Freedom through Football

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

January 2019

School of Arts and Cultures

Media, Culture and Heritage

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Abstract

The utilization of a fan base in order to address social and political issues that is not directly related to football is a socially significant, if underexplored topic. The main reason for this practice-led research project is to use documentary practice as a means to explore and interpret fan activism through football. This research project will contribute to the understanding of the football fan activism as it outlines the profile of a group of football fans that use football in order to make a stand against any repressive attitudes wherever it derives from.

F.C. St. Pauli is a well - known German football team around the world but not necessarily because of its success on the pitch. The reason why this team is internationally renowned and so distinctive is the socio-political views that its fans have been projecting ever since the mid-1980s. FC St. Pauli fan clubs exist outside Germany, having 500 registered supporter clubs around the world, with fans in Europe, the US, Canada, South America and lately India (VICE, 2017). Greece is one of these countries. Greece has experienced dramatic political and societal changes due to the recession. This has led to a polarisation in politics between the left and right wing, which makes an ideal context to situate this research. The documentary, *"Freedom through Football"* narrates the story and activities of a group of male activists who established the St. Pauli F.C. fan club in the city of Thessaloniki, Greece.

Due to the absence of practice – led research about football fan activism and more particularly about FC St. Pauli in the social sciences, I am confident that this project will be a distinctive contribution to this field of the activist documentary. Throughout the years, film has played a significant role in the generation of political and societal changes. Activist filmmakers have tried to capture the essence of social movements by filming and presenting demonstrations and actions, which tend not to be aired on mainstream media. However, what distinguishes my work from other activist documentary films is the fact that I am not producing a didactic/propagandistic activist piece. My goal is to give space to the audience to construct their own understandings from the film.

Dedication

This piece of work is dedicated in loving memory of my mother.

Acknowledgements

Statement of Contribution

This is to declare that the work contained in this thesis comprises original work conducted by the student under the supervision of Dr Ian McDonald and Dr Majid Khosravinik.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any other degree at any other institution.

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Introduction

Ever since the economic recession started in Greece, altering the societal, political, and financial status quo (Gerodimos, 2013), progressive social movements started to emerge in order to fight against inequalities. Most famous amongst these movements was *indignados*, which reached its peak during the protests against austerity, in 2011, bringing hundreds of thousands of protesters of every age, gender and class out in the streets (Sotirakopoulos & Sotiropoulos, 2013). The economic crisis also prompted a significant rise in right wing populism in the country, resulting in attacks against immigrants and left-wing activists (Roushas, 2014; Korounis, 2016; Halikiopoulou & Vasilopoulou, 2015; Dinas, *et al,* 2012). Greek filmmakers attempted to capture the unrest with their cameras, documenting the impact that the austerity measures had in Greek society (Gastine, 2012; Katsaounis & Paschalidou, 2012; Pandeleakis, 2012; Chatzistefanou & Kiltidi, 2011). Furthermore, they presented the rise of extreme right-wing populism, which culminated with the establishment of Golden Dawn party in Greek parliament (Tzivara, 2015; Kourounis, 2016). Film theorists in Greece (Papadimitriou, 2016; Karakasis, 2014) raised questions with regard to the potential role of documentary to shape perceptions, combat right-wing populism and help contribute towards positive social change.

During that time, one of the social movements that emerged in Greece centred around football fans activism which attempted to bring political and social change using fan clubs as a vehicle. Football fan activism had already been established in countries all around the world, with Germany being in the forefront. F. C. St. Pauli, a second division football team in Hamburg, consists of fans with left wing ideology practicing activism through football against fascism, racism and homophobia (Dalakoglou, 2013; Kassimeris, 2013; Davidson, 2014; Merkel, 2012; Perdana, 2016; Totten, 2014; Haasen, 2018). The aim of the members of the Thessaloniki fan club is to bring this form of activism to Greece; therefore, I decided to research this fan club by using a non-conventional research method.

In the social sciences, documentary film as a research method is relatively new (Filmmaking Research Network, 2016) though it has long been accepted as part of ethnography and anthropology (MacDougall 1998; Tope *et al,* 2005; Banks 2001; Banks & Morphy 1999; Gray 2010; Grimshaw & Ravetz 2009; Grant 1998; Kapur 1997; Wood & Brown 2012). However, there are many who have argued against it as a useful way to generate new knowledge (Rothman 1998; Harper 2012; Ruby 2000; Gibbs, Friese, & Mangabeira, 2002;

Pauwels 2010; Grady 1991). With this project, I am attempting to contribute in this debate by using documentary film as a research method.

"Freedom through Football" is a documentary film that contributes to the understanding of the football fan activism based on Nick Crossley's (2011, 2015) theory of 'relational sociology' which in essence refers to humans as social beings developing social ties only by interaction. Visual representations of the construction of these ties presented in the film constitute a strong argument of the high importance and utility of the film medium towards the contribution of new knowledge. Furthermore, by presenting this culture using the film medium I am offering an alternative portrayal to the mainstream media which tends to present them as 'mindless hooligans' only interested in causing mayhem. This portrayal is mainly a result of the fact that football hooliganism is an under-researched area (Poulton, 2005; Dunning *et al,* 2002). Finally, by placing this film within the activist documentary genre and by critiquing other contemporary activist documentary films I outline how activist film can contribute towards social and political change.

In short, this is a practice-led research project aiming to contribute to the field of the activist documentary by using a largely observational method to explore the activism of a group of male football fans belonging to FC St. Pauli fan club. This written thesis not only provides an explanation and justification for the claims made about the contribution to the field of activist documentary, but also provides a theoretical and historical perspective of the social and political context for football fan activism in Greece. Here, I am attempting to provide an answer to the following questions:

1. Why do football fans, here the activists who are part of FC St. Pauli fan club in Greece, consider it necessary to engage in activism at this specific time in Greece?
2. How are football fans using the sport of football in order to engage with broader social and political issues?
3. How does my film, *"Freedom through Football"*, contribute to the utilization of documentary film as a research method?
4. How does activist documentary film contribute towards social and political change?

Chapter 1. Political Content

Introduction

"Freedom through Football" is a documentary film researching the activities of a fan base in order to address social and political issues that are not directly related to football. In this chapter, I explain how the recent political situation has led people in contemporary Greece to engage in radical forms of fan activism, here focusing on the F.C. St. Pauli fans.

Since this is a film-based research project, I am critically examining the attempt of Greek filmmakers who have tried to portray the economic crisis and the rise of Golden Dawn in their documentary films by adopting a variety of filmmaking and editing techniques.

Fascistic movements have been growing in countries facing political, societal and financial instability, often expressed in increased levels of violence and extremism. Greece constitutes a major example, as it descended into recession since 2008 and has yet to recover. The new societal, political and financial status quo in the country, which led to the distrust of voters towards the mainstream political parties, helped the extreme right to prosper placing the Neo-Nazi far right extremist party Golden Dawn in Greek parliament with 17 seats in the 2012 election. Since then the country has experienced the occurrence of large numbers of violent incidents, including beatings and stabbings against immigrants and minorities, clashes with anti-fascist protestors and left-wing activist groups. The latest report of The United Nations Racist Violence Recording Network (2017) is quite indicative, as the incidents were 102 in the year of 2017 alone.

This chapter offers a thorough overview of the definition of fascism in order to help us comprehend the reasons behind the rise of Golden Dawn in contemporary Greece and analyzes in depth the preconditions needed for it to prosper.

1 Defining Fascism

Social, political and economic changes in Greece during the debt crisis have helped far right extremism to rise, as expressed by the Golden Dawn, an extreme, ultra-Nationalist and racist party, which has entered the Greek Parliament. Even though they were politically marginalized in the past, the party emerged during the recession years and following the elections in 2015. They are now the third largest party in the Parliament. By linking the party's ideology and rhetoric with a different definitions of fascism, I will attempt to grasp the critical understanding needed with regards to the rise of Golden Dawn in contemporary Greece.

