari<sup>69</sup>.



Figure 7.7 S's Dessena shirt collection, including one Parma shirt, three Sampdoria shirts, three Cagliari shirts and one Italian Under 21 shirt. Courtesy of the owner.

S told me an interesting story about her first Dessena's Cagliari shirt.

Cagliari is a small club. At that time, he was a newcomer there, and I couldn't find his shirt at the official online fan shop. I emailed the fan shop, and my Italian language was of great use. [I asked if she learnt Italian for football reasons, and she replied yes.] The fan shop said they didn't have his number for printing. Then I wrote to the shop again, saying 'I really like him and have followed him for a long time. I bought every shirt of him before... where shall I

<sup>69</sup> Parma, Sampdoria and Cagliari are all Italian football clubs.

turn to instead of the official shop' (laughed). I emailed again and again for about half a year, sometimes just chatted with the staff via email. Suddenly, one day, he told me the shirt with Dessena's name and number was ready and asked for my address. And he sent the shirt to me for free!!! I was almost moved into tears. The very next year, I visited the fan shop in person and found they have every player's number...Seemed like I pushed so much, and it worked...More importantly, I felt the small club's kindness to their fans.

S wrote to the fan shop over half a year to obtain a shirt of her favourite player, because she thinks 'a football shirt without a printed number is like a person without a soul'. For her, 'the shirt equals the footballer', and one shirt stands for a certain period in the player's career. She purchases Dessena's shirt every season, and most of her shirts have been signed by the player, as she frequently travels to Italy to meet him. S believes her shirt collection represents the footballer's career, and also connects herself to the player.

#### **7.2.4 'Yugoslavia is still alive, at least in my heart': Z and the national flags**

The final story in this chapter is of Z, a Chinese girl in her twenties. It may seem strange, but Z supports all the national teams she regards as successors of the former Yugoslavia national team, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. Her interests in the history of Yugoslav football and her affections for the successor teams root in, in Z's words, 'her wandering style of life' and 'the sense of being without a hometown', a similar feeling she got when reading the break-up of Yugoslav football<sup>70</sup>.

Z hosts a collection of national flags of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. 'I have got all of them, except Kosovo', she told me a few days before. I realize it has been a long and

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<sup>70</sup> For the break-up of Yugoslav football in the 1990s, please see Mills (2009) *'It All Ended in an Unsporting Way': Serbian Football and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia, 1989-2006* and Sack, A. and Suster, Z. (2000) *Soccer and Croatian Nationalism*.

solitary journey for her, as some national flags might not be easy to purchase or order in China, and many people by her side cannot see her devotion to many less-experienced teams. But Z insists on expressing her support through collecting and sometimes displaying those national flags. During the 2010 World Cup, she was hanging a Croatia national flag in the window of her dormitory at her university, though her roommates and more could seldom identify that the flag represents Croatia.

In October 2012, Z and I travelled to Zagreb, capital of Croatia, and made our way to Stadion Maksimir, the home ground of Dinamo Zagreb, and the place where the break-up started<sup>71</sup>. She left Zagreb with more Croatian flags and banners to add to her collection.

For Z, watching a Croatian player and a Serbian player of opposite sides shaking hands after a football match on TV is exciting. 'Yugoslavia is still alive, at least in my heart', said Z, and for her, 'Yugoslav football is forever'. She has established a museum in her heart, and the tangible collection of national flags symbolises and objectifies her virtual museum.

### **7.3 Summary: displaying 'us', curating 'me'**

Going beyond the fieldwork sites, in this chapter, I listed football on public display within the museum/exhibition context, and stories of football objects held in private hands and in everyday lives. Public displays and private collections penetrate into the projections of collective and personal identities. On the one hand, football items have been increasingly employed in exhibiting practices to express collective identities of a nation (Estonian, Polish, Czech), a city (Doncaster, Liverpool, Preston) or a community (Jewish people in Kraków). Football items on display at sports museums and general museums are still simplified and glorified, such as shirts and trophies of national teams and/or local football heroes, in order to serve the identity-making strategy. In

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<sup>71</sup> On 13 May 1990, the riot between Dinamo Zagreb and Red Star Belgrade supporters at Maksimir has been regarded as the beginning of Yugoslavia collapse. Ibid.

comparison to specific football museums, most of the football sections in more generalised museums and exhibitions are still creating the stereotypical glory and the 'institutionalised' 'golden age' (Vamplew 1998:270), through which a pride in 'us' is displayed.

On the other hand, through personal objects, fans could build relationships with teams (Y's photos) and players (S's shirts), with their family (M's album) and friends (my friends who showed their football items to me and shared related stories with me), and sometimes with their ideas and beliefs (Z's national flags). Moreover, objects as 'property' are closely related to the sense of 'self' as 'owner' (Macdonald 2003). Football objects provide football supporters the materiality to 'own' their memories, experience, emotions, and ideologies, and every individual attachment contributes to the uniqueness of the object(s). Apart from fan communities and collective identities, a fan is also curating a 'me' through personal football object(s).

## Chapter 8 Discussion and conclusion

Returning to the idea of the ‘Circuit of Culture’ (Du Gay, Hall, et al. 1997, see Figure 1.1) —of ‘representation’, ‘identity’, ‘production’, ‘consumption’ and ‘regulation’ as well as the five metaphors of the football museum as ‘shrine’, ‘curtain’, ‘time-machine’, ‘theatre’, and ‘miniature’, in this concluding chapter, I revisit and compare the football museums examined in previous chapters and the football memorabilia beyond museum sites that have also been foregrounded.