First, defining fascism is not an easy task. As Renton (1999: 18) writes, "historians face a

bewildering array of rival models and definitions when it comes to elaborating a critical theory of fascism". However, by analyzing one of Golden Dawn's main principles, deriving from the Greek word 'palingenesis' meaning rebirth (McDonald, 1999: 355), we can comprehend in a more effective way Griffin's (1993: 26) reference to fascism as "a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism". As Griffin elaborates (1995: 3):

> "The mythic core that forms the basis of my ideal type of generic fascism is the vision of the perceived crisis of the nation as betokening the birth pangs of a new order. It crystallizes in the image of the national community, once purged and rejuvenated, rising phoenix-like from the ashes of a morally bankrupt state system and the decadent culture associated with it".

This fits precisely with Golden Dawn's profile, as the party's rhetoric often referred to the rebirth of the Greek nation, an idea that got more relevant since after Greece's descent towards recession resulting in the heavy reliance on loans from the European Union.

Furthermore, Paxton (2005: 218) describes fascism as "passionate nationalism", which is expressed by a "mass based-party of committed nationalist militants"; a description that fits the portrait of Golden Dawn members who proclaim themselves as passionate Greek patriots and declare the importance of their country above anything else.

In order to achieve an in-depth comprehension of the reasons behind Golden Dawn's rise to political power we need to analyze why Fascism has been emerging in general and that, according to Alexander (1987: 26), is because of extreme social crisis. In the 1930s, Germany was suffering major political and economic crises during the Weimar period and so, as Tomasulo (1998: 101) highlights "the longstanding myths of that culture became effective symbolic tools to promote fascism, and, in the twentieth century, those cultural myths were most forcefully conveyed on film", for example Leni Riefenstahl's (1935) film *Triumph of the Will.* Undoubtedly, Greece is a country deep in social crisis and provides fertile terrain for Fascism to thrive. Reichardt (2013: 453) highlights three socioeconomic explanations for the rise of Fascism and those are, "late industrial and democratic development and/or economic backwardness; sudden and profound economic crisis; and social tensions caused by heightened class conflict". Golden Dawn did not emerge by force as they made their way into parliament by winning 7% of the popular vote (500.000 voters). This indicates that Fascism can emerge within Parliamentary democracies, as it only needs "a major structural dysfunction at the heart of existing system" giving as examples inter-war Brazil and Europe after 1918 and 1929 (Griffin 1993: 210). Greece is a country in a relatively advanced liberal democracy undergoing a structural crisis, meeting all the preconditions for Fascism to take off without being crushed.

1.1 Nationalism: Ethnic nationalism and Golden Dawn

Gellner (1983: 1) defines Nationalism as "a political principle which holds that political and national units should be congruent". Many European countries have witnessed the rise of Nationalism in the forms of extreme right parties, which are adamant that in their countries political and national ideas are not compatible due to today's neoliberal status quo established by governments. According to their political agenda, this has resulted in the loss of national identity or in other words the decline of the term "Nation".

Guibernau (2010: 4) talks about the "new radical right" and Boréus (2013: 297) highlights the rise of the so called "modern radical-right parties" which are capitalizing on popular frustration with hardships caused by recession, the rise of immigration and the loss of identity, to propagate that social structures such as class and religion are faulty. This rhetoric has managed to push people towards nationalism as Eatwell (2003: 53) confirms, "individuals lose a sense of belonging and are attracted to ethnic nationalism". This new radical right declares that it is anti-elite, populist and challenges the current functioning of democracy preaching hate against mainly Muslim and non-white immigrants leading to numerous outbreaks of discrimination.

Boréus (2013) argues that strong ethnic nationalism makes it difficult for immigrants to become insiders, as they have to face nativism, a strong form of ethnic nationalism. This is defined by Mudde (2007: 19) as an ideology that "holds that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group ("the nation") and that non-native elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation state". Golden Dawn's motto is "Greece belongs to Greeks".

Since 2008, Greece has plunged into deep recession and has not managed to recover so far. As a result, violent extremism and social problems have risen sharply in the wake of the country's debt crisis and subsequent austerity programs. Furthermore, Greek society started facing political and societal instability. According to Dinas *et al.*, (2012) Golden Dawn is an ultra-nationalist and extremist party with a discourse based on racial discrimination. Halikiopoulou & Vasilopoulou (2015: 4) argue that Golden Dawn "among current far right-wing parties in Europe, it is the one that most resembles fascism, and in particular Nazism, in its outright espousal of National Socialism: the endorsement of what it terms the 'third biggest ideology in history', i.e. nationalism, combined with support for an all-powerful state premised on popular sovereignty". Finally, Roushas (2014: 5) states that Golden Dawns' ideological statements clearly reveal elements of nationalism and nativism and are full of anti-immigration and anti-systemic rhetoric.

In order to comprehend the rise of Golden Dawn, there needs to be a thorough analysis of the changes that the political system has suffered in Greece since the debt crisis began. After the restoration of democracy in the country in 1974, there has been a stable two-party system governing Greece. On one hand, there was the conservative right-center wing New Democracy party and on the other hand, the Socialist left-center wing PASOK party. According to Gerodimos (2013: 16), this was a period of systemic corruption, accumulated debt and repetitive public administration failures. Although it is not certain when the stable two-party governance ended Gerodimos (2013: 16) argues that,

> "the debt crisis that finally broke out in late 2009 marked the beginning of the end for the post-1974 political system. I argue that the collapse of the Papandreou government and the formation of the Papademos coalition government in November 2011 constitute the turning point, as the political system entered a transitional period of tectonic changes."

After the 2012 general elections, Halikiopoulou and Vasilopoulou (2015: 5) noted "a de-alignment and disillusionment with mainstream parties, which resulted in the fragmentation of the party system and the rise of small anti-establishment parties of both the right and the left". In other words, according to Gerodimos (2013: 16), the noteworthy result was the retreat of the traditional left/right division and the emergence of pro-Euro group against anti-austerity cleavage. The fact that Golden Dawn held an anti-austerity stance boosted their electoral percentage placing them in Greek Parliament, as Gerodimos (2013: 19) writes "Golden Dawn has systematically and quite aptly exploited people's grievances regarding lawlessness, poverty and insecurity so as to build a grassroots organization which then materialized electorally". Additionally, it has also been argued that in times of economic downturn the opportunity cost or risk of supporting a more radical party is lowered (Brückner & Grüner 2010). Halikiopoulou and Vasilopoulou (2015: 5) argue,

> "An analysis of the electoral results indicates that support for the Golden Dawn is an attitudinal phenomenon deriving from people's stance on the political system in general: a protest vote against the status quo and disillusionment with governing parties"

Gerodimos (2013: 19) points out the importance of the Golden Dawn case "as it reflects the normalization and paradoxical institutionalization of anti-democratic rhetoric within Greek society". In parallel to that, transformation in the political level is "the normalization of extremism within Greek society" (Gerodimos, 2013: 17) which can result in negative

outcomes such as public mistrust of democracy, hate crime incidents and decline of civic culture.

So why has Golden Dawn been successful in Greece? Halikiopolou and Vasilopoulou (2015: 6) argue,

> "the success of the Golden Dawn must be understood as dependent on the extent to which it was able to propound plausible solutions to the three sets of crises - economic, political and ideological - that befell Greece and culminated in an overall crisis of democracy to which the Golden Dawn offered a nationalist solution".

In short, economic, political and ideological crises fused the success of Golden Dawn party in Greece. However, the rise of the fascistic right has been met with opposition movements form the left. In the next section, I outline the political characteristics of one strand of opposition rooted in non-Party political organisation. This is relevant to the discussion of the kind of activism practiced by members of the FC St. Pauli.

2 Activism and Kropotkin's Mutual Aid

Originating mainly from the political far left, one can notice that solidarity and comradery constitute the main ideas among these football fan activists. They have developed these tendencies by spending time together in the football grounds caring for one another, standing side by side at political rallies and taking part at marches. As a result, these football fan activists, ideologically, are following a more humanistic approach towards the oppressed and less fortunate members of contemporary society. As it is clearly portrayed in my film *"Freedom through Football"*, these individuals act under the principals of mutual aid and solidarity, ideas that, among others, are the cornerstone of their political and sociological beliefs. These notions were firstly introduced by the Russian anarchist theorist Pyotr Kropotkin who according to Washton Long (2016: 57) "called for "mutual aid" or freely agreed upon cooperation which he described as emerging from the "natural law" or the basically ethical morality of early peasant communities". In his pamphlet Anarchy (1891: 4), the Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta describes solidarity as "harmony of interests and sentiments" which causes the liberty of all men.

Kropotkin (1908: 8) gives a more thorough definition of human solidarity, by clarifying that,

> "the unconscious recognition of the force that is borrowed by each man [sic] from the practice of mutual aid; of the close dependency of everyone's happiness upon the happiness of all; and of the sense of justice, or equity, which brings the individual to consider the rights of every other individual as equal to his own".

At this point it would be useful to highlight more of Kropotkin's notions about mutual aid in order to detect with clarity the timely connection with this tendency to help the oppressed and the people in need by F.C. St. Pauli fandom.

Kropotkin had a strong belief that no social life could have been possible if people had not been interfering in favour of the wronged. He argued, "it is evident that life in societies would be utterly impossible without a corresponding development of social feelings, and, especially, of a certain collective sense of justice growing to become habit" (Kropotkin, 1908: 42). Prompted by that, Kropotkin (2002: 5) was against any kind of individualism as it "is incapable of inspiring anyone. There is nothing great or gripping in it". In other words, Kropotkin (1908: 145) believed that the feeling of mutual aid is a tendency "so deeply interwoven with all the past evolution of the human race that it has been maintained by mankind up to the present time, notwithstanding all vicissitudes of history". What Kropotkin is adamant about is that the human brain could not reject the feeling of mutual aid as it has been nurtured by thousands of years of human and pre-human social life. These football fan activists are in essence verifying Kropotkin's latter point by following the exact same mutual aid tendency today.

Kropotkin (1908: 176) used the example of the everyday relationship of miners and seamen who by their "common occupation and contact with one another create a feeling of solidarity, while the surrounding dangers maintain courage and pluck". As it has been clearly stated in the film from one of the subjects, football fans have developed the same feeling of solidarity by being in the same space, namely the football grounds. Kropotkin (1908: 181) went one-step further in terms of mutual aid in the life of laboring classes, "for everyone who has any idea of the life of laboring classes it is evident that without mutual-aid being practiced among them on a large scale they never could pull through all their difficulties".

Critics of his theories such as Porton (1999: 8) characterize his views as being "unquestionably out of step with contemporary political theory". Pryce (2012: 10) even though she initially finds Kropotkin's ideas about mutual aid outdated and inaccurate, subsequently argues, "its overall message is as true now as it ever was; and some of Kropotkin's thoughts are decidedly prescient and are only lately being revealed as correct". Bekoff and Pierce (2009: 57) in their research come to a significant conclusion in reference to Kropotkin's theories by arguing that "we might wonder what the intellectual history of evolution would look like had Kropotkin's ideas been taken more seriously". Finally, Kropotkin (1908: 148) noted,

"In our mutual relations, every one of us has his [sic] moments of revolt against the fashionable individualistic creed of the day, and actions in which men [sic] are guided by their mutual aid inclinations constitute so great a part of our daily intercourse that if a stop to such actions could be put all further ethical progress would be stopped at once. Human society itself could not be maintained for even so much as the lifetime of one single generation".

Kropotkin believed that change in society could be possible if protest was continuous and whether this change could be achieved by the use of violence or not. Kropotkin's views on the utilization of violence are balanced. To be more specific, on one hand Kropotkin was critical of Tolstoi's non-resistant anarchism and even though he was in sympathy with most of his work, he accused Tolstoi and his followers of asceticism i.e he states "it seems to me, too, that he has bound himself, without reason or judgment, to the letter of the New Testament" (Kropotkin, 2002: 4). On the other hand, Kropotkin unlike Mikhail Bakunin, Errico Malatesta and other anarchists of his era was not promoting violence; yet, he was not opposed to the use of it either. Malatesta (1891: 26) talked about the abolition and expulsion of government, which would eventually lead to a change in society "by revolutionary action". Kropotkin's main ideology for humanity to progress was meant to be fulfilled by following peaceful procedures such as mutual aid and solidarity. After all, he argued, "the practice of mutual aid and its successive developments have created the very conditions of society life in which man [sic] was enabled to develop his [sic] arts, knowledge and intelligence" (Kropotkin, 1908: 189). However, Kropotkin was not condemning acts of violence which as he wrote were "useful acts in the struggle toward liberation" such as the assassinations of tyrants or even civil wars which included conflict of classes "though he wished it to be limited to the smallest number of victims and a minimum of mutual embitterment" (Kropotkin, 2002: 4). While the activists in *"Freedom through Football"* do not identify themselves fully as anarchists following the Kropotkian approach, I believe that by participating in peaceful demonstrations, by organizing football events to raise money and clothing for refugees, and by conducting peaceful round-table discussions in order to take future actions, their actions can best be understood as a form of Kropotkian mutual aid. Nevertheless, as it is presented in the film they too, even though they are not promoting violence, are not opposed to it especially when they have to confront right wing extremists or when the police provoke them. Another useful way to frame the activism expressed in *"Freedom through Football"* is to draw on Gramsci's concept of 'organic intellectuals', not least because of the orientation of this concept to the leadership of resistance through forms of popular culture.

3 Antonio Gramsci: 'Organic Intellectuals'

Antonio Gramsci in his 'Prison Notebooks' talks about the role of intellectuals in political struggle and also highlights the importance of culture in political battles. As Bairner (2009: 197) notes, "Gramsci's ideas allowed for the possibility that Marxist and socialist intellectuals could begin to take seriously all forms of culture, sport included". According to Gramsci (1971: 9) "all men [sic] are intellectuals…but not all men [sic] have in society the function of intellectuals". However Gottlieb (1989: 116) contradicts this statement by arguing that "each man [sic], finally, outside his professional activity, carries on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a "philosopher," an artist, a man of taste, he participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is, to bring into being new modes of thought".

There are two categories of intellectuals: traditional and organic, with the former – academics, teachers, clerics, artists – fulfilling actions that transcend particular historic conditions although they are able to work on behalf of or in opposition to the status quo in any given era (Gramsci 1971). Additionally, Humphrys (2011: 3) notes that traditional intellectuals "indirectly represent the interests of the ruling elites because they propose a trans-historical view of human activity that does not permit serious disruption of existing social relations – instead assigning eternal characteristics to what are in fact transient arrangements".

Gramsci's (1971) definition of an "organic intellectual" describes a person that counteracts hegemony by identifying with a group and trying to organize a social power within this group. Their practice consists in "active participation in practical life, as constructor, as organizer, "permanent persuader" and not just a simple orator (but superior at the same time to the abstract mathematical spirit)" (Gramsci 1971: 10). So, and according to Humphrys (2011: 3), organic intellectuals rather than only having specialized knowledge, they become directive – they have both particular comprehension and actively engage in politics. This organic intellectual has to associate themselves with a major change in society, a way to make a difference which is what so many people wish to identify with. Bairner (2009: 119) goes one-step further as he argues that, "organic intellectuals may be tied to subaltern groups in society. Not all of their ideas and actions are necessarily enlightened. From time to time, however, they provide the essential intellectual leadership that can benefit such groups and which cannot be given by traditional intellectuals".