### 8.1 ‘Shrine’ and ‘curtain’: museum representation and management

Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning.  
—Clifford Geertz (1973:5)

#### Temporal-spatial settings

In this thesis, football museums are examined as cultural productions. A football museum is largely a holistic representation and interpretation of the history and culture of a football club or a nation. Linzi Football Museum, staging the history of football in ancient and modern China, to a certain extent, serves as the national football museum of China. At each museum noted above, football-related objects, pictures, texts, audio-visual devices and interactive items are articulated under a grand interpretive framework. Beyond Linzi Football Museum, other frameworks (Table 8.1) demonstrate that a ‘themed’ classification is favoured over the timeline system, from which the temporal logic intrinsic to football (two halves of a match, change of home grounds, development of club’s myth) is incorporated.



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| <p><b>The National Football Museum</b> (NFM), Manchester—English Football Hall of Fame, First Half (history of football) and Second Half (playing the game).</p> <p><b>The Schalke Museum, Gelsenkirchen</b>—aspects of the Schalke Mythos.</p> <p><b>The Borusseum</b>, Dortmund—Six museum islands representing birthplace of the clubs, three home stadiums, a chamber of trophy and an interactive zone.</p> <p><b>The German Football Museum</b>, Dortmund—according to the designing plan, Before the Game, First Half, Half-time Break, Second Half, After the Game and German Football Hall of Fame.</p> <p><b>The Linzi Football Museum</b>—Ancient Football and Modern Football.</p> |
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Table 8.1 Interpretive frameworks of football museums.

These frameworks affect not only how exhibits are organised, but also the spatial design. The Schalke museum and the Borusseum are built in football arenas. The Schalke Museum furnishes a ‘Stadium’ section, a mini stand featuring seats from previous and current grounds, while also providing an excellent view of the interior of Veltins Arena; similarly, the Borusseum embeds previous and present arenas as three of six exhibiting islands—both as expressions of the club’s identity. The NFM, as noted before, far away from a stadium, utilises the sloped feature of the Urbis building to create the feeling of a football stand and naturally situates ‘two halves’ on different floors. Together with other museum devices, NFM incorporates the feelings of being in a stadium.

There is no doubt that a museum’s system of classifying and design space, influence how visitors plan their visiting pathways and how they experience the museum (Roppola 2012). On the one hand, through a football-related time frame in museum classification, along with most recent items (and empty cases at the Borusseum) on display, feelings of ‘being in time’ and ‘football’s history in the making’ are delivered at football museums. On the other hand, incorporating a footballing space, football museums establish the feeling of ‘being here’ at the heart of football. Distinctively, to situate both cuju and

modern football into a museum context, the first half of the Linzi Football Museum is largely based on the chonicalisation of cuju and restorations of ancient Linzi; with the second half connecting cuju with modern football hugely depending on the verification of Linzi as the birthplace of football by FIFA. Different from the 'stadium', 'football match' model, Linzi Football Museum's time-space framework is to (re) construct ancient and modern Linzi in the light of cuju and modern football ('being in time'), and 'being located in the birthplace of football' is the museum's uniqueness ('being here').

Temporal and spatial settings overlap, and provide the fundamental stance for football museums to construct and circulate meanings.

### **Museum building and its surroundings**

Museum buildings and their surroundings are also involved in museum representations and identity process. A built-in-stadium football museum, such as the Schalke Museum or the Borusseum, directly bears the characteristics of the stadium and the team, and is always associated with a stadium tour. Apart from football grounds, Urbis, the building itself (although not originally built for the NFM), becomes an attractive feature of the NFM; and the modern architectural style harmonises with 'modern' football and the NFM's cutting-edge museum devices. Before entering museum buildings, the Splash sculpture (featuring local and national football hero Sir Tom Finney's controlling of a football in a sodden field) in front of the NFM's original Preston site is in marked contrast to the Cuju Boy statue (featuring a Chinese boy playing a cuju ball) outside the Linzi Football Museum—these two giant items that dominate the pre-entry space convey images of modern English football and ancient Chinese cuju respectively.

In terms of the wider built environment, having a city centre location with convenient public transportation is a feature shared by the NFM (next to Victoria Station of Manchester) and the German Football Museum (right in front of the Dortmund Central Station). This feature may contribute to museum

visitor numbers; and moreover, it illustrates the significance of football in both Manchester and Dortmund. In the broadest sense, a city serves as the built environment of a football museum, and the football culture developed in the city provides the background for museum representations.

### **Storytelling and story teller: approach and authority**

As examined in previous chapters, the NFM, the Schalke Museum and the Borusseum employ a storytelling approach, but to varying degrees. The NFM, to the greatest extent, applies storytelling as a guiding principle in museum interpretations—all the zones under different themes are led by stories, and objects on display bear specific stories. Plus, selected stories of museum objects are retold in the guided tours and other museum activities (such as object handling sessions) at the NFM. At the Schalke Museum, individual stories, depicted by museum objects and audio-visual material, contribute to the grand narrative of the ‘Schalke Mythos’; and the mainstream museum activity programme invites former and current players of the club to share stories with visitors, especially school groups. The Borusseum not only delivers stories of the team’s history through objects in exhibition islands but also harbours a ‘Yellow Wall’ to showcase objects donated by fans and related fan stories. I would argue that through a storytelling approach the above three football museums: firstly, articulate museum exhibits and activities; secondly, situate individual accounts into the museum representations of shared football histories; and thirdly, engage with the multiple voices of team(s), players and fans. The storytelling approach also conjoins with multi-sensory, hands-on exhibits to create a participatory museum atmosphere.

Compared to the NFM and the two club museums mentioned above, Linzi Football Museum remains object-led. Although the museum offers guided tours and cuju performances on special occasions, the Linzi Football Museum still lacks hands-on exhibits and interactions with its visitors. It also lags behind in terms of museum technology (especially digital technologies used in

interactive devices), museum management, and museum service. However, as a museum institution, and to some extent as the Chinese national football museum, the Linzi Football Museum maintains an institutional authority in representing Chinese football, especially the history of cuju. Rather than employing individual accounts, the museum incorporates a meta-narrative of football in China and the story of 'Linzi being verified by FIFA as the birthplace of football' as the cornerstone of the museum's importance and authenticity.

In Chapter 2, under the metaphor of the football museum as a curtain, I asked whether the conflicts (such as racism, hooliganism) and the gloomy, mournful sides of football are being displayed at football museums. As seen from earlier chapters, in general, I give an affirmative answer. Examples include: the NFM's coverage of football hooliganism, the Munich Disaster, the Bradford Fire and the Hillsborough Disaster; the Borussia Dortmund's running of a 'Day against Forgetting' annually in remembrance of BVB players' death in the Holocaust; and then the quiescence of cuju at the Linzi Football Museum. This finding also responds to the long-term critique that football/sports museums only provide glorifying histories (Vamplew 1998, 2004). According to my observations, football museums manage to illustrate diverse aspects of football culture, as well as the ups and downs in footballing history. At the same time, the representations and interpretations at football museums, are still, in Clifford's (1986) sense, 'incomplete', 'partial', and 'committed' profiles of football: museum representations are closely tied to different cultural settings, and mostly controlled by the storytellers or the encoders, the message senders. Everyone who participates in the making of the museum product is involved in the role of the storyteller; and the role is chiefly taken by museum curators, who create the interpretation frameworks and objectives, select museum objects, compose museum texts, and arrange the visual appearances of the exhibits (such as, the array of objects, the combination of objects, photographs, films), and so on. The metaphors of both 'curtain' and 'shrine' are powerful here: making representations is an art of choosing representative objects to

stage for and to be seen by the audience, and this constructive process is granted by the institutional authority of the museum.

### **Museum regulation: government and management**

Museum regulations, by which I mean the government and management of museums, are also influential in how museum institutions come to survive and develop. The football museums mentioned in this thesis differ from each other in governance structures: the Schalke Museum and the Borusseum are obviously governed by football clubs; as a charity, the NFM is under the governance of a board of trustees; the Linzi Football Museum is governed by Linzi Tourism Bureau, a subordinate body the People's Government of Linzi; and the German Football Museum project is under the governance of the German Football Association (the DFB, Deutscher Fußball-Bund), reflected by its original name—the DFB Fußballmuseum. The structure of government casts a compelling force over museum practices. For instance, the NFM, as an independent museum, negotiates with a wider range of external institutions, including museums, football bodies, universities, commercial partners and its funders (especially the Manchester City Council); contrariwise, the Linzi Football Museum's practices (such as the participation in the International Tourism Festival of Qi Culture) are controlled by local government.

Museum regulation also concerns the management of a museum organisation. Among football museums, the NFM is a perfect example. As shown in Chapters 3 and 4, the NFM has developed the ideas of 'inclusiveness', 'friendliness', and 'accessibility', not only through museum exhibition, but also through organisational management. Another feature of the NFM is the employment of a business model: promoting the museum brand, taking marketing and commercial activities as serious elements, improving museum retail and other customer service, in order to reach a wider audience and to raise income for the admission-free museum to survive and prosper. The Schalke Museum, the Borusseum and the Linzi Football Museum are also

involved in 'business', as they introduce admission charges, connect to or host museum/club stores, and organise paid museum (and stadium) tours. The emerging business feature of football museums mirrors the bond between the museum sector and tourism—a trend of creating 'visitability' (Dicks 2007), through museum representation as well as museum service, to attract more visitors and consumers ('customers').

## 8.2 'Theatre': football museums consumed

What do you see in that time-touched stone,  
When nothing is there  
But ashen blankness, although you give it  
A rigid stare?

—Thomas Hardy (cited in Dudley 2012:164)

### **On-site, off-site, online**

Increasing the effort to promote 'visitability', as seen from Chapter 3 to 6, a wide range of activities were offered at the football museums. Museum tours are the basic one. Besides these, the NFM and the Borusseum also organised special events to mark and to coordinate with their temporary exhibitions. The football museums also designed particular museum activities to celebrate sports events, footballing anniversaries and cultural festivals in their host cities, as well as school programmes and family-friendly workshops to serve visitors' needs.

Beyond the museum walls, through objects on loan and touring exhibitions, football museums create, as I named them, 'satellite exhibitions' at different venues and on various occasions (for example, the NFM's satellite exhibitions at the MadiaCityUK and at the Hilton Hotel, St George's Park, and the Linzi Football Museum's satellite exhibition in Hamburg during the 2006 World Cup). 'Satellite exhibitions', on the one hand, claim football's significance in people's wider cultural lives; on the other hand, they generate citywide, nationwide and international interactions between football museums and external institutions.