According to Jarvie (2007: 415) "sport has the capacity to work across societies and agencies to make or attempt make the world a better place" and many who follow the Gramscian notion believe that sport "can become an arena for social contestation (Bairner, 2009: 200).

Gramsci (1971) argues that sport is worthy of intellectual examination stressing the importance of popular culture of which sport is constituent part as Bairner (2009: 201) writes,

> "It is important to recognize that the fact that sport reflects economic power relations is no excuse for ignoring its social significance or its potential as an arena for cultural struggle."

Bairner's (2009) work is an excellent example of using the Gramscian notion in order to understand political activism in sport. In order to highlight the potential role for organic intellectuals in sport he noted his own personal experience as a member of a governmental advisory panel in Northern Ireland where he studied the subsequent influential role played by organic intellectuals. Bairner (2009: 124) explains, "the influential role played in relation to sport by one group of organic intellectuals in Northern Ireland – a role that has allowed them to effect change in ways that would not have been possible for politicians or so-called public intellectuals". In a few areas, Northern Ireland is a divided society more apparent in the world of sport and the advisory panel, which included Bairner, had to find robust solutions in order to eradicate issues of bigotry and sectarianism in the field of sport. However, and as Bairner (2009: 125) notes "what it lacked was anyone exclusively representing the grassroots". Even though "the panel made laudable suggestions for change" (ibid: 125) it failed in practice. Only when Northern Ireland football fans stepped up the bigotry and sectarianism were finally eradicated from their ranks.

> It is instructive, but not surprising, that it is football fans themselves, and especially their organic intellectual leaders, who have been quicker to identify this potential than politicians or public intellectuals as conventionally defined (Bairner, 2009: 126).

FC St. Pauli fandom and its activities constitute a very good example in order to highlight the potential role for organic intellectuals in sport. Football fans in general form a social group and in this case, FC St. Pauli fans can be considered as the 'organic intellectuals' who are trying to organize a social power within this group. According to Entwistle (1979: 117), "it was important for the working-class movement that organic intellectuals should be generated from within the working class itself, from amongst the ranks of manual workers, and not simply through the conversion of sympathetic intellectuals from other social classes". F.C. St. Pauli Thessaloniki Branch is highly energetic with numerous of activities (anti-racism and anti-fascism demonstrations, football tournaments against homophobia etc.), as they are not only football supporters but they are people who see football as a form to help change society and they are playing football under the banners of leftism and non-conformism. One of many

of their core ideas is the usage of football as a form of political praxis in order to address community issues such as poverty, unemployment, gentrification, homelessness, low educational attainment, inter-generational conflict, lack of opportunities, and oppression by the state and police against alternative lifestyles. Totten (2014: 13) argues, "Sankt Pauli fans embody sport activism and this thrives because fans have successfully utilized the popularity of football to sustain political and cultural struggle".

St. Pauli fans play political football, employing football as a stage from which they can project their political values, where and as Bairner (2009: 120) writes, "progressive initiatives in the world of sport can be the result of work carried out not by politicians or by well-meaning traditional intellectuals but by organic intellectuals".

4 Response of Greek Filmmakers to Crisis

The medium of film has been a significant part of the response to the economic and political turmoil in Greece. In the final section of this chapter, I will review and critique how Greek filmmakers have responded to the economic crisis and the rise of the Golden Dawn. I am interested in the modes of documentary practice adopted by the filmmakers.

Before the economic crisis, documentary films were not as popular as fiction films in Greek cinema. However, from around 2008 Greek contemporary filmmakers started to focus on the portrayal of the financial, political and social aspects of it, having as their goal to frame and reframe it through relevant documentaries. The films that came as a result were varying in techniques and strategies of reality representation. One characteristic that the majority of them had in common was the fact that they were produced independently without any state or political party funding which helped filmmakers to be more 'politically engaged' without having to face censorship.

In this section, I will focus on Lydia Papadimitriou's (2016) work, which analyzed four Greek documentary films. Papadimitriou (2016) raises questions with regard to the potential role of documentary to shape perceptions and help contribute towards positive social change. Each of these four films presents facets of the crisis in a different way. The films of Marco Gastine (2012) *"Democracy: The way of the Cross"* and Aris Chatzistefanou (2011) *"Debtocracy"* analyze solely political aspects of the crisis, while Yorgos' Pandeleakis (2012) *"155 Sold"* has a more polemic view and Nikos' Katsaounis & Nina – Maria's Paschalidou (2012) *"Krisis"* tries to have a plurality of positions. Papadimitriou (2016: 469) writes,

> "The reported events have been framed variously depending on the political orientation of the different outfits, ranging from an emphasis on the effects of corruption and state

inefficiency to calls of solidarity towards the victims of neo liberalism. Within this context documentary filmmakers but also independent journalists benefited from the new relatively cheap technologies and both produced and circulated films that offered different perspectives on the unfolding of the crisis. Some of these perspectives were explicitly oppositional to the mainstream media representations of the crisis, while others tried to offer a more balanced and less openly judgmental approach".

In Aris Hatzistefanou's and Katerina Kiltidi's (2011) film *"Debtocracy"* activist journalism is the main approach as the filmmakers are offering an analysis of the Greek debt crisis and they call for a refusal to pay back of the EU loans. In other words, they try to promote, in a polemical and didactic way, the odious debt concept, which suggests that Greeks should not be obliged to pay off the debt, as they were not responsible for its creation at the first place. The film tries to make a case by explaining the developments that occurred in Ecuador, a country facing the same problems as Greece. Papadimitriou (2016: 471) writes "the film functions as an activist tool using a number of techniques to inform opinion and persuade its audience to reject the bailout deal, clearly positioning itself on the side of the protesters and the *indignados* that were gathering on Syntagma square".

In terms of technique, *"Debtocracy"* has been filmed and edited in order to keep the audiences' interest as long as possible, "utilizing a relatively fast editing pace, montage sequences with uplifting music, a mix of archival and everyday imagery, cartoons, sketches and interviews together with a focused explanatory and caustically humorous voice – over" (Papadimitriou 2016: 472). The film is clearly one – sided and for that reason controversial as the filmmaker was aiming to offer a different explanation of the debt crisis to the audience compared to the one presented by the mainstream media as Kinkle and Toscano (2011: 50) note,

> *"Debtocracy* assembles a star cast of critics of political economy not to accumulate insights but to construct a comprehensive explanation of the origins of the debt crisis in the class project of neoliberalism, tracing the collusions of Greek elites in dispossessing the Greek people and laying out the bases for a political challenge to a "debtocracy" that is already, as an interviewed physician notes, depressing lifespan".

Differentiating himself from Hatzistefanou's and Kiltidi's journalistic and expository approach, Yorgos' Pandeleakis (2012) film *"155 Sold"* follows what Papadimitriou (2016) describes an "oppositional observation". The film focuses on the demonstrations that took place at Syntagma Square in Athens during the *indignados* movement in June 2011 presenting itself as a "raw document". The film presents the events from the perspective of the protesters without voice over or post-demo interviews. The title refers to the number of MPs of the

Greek Parliament who voted in favour of the second bailout. The filmmaker is following an observational approach however, he uses expository intertitles, which "frame the ideology of the film and assert the director's oppositional approach" (Papadimitriou, 2016: 474). In order to capture the intensity of the confrontations between the protesters and riot police, the filmmaker uses hand held shots, which are highly mobile attempting to set the mood. Furthermore, we can identify his intrusive editorial interventions, which highlight police suppression in many moments of the film; as Papadimitriou (2016: 474) writes, "Pandeleakis punctuates his careful selection of material with editorial decisions that guide our attention to what he wants us to notice and how he wants us to feel".

This is a film with an anti-memorandum political and polemical drive whose "strictly observational claims are challenged" (Papadimitriou, 2016: 475) and that is mainly because the film feels like a personal statement, a point of view and accusation of police brutality during the June 2011 *Indignados* movement in Athens.

In their film (2012) *"Krisis"* Nikos Katsaounis and Nina – Maria Paschalidou, two Greek filmmakers who live outside Greece, unlike the aforementioned two films, aim for plurality through interviewing a variety of people. By talking to experts, everyday citizens and activists, they present a more optimistic approach of the economic crisis. As Papadimitriou (2016: 471) explains, "this film is expository and interactive in that it utilizes voice – over and interviews, but unlike the previous two, its aim is to represent the crisis from multiple angles rather than to offer a particular reading of it".

The film does not just portray recent events, but on the contrary, it goes back at the start of the Olympic Games held in Athens in 2004. In this way, the filmmakers are showing the country in its more affluent condition, and contrast it with the presentation of how events unfolded after the assassination of a 15-year-old student by a police officer in Athens, which led to months of uprisings. The filmmakers are furthermore touching the sensitive issues of migration and the rise of extreme right by giving the chance to immigrants and Golden Dawn members to express their views, favoring or opposing multiculturalism and pluralism. The filmmakers are choosing adamantly not to focus on the negative impact of the crisis, and through editing techniques; they present this crisis as a chance of renewal. Papadimitriou (2016: 475) explains,

> "The film explores the ways in which the crisis has been understood and experienced by a broad range of people representing different ideological, educational, regional, generational, ethnic, racial, class, and ability parameters. The pluralistic and ultimately optimistic approach chosen reflects both its mode of production and the position of the directors as relative outsiders".

Finally, the film which is adopting solely the observational mode technique, leaving the audience to construct their own meanings and as Papadimitriou (2016: 478) argues "reveal something beyond the official rhetoric of the political parties and its media representations" is Marco Gastine's (2012) film *"Democracy: The Way of the Cross"*. The filmmakers are using the direct cinema techniques first used in the 60s with Robert Drew's (1960) film the *Primary* being their main influence. Therefore, there is no voice over narration, no interviews, no diegetic music and the interaction between the filmmaker and the subject remains to a minimum. With this technique, there is less editorial intervention, which allows the audience to construct their own meanings and understandings.

The film follows the story of four candidates from different political parties getting ready for the 2012 general elections in Greece and it focuses on their electoral campaign. Two of the candidates were from the two parties which shared governing the country for the last 30 years (PASOK, New Democracy), one from the left wing SYRIZA party and finally one from the far right "Golden Dawn" party in an attempt to "achieve an ideal of neutrality in the representation of all political agents" (Karakasis, 2014: 122). The film portrays these four candidates and their ideologies and beliefs, allowing space for the viewer to position themselves accordingly without leading them towards any political direction (no propaganda) as Karakasis (2014: 124) notes,

> "As the empirical conclusions drawn from screenings of the film have so far indicated, members of the audience tend to identify more with candidates akin to their own political views and, through identification, they tend to reinforce these political preconceptions interpreting the filmic text accordingly".

Despite the fact that the filmmakers are aiming for 'balance' with minimum intervention it seems that filming and editing techniques lead to the director's personal point of view. In terms of filming, it seems that vital moments from these campaigns are left out as the filmmakers are fully respecting the code of ethics, filming only what they are allowed to, while additionally in terms of editing, the inclusion of specific scenes leads the audience towards one issue, as Karakasis (2014: 124) writes,

> "the examination of the criteria for the inclusion or exclusion of scenes suggests the existence of an idea controlling the formation of the narrative, an underlying premise or message. In most scenes, however, the prevailing issue seems to be the voters' widespread mistrust towards politicians. The choice of excerpts indicates a strong preference to scenes where candidates are confronted by members of the public expressing their lack of confidence, doubt and disbelief".

Marco Gastine's (2012) film *"Democracy: The Way of the Cross"* neither offers a solution, nor does it have a cathartic moment with a happy ending, however what it mainly achieves is to be more open to interpretation compared to the other three films presented above. Papadimitriou (2016: 479) concludes: "the film's power is its exploration of the dynamic between candidate and voter, the exchange and interaction that is the heart of the democratic process, however distorted this might have become".

4.1 Golden Dawn portrayed in Greek documentary films

Apart from the depiction of financial crisis in Greek documentary films, another issue that was attempted to be documented by Greek filmmakers was the reasons behind the rise of Golden Dawn. As already stated in this chapter, filmmakers, in this case too, have adopted different techniques and modes of documentary filmmaking in order to represent reality. Angelique Kourouni's (2016) film *"Golden Dawn: A personal Affair"* cannot elude from a journalistic approach in which the filmmaker, by infiltrating the organization, attempts to discuss how the rise of the Neo-Nazi party has affected her life. On the other hand, Marsia Tzivara's (2015) film *"Burning from the Inside"* has a more activist approach presenting the responses of Greek immigrants, who live in Germany, towards the rise of right extremism in Greece. Even though these two films have different perspectives on the same matter they share the same objective, which is to inform, and through that to contribute to the resistance against the rise of far-right extremism.

In *"Golden Dawn: A personal Affair"* the director immerses herself and the audience into the ranks of the Golden Dawn Neo-Nazi party trying to inform why the rise of far-right extremism in Greece should be a personal affair for everyone. In order to achieve that, she follows members and voters of the party, as Kourounis (2016: 98) explains, "I did not want to make a film as an outside observer from the side-lines but from within – a film about them, reaching as deep inside as I could without lying or having actually to embed myself within the group". Angelique Kourounis (2016: 98) is a journalist/filmmaker and the adoption of an investigative journalistic approach is quite evident in her film; as she admits, "as a journalist, my habit is always to get right to the source of information; and this is how I did things as a filmmaker". Therefore, by infiltrating the party, gaining their trust and through interviews, Kourounis (2016: 98) concludes, "I was after the thoughts of the hard-core individuals who are convinced of the rightfulness of their ideas, not out of need but out of conviction".

The filmmaker dares a challenging attempt, which is to keep a balance between making a partisan film while avoiding polemic propaganda. Kourounis (2016: 100) explains, "I admit

my film is not objective. But it is fair. It is not a propaganda. I was afraid that such a film would have been counter-productive and miss its purpose of reaching as broad of an audience as possible, bringing them to ask themselves questions".

However, the fact that Kourounis is using narration in the majority of the film it is unavoidable to point out that the film follows a certain propagandistic path leading to a polemical rhetoric consequently failing to engage audience to a deeper debate and discussion. Critics have praised the film for capturing in a full detail the Golden Dawn phenomenon by presenting what is in the mind of the party's supporter. Mitropoulos (2016) notes, "it shows the manipulation of the middle classes, who are unable to make ends meet because of the crisis, as well as recording Golden Dawn's assault squads and the relationship of the organization with the police, but also to criminal activity". However, according to Fraga (2016) Kourounis fails to give a clear explanation on why this film is a personal story and how the rise of Golden Dawn is affecting her life, as "apart from the claim in the beginning of the movie, Korounis does not explain how the rise of Golden Dawn could affect her. Instead, the film feels like a straight-forward piece of investigative journalism".

Overall, it seems that this film is more a portrayal of Golden Dawn's next-door supporter rather than the filmmaker's personal story in connection to the party whereas in terms of meeting the aim of contributing to resisting against the rise of extreme far right by informing the film makes a noteworthy attempt.

Marsia Tzivara's (2015) *"Burning from the Inside"* unlike Angelique Kourounis film follows a different motif, as the film is not a personal journey but the documentation of the rise of Golden Dawn in Greece as seen from the perspective of a collective of Greek immigrants in Germany. A group of Greek antifascist activists who live in Germany made this film and through interviewing mainly intellectuals from the left and antifascist activists, who live both in Germany and in Greece, the filmmaker offers the point of view of the Greeks of Diaspora. She shows how they try to organize the antifascist movement in Germany by raising global awareness on the situation in Greece, "we focus on the fascist practices in general. This is the problem: the democratic structures do not exist in Greece. I question democracy in general and the way that it can function" (Tulke, 2014).