In this day and age, football museums also engage people through internet-based devices, including museums' websites, social network systems and podcasts. The Borusseum, noticeably, digitalised its museum islands and key exhibits to offer an option of virtual visiting. Football museums employ online channels to release museum news, to increase public awareness of their institutions, to communicate with their existing and potential visitors, and to broaden museums' accessibility.

Football museums bear the educational function of a museum, and, one can say, stimulate learning through the subject of football, through fun. The NFM, among all the museums examined in this research, has performed the educational role most efficiently, by providing a learning environment for museum visitors (see the temple of NFM's learning environment). The learning programmes of the NFM, on and off site, provide free-choice learning opportunities; and through regular activities, further promote interactions among museum visitors and strengthen the relationship between the museum and its visitors.

Activities and interactions (visitor-visitor and visitor-museum) bring into focus the metaphor of football museums as 'theatres'. Through activities on and off site, 'satellite exhibitions' and online communications, the 'theatre' is, however, no longer limited to the physical building.

### **Museum visitors as exhibits**

Visitors play significant roles at football museums. Not surprisingly, a majority of my interviewees identified themselves as football supporters. Football fans and fan culture are significant themes at football museums: the NFM hosts a zone dedicated to fan culture; the Schalke Museum harbours a 'fan's room' as a highlight of the museum; the Borusseum furnishes a 'Yellow Wall', representing the famous South Stand of BVB's home arena, to display the club's fan culture; the Linzi Football Museum, although not focusing on modern Chinese football, also depicts fans of the Chinese National Football Team

through pictures. Several supporters of Schalke or BVB mentioned their 'emotional involvement' when visiting the museum of their clubs, especially when reading through fan stories. According to interviews, visitors to the NFM, who saw themselves as football fans, all endeavoured to find items of their clubs, and they were 'sharp' in spotting exhibits of their teams. Visitors who are football fans, from this perspective, become a feature of football museums—they live and breathe football, and they 'see' and 'seek' themselves at football museums. Moreover, although not observed in my field reach, there is also a possibility that football fans encounter their own items during their visiting, since football museums display objects donated by football fans.

At the same time, museum visitors serve as 'living' exhibits at football museums. By living exhibits, I mean, visitors perform football culture (outfits, activities, love and passion) at football museums. They are visible to each other when wandering in museum halls and/or participating in museum activities, and according to my interviews and observations, they 'spot' and 'watch' each other. One of the most intriguing features shared by football museums is that a great many visitors wear football gears to express their fan identity. At club museums, visitors dressed in the same colours are showing-off of their club's collective identity. At the NFM, red (of Manchester United) and blue (of Manchester City) were the two dominant colours; while a wide range of English and non-English clubs were also to be recognized. More interestingly, as mentioned in Chapters 3 and 4, strangers identified each other through the football colours they wore, and this shared identification by the fans also generated communication between them.

In a word, visitors, especially football fans, 'see' and 'are seen' at football museums. In the 'theatre' of football museums, they act as audiences, but also as actors; they consume museums in an active way.



### **8.3 ‘Miniature’ and ‘time-machine’: enlarged football museums and multi-layered identities**

I play therefore I am: a style of play is a way of being that reveals the unique profile of each community and affirms its right to be different. Tell me how you play and I'll tell you who you are.

—Eduardo Galeano (1997:205)

To live is to live locally, and to know is first of all to know the places one is in.

—E. S. Casey (1996:18)

#### **Football Museum and the city**

One of the major findings of this research is the deep bond between football museums and an urban environs; even the National Football Museum in Manchester, as argued in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, remains local. The relationship between a football museum and its city involves a four-fold process. Firstly, in terms of museum representation, each football museum showcases local culture, and primarily the culture of the city; this feature of football museums coincides with the increasingly significant role of football in urban culture (Bale 1993, Brown 1998). For a club museum, since it is local culture that originally cultivated the team, the museum is the footballing history of the local city. Both the Schalke Museum and the Borussia Dortmund Museum highlight their local roots; the coal compartment at the Schalke Museum is a good example. The Linzi Football Museum, bearing the name of the place, focuses on Linzi's role in the game of cuju and football. The Manchester clubs are well represented at the NFM, not only because they are local teams, but also for the clubs' influential roles in English football as a whole. Secondly, and most importantly, through museum activities, football museums weave themselves into their cities. For example, the NFM, on the one hand, hosted activities on-site to celebrate Manchester's cultural festivals; on the other hand, it tailored Manchester-centred 'satellite exhibitions' to be displayed in various venues of the city. The Linzi Football Museum, similarly, has been annually involved in the citywide tourist festivals. Thirdly, museum visitors strengthen

the relationship between the museum and the city, as, according to fieldwork findings, local people were those who more engaged with the museum and typically made frequent revisits to 'their' football museums. Last but not least, cities embrace football museums and football culture. The NFM (both its Preston site and its Manchester site) and the Linzi Football Museum have become landmarks and popular tourist attractions in their cities; and there is no need to mention the Schalke Museum and the Borusseum, since they are built inside iconic football stadiums. As a matter of fact, Manchester, Gelsenkirchen, and Dortmund have great football teams and football traditions, and Linzi and Preston are of historical importance. A football museum crystallises football tradition and the atmosphere of a football-rich city, we can say, and provides a physical venue to be visited and materiality to be viewed. Further, in a city like Gelsenkirchen, or for Schalke, football is a dominant power in the daily lives of many local fans. 'Schalke' is displayed not only in the Schalke Museum, but also at the arena complex, the Schalke Meile, the 'Schalke Church', at the coal mine and through Schalke fans. The Schalke Museum, in this way, is enlarged and extended; the city, in Davis's sense (1999), is an 'ecomuseum' of the team, with local supporters being integral participants, interpreting a Schalke identity. In recent years, several museums have been implicated in the urban regeneration of certain cities (Wang 2005). The football museum, developing the ethos of the city, promoting the cultural image of the city, attracting tourists and generating economic profit, is also involved in the regeneration and (re) branding of its city. The metaphor of the 'miniature' was employed earlier to consider how football museums reflect the globalisation process; here, a football museum is also a miniature of changing characteristics of a city, providing a lens to approach a city.