The film adopts a clear activist approach by imposing questions and attempting to initially inform people and subsequently raise awareness about the rise of far-right extremism not only in Greece but in Germany as well. In terms of technique, there are hints of observational filmmaking however, interviews also dominate in the film. According to the filmmaker, with this film, she aims to inspire the people to unite and fight against fascism in both countries. The filmmaker makes an interesting choice by presenting how Greek immigrants who live in

Germany discuss developments in Greece as they confess in the film how they are experiencing racism themselves being in a foreign country. In that, way the filmmaker is debunking the myth that Greek immigrants are not facing discrimination being in Germany, a notion that was adopted by members of Golden Dawn.

> "First of all, sometimes we feel racism as well. That is one more reason to sympathize with people who are affected by racism in Greece for example. The second is that you are away and you want to have the weapons to fight. You want to have a voice but it is not easy. As an immigrant, you have to find your connections, if you are new like me you have to find people that you can socialize with and you have to find you means, the way you can protest and fight. We are many Greeks but not many of us are active. Basically it is the same people over and over again that are interested" (Tulke, 2014)

Marsia Tzivara's film succeeds in informing and raising awareness with its activist approach and the detailed interviews however, the fact that it is one sided, fails in achieving a deeper debate.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have focused on the reasons behind the rise of far-right wing extremism in a global scale initially and in Greece subsequently, discussed the profile of football fan activists and how they operate, and critiqued the response of Greek filmmakers to the economic crisis and the rise of Golden Dawn.

As it has been clearly stated in this chapter, the main reason that led the extreme far-right, political party of Golden Dawn to gain electorate power was the ongoing recession and the gradual mistrust of Greek voters towards the establishment. This had as a result the form of the F.C. St. Pauli Thessaloniki branch, an activist group that is practicing activism through the sport of football following Kropotkin's theory of mutual aid and solidarity, in essence acting as "organic intellectuals" a notion, which was developed by Antonio Gramcsi. By analyzing in depth the image of these fan activists I have reached the conclusion that football fan activism can be characterized as a successful form of reaction against the rise of extreme right.

There has been a variety of financial crisis representation through film in Greece and all the documentaries analyzed in this chapter adopt different techniques in representing it as Papadimitriou (2016: 479) writes, "as a means of expressing opinions and documenting sociopolitical situations differently, independent documentary filmmaking has proved very versatile, creative and inspirational during the Greek crisis".

Chapter 2. Introduction to Football Fan Activist Culture

Introduction

"Freedom through Football" is a documentary film attempting to contribute to the understanding of the football fan activist culture, which emerged alongside the rise of new social movements. I will frame my critique of this fan culture within Nick Crossley's (2011, 2015) theory of 'relational sociology' which in essence refers to the ways in which humans as social beings develop social ties and forms of identity via social interaction. He argues, "human beings are shaped and become social actors within interaction" (Crossley, 2015: 66). New social movement learning and understanding is key in order to comprehend the place of the F.C. St. Pauli fandom in that spectrum. Ultras use the sport of football as a means for practicing political and social activism working as a group, while at the same time creating bonds and affiliations with other Ultras from all around the world forming transnational social movements. In this chapter, I will argue that football can be introduced as a new form of political communication amongst football fans which not only makes it a powerful tool of resistance but also challenges the notion of media representation of Ultras' as a group of mindless hooligans.

1 Activist definition – Sport and Human Rights

In order to gain a better understanding of the football fan culture which is functioning under the ideology of activism, we need firstly to get a thorough grasp of the definition of activism and secondly to get an idea as how global activism has seen a dramatic rise in the recent years. Furthermore, we need to understand how sport and more specifically, how football is used so that marginalised groups in our society can succeed in fighting for their human rights.

1.1 Activists Definition

The worldwide rise of Neoliberalism has had a considerable effect on peoples' engagement with politics, resulting in the rise of global activism. As Chandler (2011: 37) argues, "the basis for the rise of global activism is political disconnection between state elites and societies and a popular disengagement from mass politics". Reitan's (2007: 5) definition of activists fits perfectly with the aforementioned reference and it is the best way to describe how concerned individuals have come together and have organised themselves against any injustice. She defines activists as "a role assumed by individuals or collective actors either to resist what they consider to be a political wrong or to act to bring about political change, through either contained or transgressive tactics, excluding political violence" and therefore, "an activist may be a member of a social movement". Activists have been organising

themselves globally, developing ties and eventually resulting in the formation of global social movements, as Reitan (2007: 7) highlights "this trend toward increased transnational activism has coincided and accelerated alongside the global spread of neoliberalism".

1.2 Sport and Human Rights

The connection of sport with politics and the fight for human rights has not been as foregrounded in the past as it is today. Donnelly (2008: 386) argues, "International concern in sport organizations was slow to develop, with sport organizations generally accepting the principle that sport and politics should be separate". In recent decades, sport and politics have started being heavily linked, with football holding the lion's share. However, that connection was for the wrong reasons as Kuhn (2011: 52) argues, "the most obvious is football's political exploitation by those in power: politicians try to gain public support by identifying with the people's game, football victories are turned into political ones and football tournaments are used to support authoritarian regimes". Donnelly (2008: 382) goes a step further arguing that, "competitive sport is based on principles of social exclusion; and sport may be used to promote ideological conformity, nationalism, militarism and inequitable attitudes about gender, race and disability", in other words what he is trying to explain is that human rights can be violated in ways that are related to sports.

On the other hand, contemporary studies (Kidd, 2008: 372) have shown that sport can address social problems in the developed world such as poverty with humanitarian intervention or even help deescalate conflicts, with the 'Sport for Peace' campaigns by "advancing reconciliation and intercultural communication in regions of conflict". Activists have acknowledged the possibility of sport's help in the achievement of human rights. Donnelly (2008: 387) brings to the fore the example of the Homeless World cup and how football can be of a major assistance, "increasingly, marginalized groups and populations have begun to announce their presence and claim their right to human rights with the use of sport".

2 New Social Movements – Relational Sociology – Limitations – Transnational Fan Cultures

At the introduction of this chapter, I referred to Nick Crossley's (2011, 2015) 'relational sociology' as the main theoretical framework, which will help us comprehend the tendency of football fans to come together. Crossley (2015: 67) highlights the way they are creating relations and social ties, interacting, forming a social movement, which is composed of transnational fan cultures ending up practicing activism through football. He concludes, "human activity is, for the most part, interactivity, and it is best analysed as such". New social movements are outside the traditional civil society, submerged in everyday life creating

meanings and definitions of identity, critiquing representative democracy, challenging conventional ways of doing politics and challenging the power of the state establishing a counter power (Mellucci, 1988; Offe, 1985; Della Porta, Reiter, 2011). However, as I discuss later in this chapter, transnational global movements have their limitations in terms of their effectiveness.

2.1 Relational Sociology

As social animals, human beings form societies and create networks and relations. Indeed Crossley (2011: 2) notes, "we were social before we were human and perhaps only ever became the type of organism that we now call 'human' because we were social". Relational sociology gives priority to these interactions and social ties as opposed to both, according to Crossley (2015: 66), "individualism (methodological and ontological) and those varieties of holism". King (2012 [2004]: 19) saw relational sociology to be a "social ontology which insists that society consists only of social relations: humans interacting with each other on the basis of shared meanings", while Perasović and Mustapić (2017: 962) illustrate how it is "creating a common denominator, a covenant, a symbolic field—or expressed in sociological terms—a social movement". Finally, Crossley (2015: 68) gives a solid definition to the term relational sociology,

> "Relational sociology, by contrast, posits that the social world is a network of interactions and ties, of numerous types and on various scales, between actors who are themselves formed in those interactions. Actors are always in-relation to one another, in this conception, and their actions are always interactions. Similarly, wholes are structures of interconnection between actors: networks".

The idea of activism, the intention to do good by helping the oppressed and fighting against any injustice did not arrive in the brain of one individual, but in the course of interaction and conversation. Crossley (2015: 72) mentions Tarde's (1903) theory of the Laws of Imitation in which he brings up an example of Darwin's idea of evolution. He explains, "It did not mysteriously appear one day in the 'brain cells' of Charles Darwin or anybody else but rather took shape over time as various different scientists and philosophers engaged with one another's work". What is important about this example, according to Crossley (2015: 72), is the "dialogical process in which the idea was born and worked over by numerous individuals before assuming its 'finished' form". In *"Freedom through Football"*, the Greek fans make their pilgrimage journey to Hamburg, Germany in order to interact with their counterparts. During their presence there, they engaged in that 'dialogical process' which helped them to come up with the idea of activism through football and now are trying to introduce it and expand it in Greek society aiming to achieve a change. In essence, they are imitating the

activist ideas and way of functioning of their counterparts in Hamburg, showing that activism through football did not just appear one day in their heads but they imitated the activist strategy of St. Pauli Ultras in Germany. According to Crossley (2015: 71), "the origin of culture, from a relational point of view is human interaction". Cleland *et al* (2018: 4) talk about cultural relational sociology mentioning that, "society consists of humans who, in their networks, make up the systems and conventions that guide the behaviour and actions of others". In a society, one important factor that is driving the behaviour and actions of social actors is the situation in which they are. Another factor determining human behaviour is the other people that the actors are involved with and the relations and ties they develop. Furthermore, action is always oriented to other actions and events within the networks in which the actor is embedded. Cleland *et al* (2018: 177) conclude, "Ultimately, relationships are fundamental within the group, to share ideas and recruit new members and to engage in a dialogue with those in power".

In the film this collective of football fans tend to gather in specific places in order to exchange ideas and form relations and ties. Two characteristic examples in the film are the coffee place in which they gather for leisure time, watching games and discuss about future actions and the football pitch where they organise their annual footballing event. Crossley (2014) refers to these places or events as a 'focus' which attracts actors with specific interests, bringing them together and thereby allowing them to meet, form ties, and mount the collective action which, in turn, creates a social world.

2.2 New Social Movements

In the wake of 21st century, a Neoliberal model of economic governance has been established in many countries. The introduction of austerity measures has created many injustices with middle and mainly lower classes suffering the most. In the midst of this unprecedented creation of inequalities within societies, new social movements have emerged in order to fight for justice and equality. As Della Porta & Reiter (2011: 92) argue, "social movements do challenge the power of the state, establishing a (temporary) counter power".

The formation of modern social movements was a consequence of the creation of the nation-state and as Della Porta & Tarrow, (2005: 1) argue, "the nation-state has for many years been the main target for protest". The majority of these new social movements are anti-state, and its members fight for autonomy trying to create more than one political spaces, as Jessop (1990: 184) notes, "no more struggle for equal political rights of participation but for the recognition of difference and autonomy". That centrality of autonomy for Chandler (2011: 38) is the reason that makes new social movements anti-state, "not only because of their subjective

political views but also because of their organizational practices". New social movements try to oppose the intrusion of the state and the manipulation of the system. Melucci (1988: 247) explains, "new social movements exist outside the traditional civil society/state nexus; submerged in everyday life, they have 'created meanings and definitions of identity', which contrast with traditional political boundaries". In other words, they become visible but not institutionalised.

Offe (1985) highlights that new social movements critique representative democracy and challenge conventional ways of doing politics. Furthermore, Della Porta & Diani (1999: 174) highlight the importance of protest culture and the attempt to influence public opinion, the final repository of political power, "protests serves to draw the attention of elected representatives to the fact that, at least on certain issues, the majority in the country is not the same as the majority in parliament".

Solidarity is a major factor in social movements' social identity construction. Collective action cannot occur in the absence of 'we', therefore direct democracy is the basic political system, which its members are trying to impose in society so decisions taken could help improve ordinary people's lives. Della Porta & Diani (1999: 242) argue, "in the social movement conception of democracy the people themselves (who are naturally interested in politics) must assume direct responsibility for intervening in the political decision-making process".

New social movements differ from the old trade unions and communist party politics as Chandler (2011: 37) notes, "these groups stressed their radical opposition to traditional political engagement". Heartfield (2002: 142) with his remark goes a step further by arguing that "the new generation of radicals did not, as a rule, challenge the official leadership of the trade unions, but side-stepped the organised working class together, to find new constituencies and fields of activism. Taking the path of least resistance, these radicals took their struggle elsewhere".

The establishment of Neoliberalism came with the creation of supranational institutions like the International Monetary Fund and summits of G7, G20 and the World Trade Organization. As a response, transnational collective action was introduced by the formation of transnational social movements. (Kolb; Bennet 2005) "Coordinated international campaigns on the part of networks of activists against international actors, other states, or international institutions". (Della Porta & Tarrow, 2005: 2)

2.3 Global Movements Limitations

Global movement formation, as well organised and effective as it can be, comes with

limitations. Studies (Chandler, 2011; Kaldor 2003) have shown that the global interconnectedness is the other side of a lack of communication domestically. People have more in common with others who live abroad than the ones who live close by. What they have in common is the isolation from and rejection of their own political communities. Kaldor (2003: 82) recognises the fact that Social Movements and NGOs have transnational relations "precisely because these groups inhabit a political space outside formal national politics (parties and elections)". This political space outside parties and elections is characterised by Chandler (2011: 41) an "invisible political community which is merely a radical re-representation of their rejection of a real and all too visible political community: the electorate". That according to Chandler (2011: 42), by refusing to engage politically, is the reason why members of transnational social movements are retreating into "personal solipsism".

> The unwillingness of many global activists to engage with their own society reflects
> the attenuation of political community rather than a radical challenge to power.
> (Chandler, 2011: 48)

Della Porta & Diani (1999) explain that for transnational social movements to work, its members need to share the same set of beliefs, feel the sense of belonging in their own societies initially, and then expand their affiliations with other activists abroad subsequently. The culture of public protest and the engagement of social actors in political and/or cultural conflicts should be a common denominator for transnational social movements especially since the fact that these movements work outside the conventional style of political participation i.e. voting.

2.4 Transnational Fan Cultures – F.C. St. Pauli

Football fan activists consist one expansive transnational social movement, which has the basic characteristics of a political movement. Ultras share the same set of beliefs, feel a sense of belonging, especially in the football grounds they meet and finally adopt the culture of protest. As Cleland *et al* (2018: 161) explain, "football fans across Europe are engaged in complex and variable networks of interaction where they share information or seek to assert their difference".

Due to transnational fan culture F.C. St Pauli, as many other big European football clubs, have many followers in Greece. The majority of these supporters are leftists who are trying to use the popular sport of football in order to make a change. They share a common love for football and the same anxieties for the future. Their goal is to contribute to the anti–fascist struggle organizing solidarity actions. As their counterparts in Germany, they believe that football is an extension of politics and they are using it in order to make a change.

They are supporting teams, which represent the same ideologies as F.C. St Pauli's, and in many stadiums, they have posted numerous banners with the iconic symbol of the German football club. Furthermore, the presence of German St. Pauli supporters has been observed in many football matches of the Greek teams and vice versa. It seems that there is a social leftist movement going on in whole Europe, which is using football in order to pass its actions and ideas. Political and societal changes in Greece have pushed many Greek supporters of various football clubs to unite and to establish the Greek F.C. St. Pauli fan club in order to stand against repression.