### **Museum, materiality, identities**

Football museums, as encoders, circulate meanings and construct identities through representations (Du Gay, Hall, et. al. 1997). Simultaneously, visitors,

as decoders, reconstruct identities through their production of the museum.

At a club museum (the Schalke Museum or the Borusseum), a shared fan identity of the club is claimed by the museum and is widely accepted and appreciated by visitors whether they be local or distant fans. Visitors, in interviews, typically indicated a personal experience of football supporting, as showcased by the 'Fan's Room' at the Schalke Museum or the 'Yellow Wall' at the Borusseum.

The Linzi Football Museum, as argued in Chapter 6, constructs a kind of 'Chinese-ness', the sense of Linzi. According to Chinese museum visitors and my local informants, the museum generates a shared sense of nostalgia. Most visitors, especially the locals, demonstrated a desire to return to the golden age of Qi, when Linzi was prosperous and the game of cuju originated. Since 2004 when FIFA verified Linzi's role in the history of football and Linzi was branded as 'the birthplace of football', local people, evidenced by Uncle Ding and Xiao Ding, hold different attitudes towards the marketing plan, in which the Linzi Football Museum centres. Xiao Ding hopes the museum can promote the rebirth of the tradition of cuju, as folk culture; while her father holds the dream that Linzi city will be revitalised through the 'cuju/football economy', like its good old days. Here, a shared nostalgia carries different personal dreams.

The NFM showcases the England National Team, English clubs and world football, and tries to balance the global, the national and local, which makes its identity projection extremely complicated. One obvious finding is that, although the museum largely stages the history of the England National Team and hosts the Hall of Fame of English football, from the perspective of the English visitors whom I interviewed, the 'national team' and, 'English football' seldom figured. Gender identity was also a theme that barely figured, with only one female interviewee complaining that there was 'barely an exhibit of women's footy at the museum'. The only shared feature among my interviewees was the way in which football fans all identified themselves with specific football clubs and searched exhibits for mention of their clubs; and the degree of visitor

satisfaction with their museum experience was also influenced by whether their clubs were well represented.

The NFM, through the storytelling approach, also encouraged personal identity claims. Many visitors favoured the film, 'Our Beautiful Game', or the 'Football for all' zone (both featuring grassroots football) and shared their personal experience of playing football. Besides high-valued key items of the museum, visitors also noted objects such as a ticket (mentioned by a visitor who attended the same match), a player's contract (chosen by a non-fan who was a professor of Law as the most interesting item), a pair of mascots of the 1974 World Cup (mentioned by a visitor who saw the characters on a team bus a few days earlier at the Mercedes-Benz Museum in Stuttgart), which related to their personal interests and experiences.

In the 'time-machine' of museums, visitors not only relive their past experiences, but also carry the visiting experience with them into the future. Visitors at the four football museums had one thing in common—taking photos, of exhibits and with exhibits. Since pictures were not allowed in the exhibition halls of the Linzi Football Museum, the Cuju Boy statue was a popular picture spot. Pictures (sometimes together with purchases at the museum/fan shop) are souvenirs of their museum visits. The souvenir marks a visitor's unique experiences and a desire to keep experiences alive (Stewart 2003). In this sense, football fans, such as Y, M, S, and Z (Chapter 7), maintain and distinguish their experiences in football supporting through the materiality of objects as souvenirs, and also maintain a personal sense of self.

As seen from above, even though more collective identities may be represented by the museum—the encoders—these can be transformed into more personalized identities as constructed by museum visitors—the decoders.

### **Place football museums globally: the challenge**

Museums can be seen as time-space compressing (Massey 1994). The

museum is a miniature of the globalised world; it is also an ideal site to examine how museums place themselves globally. As discussed earlier, the football museums examined in this thesis, are, to a great extent, localised. At the same time, the global has emerged in the field of football museums, not only as a background, but also in negotiation with the local (Ritzer 2006). On this reading, the Linzi Football Museum is a paradigmatic example. As analysed in Chapter 6, the Linzi Football Museum connects cuju with modern football by stating how Linzi was verified by FIFA as ‘the birthplace of football’ (in the certificate issued by FIFA, it is phrased as ‘the cradle of the earliest forms of football’). Putting the suspicious rewording aside, I consider the museum’s strategy of connecting with ‘the global’ (‘Football in the Modern Age’ section) to be problematic—the focus is on ‘Linzi (the birthplace of cuju)’s relationship with FIFA (the governing body of world football)’. It is understandable to bring the verification story into the museum, but the emphasis, I believe, should be on Linzi’s/Chinese modern football, and how cuju is played in the present time (celebrating cuju/football culture), rather than on the communications with an external authority. Therefore, I consider, the museum partly failed in the challenge of locating itself globally. However, helping staging the cuju-related exhibition in Hamburg in 2006 was a positive example of connecting cuju with the world.

Concerning more practical issues, football museums also face challenges. For example, at the Schalke Museum, German is the only language used. For some museum visitors, the museum information is therefore not accessible. The Borusseum, on the contrary, provides audio guides in both German and English. The Linzi Football Museum also provides basic English introductions. I would argue that, to situate the museum globally is not only to display international contents, but also, more importantly, to communicate with the world audience through the language of football, and through different languages. With the help of museum’s institutional power as well as the popularity of football, making one’s football culture seen and understood by a

wider, international public, I believe, can be a celebration of one's footballing identity.

## **8.4 Reflections on the research process**

As a Chinese student being trained in the tradition of British social anthropology, an ethnographer conducting field research at home and abroad, a football fan communicating with football supporters of various teams, and a traveller visiting museums all in different countries, I have been fully aware of complicated identities of my own and have increasingly felt the power of 'in between'. To reflect on the research process, on one hand, I made myself into an informant in the field, and took advantage of my own experience in football supporting to understand football museums and visitors (mostly football fans). My involvement in the fan community of Schalke 04 helped me to go deeper into the background of the Schalke Museum and the fan culture of the club as an insider (Chapter 5), and my engagement with my friends allowed me to explore their personal football-related objects and stories (Chapter 7). On the other hand, I endeavoured to maintain an ethnographic sensibility and intellectual distance in my field sites: sometimes I had to hide my fan identity in the field (in Dortmund, in particular) and in the writing process.

Language mattered in understanding museum exhibitions as well as in interviews with museum visitors. I have to admit that my limited knowledge of the German language, especially spoken German, obstructed richer interview responses. In China, at the Linzi Football Museum, the interviewing process was much easier for me; however, during the writing, to translate ancient Chinese language and literature into English was painstaking. As the first academic account of the Linzi Football Museum (Chapter 6) in the English-speaking world, the museum is introduced into this field with the hope of encouraging further studies.

As mentioned in earlier chapters, the new Linzi Football Museum, Linzi, the German Football Museum, Dortmund, and the FIFA World Football Museum, Zurich (sharing the designing agency with the German Football Museum), will open their doors to the public in the next few years and will constitute intriguing sites for further research.

## 8. 5 Conclusions: the Circuit of Football Museums

A good sports museum is an institution that can combine education, participation and preservation of the sport. —Karen Goody (cited in Forslund 2006:6)

Football museums are where the fans are.

—David Pearson, Deputy President of the National Football Museum

This exploratory research presents, mainly, a comparative study of four football museums in England, Germany and China, encompassing museums on national and club levels, about ancient and modern football. The study sets out to examine identity projections at football museums through museum exhibitions, museum activities, museum services and museums' outreach.

I adopted the 'encoding-decoding' model introduced by Hall (1997), and viewed the museum and museum visitors as the encoders (the message sender) and decoders (message consumers) respectively. They both play active roles in the circulation of meaning, and constructed identities travel both ways. As a model, the 'Circuit of Culture' (Du Gay, Hall, et al. 1997, see Figure 1.1) illustrates five processes ('representation', 'identity', 'production', 'consumption' and 'regulation') in the making of a cultural product.

In Chapter 2, I developed five metaphors of the football museum as 'shrine', 'curtain', 'time-machine', 'theatre', and 'miniature', in order to address theoretical considerations on the marriage and the tension between the museum and football. In Chapters 3 to 6, based on a multi-sited fieldwork, an ethnographic account was provided to look into the National Football Museum, Manchester; the Schalke Museum, Gelsenkirchen; the Borusseum, Dortmund;

and the Linzi Football Museum. Going beyond main fieldwork sites, in Chapter 7, I briefly described football items' presence in public exhibitions and in private collections.

Drawing on the issues further discussed in this chapter, I conclude by co-opting the five metaphors of the football museum into a revised 'Circuit of Culture', to create a 'Circuit of Football Museum' figure.

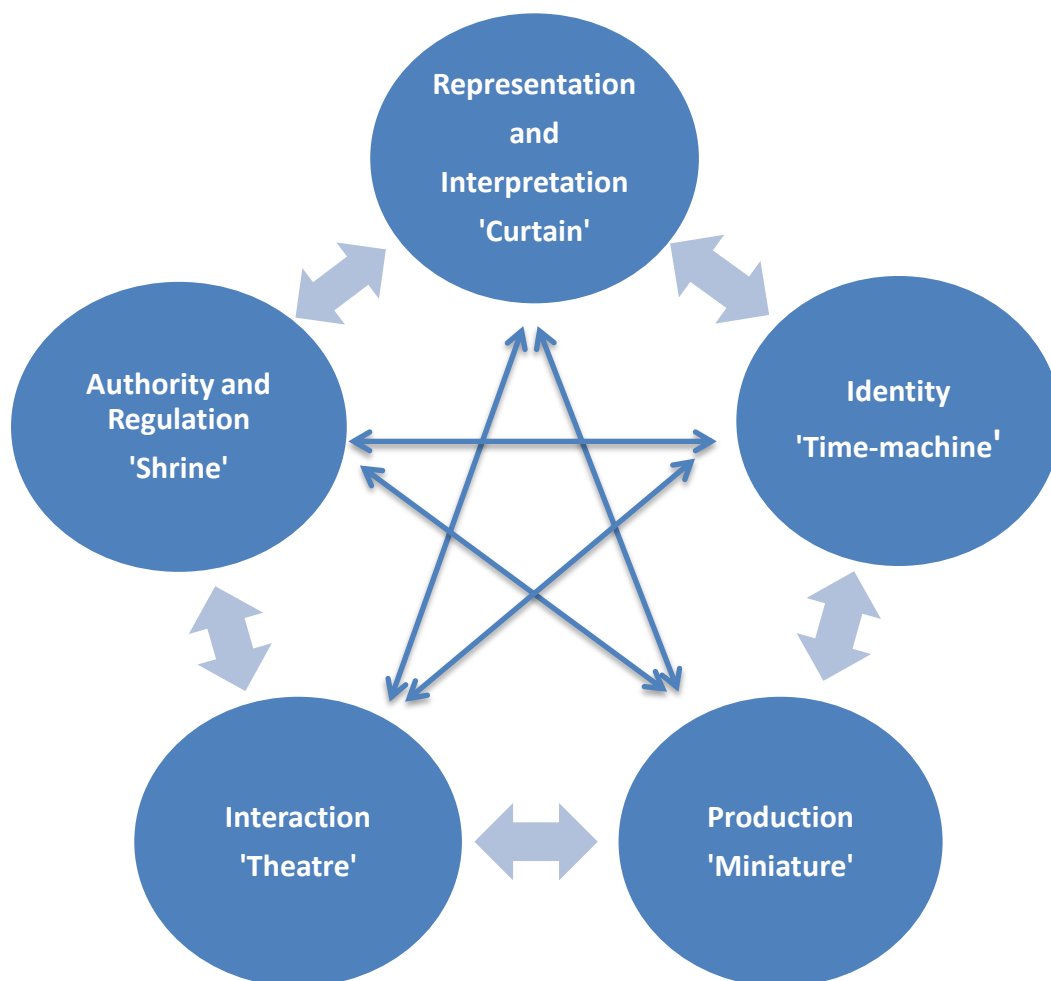


Figure 8.1 Circuit and metaphors of Football Museum, based on the 'Circuit of Culture' (Du Gay, Hall, et al. 1997).

### Representation and interpretation

Football museums articulate objects, texts, pictures, audio-visual items, and other devices under overarching interpretive frameworks, which always



engage with football-related, temporal-spatial settings. The visual form of the museum building and its built environment also involve museum representations. The approach of storytelling is favoured by football museums to situate personal stories in the grand history of football, and to engage with museum visitors. Football Museums, especially national-level, large-scale ones, such as the National Football Museum, contrive to provide a more comprehensive profile of football, relying on abundant collections and thorough research. At the same time, museum representation is highly constructive, influenced by museum curators' cultural backgrounds and knowledge structures. The half-hidden feature of museum representation, the 'curtain' metaphor, reminds museum visitors that they might maintain their own 'wise' ways of seeing and knowing.

### **Authority and regulation**

The football museum, as a member of the museum family, retains institutional authority as a shrine, and embeds the power of showing and telling (Bennett 1994). At the same time, museum practices are influenced by the government and management of the organisation. In terms of museum management, all the museums examined here engage with business plans to promote marketing practices and/or commercial services. The host city of football museums, more or less, brands itself as a football city. Thanks to the popularity of football, football museums process the potential of engaging a wider museum audience. The branding of football museums and branding of football cities promote museums' public awareness and contribute to fulfil this potential.

### **Interaction and consumption**

Museums furnish a 'contact zone' (Clifford 1997), a 'theatre', to generate communications and interactions, between the museum and its visitors and among visitors. Museum visitors, especially football fans, play an active role at

museum sites. They not only visit exhibition halls, participate in museum activities, but also perform their footballing identities during museum visits. Football museums organise a great range of museum activities to help visitor engagement to flourish. As museum institutions, football museums claim educational commitments, and offer learning programmes to encourage free-choice learning through the entertaining subject of football.

## **Production**

Football museums, always in the process of producing meanings, are cultural productions staged to the public. With the change and development of museum's roles, the cultural production exceeds the physical walls of museums. Through 'satellite exhibitions' and online activities, football museums secure a larger audience. The cultural production also manifests how the football museum incorporates itself into the cultural map of its city; how the football museum negotiates with the external world, especially the museum circle, and how the football museum position itself globally. In this sense, a football museum provides a 'miniature' to approach the city and the global through the lens of football.

## **Identity**

The identity process in football museums is a two-way construction. On the one hand, the museum, through exhibitions and activities within and beyond museum walls, represents collective identities of a football team, a city, a national, general fan community, and so on and so forth. Also, as identity is greatly being shaped by the memories of the past (see, for example, Anderson 1983, Smith 1991), the materiality of museum objects and the storytelling approach (both calling on visitors with their personal experiences as intermediaries) of football museums encourage personal interpretations and personal identities. On the other hand, museum visitors construct and perform collective and personal identities during museum visits, and beyond (through

souvenirs). As shown in visitor interviews, renewing a collective identification with one's football club is the main claim made by museum visitors (who are mostly football supporters).

Finally, I would argue, a materiality, or thing-ness is fundamental in the process of identification; through an 'objectification' (Handler 1988, Stewart 2003) of personal experiences, museum visitors maintain themselves through souvenirs. More generally, football supporters attach their emotions and their memories to objects: by keeping, collecting and displaying the things, they claim and affirm their identities. Football museums, similarly, through the 'objectification' of football culture, insert identity into thing-ness (Macdonald 2003), and museum representations are primarily generated from the visual form of such thing-ness.

# Epilogue

On September 5th, 2014, not long before I finished writing this thesis, the National Football Museum made a retweet on its official twitter (see Figure 9.1), and stated that the message was ‘especially for anyone who doesn’t think football does anything nice anymore’ (@FootballMuseum 5 September 2014).



Figure 9.1 National Football Museum’s twitter posts. (@FootballMuseum 5 September 2014).

The story was about a football fan and his club. Gohan is a thirteen-year-old Villarreal<sup>72</sup> fan who is battling against cancer. The Spanish team invited him to play alongside the professionals against Celtic FC in a charity match<sup>73</sup> on 2nd September 2014, and Gohan managed to score a goal. The club recorded a short film of Gohan—arriving at the home ground, meeting the players in the locker room, starting for the team, scoring the goal, leaving off the pitch, saying

<sup>72</sup> Villarreal Club de Fútbol, S.A.D. is a Spanish football club playing in the La Liga.

<sup>73</sup> Celtic Football Club is playing in the Scottish Premiership and is keeping a good friendship with Villarreal. The friendly match between the two clubs was a celebration to mark football’s power in changing young cancer sufferers’s lives (Dalziel 2014).

goodbyes and exiting the stadium—and published it on its official YouTube channel (VillarrealCFOficial 4 September 2014).



El sueño cumplido de Gohan

Figure 9.2 Gohan tearing the poster off. (VillarrealCFOficial 4 September 2014).

When watching the video online, one moment caught my eye; that is when Gohan tears the background poster (featuring himself and a Villarreal player) off his temporary seat in the locker room before leaving his home stadium. It is a sad moment because it is a sign of the boy going back to his everyday life of the battle against cancer; but it is also a heart-warming scene, because at least for one day, one match, football lifted his dream, evidenced by the poster he took home.

The object, with its emotional involvement and experience safely contained, is unique to the boy. Gohan's poster may exist longer than his life, and one day, it may gain a place in a football museum, conveying not only his personal story, but also a story of his club, a story of football-supporting, and a story of football's role in constructing and celebrating identity.

# Appendix Outline of visitor interviews

The semi-structured short interviews (197 in total) with visitors were conducted at the National Football Museum (NFM, 104 visitors), the Schalke Museum (33 visitors), the Borusseum (19 visitors) and the Linzi Football Museum (41 visitors). The questions varied at different museums and in different settings. The structure below only served as an interview outline. The interview design took inspirations from Sharon Macdonald's Visitor Study Questionnaire at the Science Museum, London, in the book *Behind the scenes at the Science Museum* (2002:263-265).

## Notes on the use of language:

Most of the interviews at the NFM were carried out in English (with the exception of five Chinese visitors). Interviews in Germany were mainly in English, with the help of my limited knowledge in German language. At the Linzi Football Museum, except for one English visitor, the Chinese language was used. The following outline is in English only.

### Self introduction

Hello. I am a student from St Andrews University in Scotland and I am doing my research on football museums. If you have some time, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your visit.

### Section 1 About you

Can I ask where you are from? How much time did you spend getting here?

Are you a football supporter?

Are you making this visit alone? /Are you coming with your family/ a group?

### Section 2 Museum exhibition

Have you finished your visit? If not, what did you see at this point?

Generally speaking, how do you like the exhibitions?

Which is your favourite part/subject? Do you have a favourite object/item/story?

(NFM and the Borusseum only) What do you think about the temporary exhibition?

### Section 3 Museum experience

Is this your first visit? If not, how many times have you visited the museum?

(NFM only) Have you visited the Preston site?

Does the museum meet your expectations? If not, would you please explain more specifically?

Have you tried some hands-on activities (and in NFM, the football plus) /joined the museum tours and/or workshops? What did you do? How do you like it?

### Section 4 Beyond the museum visit

(Schalke Museum and Borusseum only) Did you just finish a stadium tour or are you going to take one?

Have you visited other football museums?

Do you like going to museums in general?

### Section 5 Cuju and Linzi Football Museum

(In the UK and Germany, if time allows) Do you know cuju? If yes, do you know there is a football museum about cuju in Linzi, China?

### Closing question

Is there anything else you would like to share about your visit today?

Thank you so much for your help.

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### **National Football Museum (Manchester) Documentation**

- National Football Museum Strategic Plan (1 July 2010-31 March 2016) (Unpublished)
- National Football Museum at Urbis-Business Plan. (Unpublished)
- National Football Museum-Interpretation Plan (Unpublished)
- National Football Museum-Public Programme Plan. (Unpublished)
- The Homes of Football Programme(2012)
- Moving into Space Programme(2012)

### **Football Museum Sites**

#### **Borusseum**

<http://www.borusseum.de/>

[@BORUSSEUM](https://twitter.com/borusseum)

#### **Deutsches Fußballmuseum**

<http://www.fussballmuseum.de/>

#### **Linzi Football Museum**

<http://www.qiwenhuabowuyuan.com/zuqiu.html>

#### **National Football Museum**

<http://www.nationalfootballmuseum.com/>

[@FootballMuseum](https://twitter.com/FootballMuseum)

#### **Schalke Museum**

<http://tradition.schalke04.de/de/museum/schalke-museum/ausstellung/page/81--81--.html>