3 Football Ultras as a New Social Movement - St. Pauli Fandom other Left wing oriented football fans

So far, in this chapter by using Nick Crossley's (2011; 2015) theory of 'relational sociology' I presented an analysis on how New Social Movements form and function. Now, I am going to focus on a specific social movement which has emerged in contemporary society, and it is using the sport of football in order to achieve change. Studies has shown (Lestrelin, 2012) that football fans constitute one of the biggest social movements in the world and they are using football stadiums as the places where they gather, interact and build their social ties and relationships. Cleland *et al* (2018: 3) note, "football fandom is an excellent way of assessing the networks of interactions. Football fans are heterogeneous and come from a wide range of backgrounds and interests. They share a love of the game and their clubs, and this is increasingly becoming an area of political mobilization". This political mobilization is connected with collective action, which means that the number of individual actions are insignificant without the relational processes involved within it (Melucci, 1996a). In other words, political mobilization is achieved through fans interaction. Football fandom according to Ha-Ilan (2017: 914) is "a form of collective behavior conducted within social networks". Footballing community has shown the ability of constructing a cultural identity, companionship and breathing space which according to Blackshaw (2008: 336) "are the only things permissible in a modern public space".

Football by itself is a sport full of emotions. While watching a football game and/or interacting after the game in a social space, a football fan experiences exalted feelings, which are only possible by being a member of a group. Relationships, social ties and interactions alongside protests, constitute 'collective effervescence' (Bromberger, 1995; Jasper, 1997) which is palpable only at football matches and it is unlikely to be exhibited when people are on their own. As Cleland *et al* (2018: 34) argue,

"emotions are inherently relational; they emerge from social interaction. Football and social movements provide ample opportunities for individuals to interact and build a collective effervescence".

Collins (2004) identifies four ritual ingredients: group assembly, barrier to outsiders, mutual focus of attention, and shared mood. Football ultras follow a code of solidarity and morality in their groups, which lay the foundation of an interaction ritual. A ready-made network of fans is having as the next goal the recruitment of new members, which is key for every social movement. Football stadiums constitute an important space where the recruitment can take place, as Crossley argues (1999: 822) "that working utopias are places of pilgrimage, they become meeting grounds for key movement activists and intellectuals, and thus sites of debate and discussion. They lure likeminded activists, concentrating them in situations where they can and will exchange ideas".

3.1 Football as a means of resistance

Supporters in the early years of professional football were mainly from the lower tiers of society. Football was an opportunity for cheap entertainment after a week of hard labour in the factories or shipyards. The momentum changed when commercialism entered football and saw wealthy corporations stepping in and the game becoming commodified. This significant change escalated after Neoliberalism swept over in a global scale creating this sense of inequality, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The commodification of the popular sport is more than evident today and the Ultras movement since its formation has placed itself in opposition to this trend. Kennedy & Kennedy argue (2013: 122) "the increased commodification of everyday life, the breakup of traditional communities, the fostering of anti-immigration sentiment and a heightened sense of inequality concerning wealth distribution has had a clear influence on the direction of the ultra-movement".

However, football fans were not that politically active as they seem to be today, Kuhn (2011: 159) argues, "the political affiliations of Ultras have always been ambivalent. While most have maintained a decidedly "apolitical" stance, there have been explicitly right-wing as well as explicitly left-wing adaptations". Neoliberalism has brought right-wing nationalism or forms of populism in many countries in Europe and that had an effect in the sport of football too. Right wing hooligans infiltrated the stands in order to get people to fight for race and nation. On the other hand, anti-fascism and anti-racism are both unifying force for left wing fan culture. Kennedy & Kennedy (2013: 122) highlight that,

> "this movement is in large part now defined by its reaction to issues such as racism within football and the neo-liberal colonization of the game; in this, the ultra-movement takes its place among radical political cultures that have grown on the

continent in reaction to what is viewed to be the abandonment of social democratic principles in the face of market reformism.

However, how can a sport which is represented by organizations (football teams) controlled by the ruling class (corporations, rich families) become a means for resistance and practicing activism? Football has become business, commercialised and the fear of the sport's social importance is high likely to be undermined. The answer is solidarity, which is nurtured in inter-fan relationships. Cleland *et al* (2018: 167) note, "when fans combine their effort and focus on specific goal, then they can wield substantial power over clubs, government, or authorities". Furthermore Goldblatt (2011) argues, "we are lucky that in our otherwise depoliticised, individualised and over-planned world, there is somewhere where large crowds can reinvent their own identities". In *"Freedom through Football",* the activists highlight how they have specifically learned about solidarity by being in the stadiums, helping each other and feeling part of a group. Kennedy & Kennedy (2013: 118) highlight that "football has traditionally been proven to be highly resistant to the commodification of its culture". Therefore, they bring to the fore the examples of Ultras from FC St Pauli in Germany, AS Livorno in Italy, Omonoia Nicosia in Cyprus and Hapoel Tel Aviv in Israel; who are supporters trying to take ownership of their clubs back from speculators. Furthermore, Kuhn (2011: 159) argues, "practically all Ultras groups are united in the struggle against "Modern Football" i.e the over-commercialization of the game, and the repression of football supporters". Outside union trade movements, football stadia are the only places where people of the working class can unite under one banner, one common cause. Cleland *et al* (2018: 180) argue, "that football provides a sense of emotional belonging to a wider social collective". Football can give the chance to the people who are in the margins of society to have a voice and stand against oppression, alienation and exploitation. Kennedy & Kennedy (2013: 120) conclude,

> "whatever the reason or combination of reasons for this tipping point the changing attitude to football in leftist circles has been palpable. Rather than being seen as another means to blunt class-consciousness, parties on the radical left now embrace the game in the belief that football is part and parcel of a collectivist working class culture that offers a sense of community in the face of the onslaught of the market and rampant individualism".

One of the key strengths that the sport of football possesses is popularity, which manages to mobilize the masses and deliver messages and according to Perdana (2016: 52), "football now considered as an effective intermediary on conveying an information from sender to audience efficiently". Kuhn (2011: 105) refers to specific examples of political protests in various ways such as "disruption of games, activists storming the pitch waving flags with political

messages, unrolling banners with political messages, demanding the release of prisoners". In *"Freedom through Football"*, the activists describe how the popularity of football is helping this kind of activism to grow.

3.2 F. C. St. Pauli fandom

The groups of people who were severely affected by the rise of Golden Dawn in Greece were migrant minorities and members of the radical left. Dalakoglou (2013: 290) argues that a coalition of state apparatuses and neo-Nazi street gangs routinely targeted migrant communities, antifascists, social centers, and the Left.

> "All this violence may also imply a political dead end of the regime, which due to austerity cannot provide anything else but state terror and violence in order to make itself present to the residents of the country".

As a result, the impact that recent political situation has had on people in contemporary Greece has led them to forms of fan activism. To be more specific, F.C. St. Pauli Thessaloniki fan club was established in order to fight against the rise of far-right extremism in Greece. F.C. St. Pauli, a team based in Hamburg, Germany, according to Petra & Kassimeris (2013: 1) "has certainly been instrumental to developments in its immediate environment though not so much for its success on the pitch, as for the sociopolitical views that its fans have been projecting ever since the mid-1980s".

There is a tendency of struggle against oppression amongst F.C. St. Pauli fandom and even though during the Nazi regime in Germany, as Davidson (2014: 62) highlights, "there are no recorded examples of heroic resistance to Nazi rule, individual or otherwise", contemporary FC St. Pauli fans are keeping a more robust anti–fascist stance. Davidson (2014: 62) explains, "members of the St. Pauli fan scene laid a wreath at the Koln – Ehrenfeld cenotaph in honor of a group of youngsters called the Edelweiss Pirates who openly opposed Nazis". The rhetoric is simple: lessons must be learned from the past, the far right must never again be allowed to rise to prominence as Merkel, (2012: 367) argues:

> "St Pauli fans organized a number of political rallies criticizing local right-wing politicians, budget cuts, police suppression and the opening of a shop selling Nazi memorabilia. It is this combination of political activism and football fandom that has made this small club well known outside Hamburg."

Perdana (2016: 46) also highlights their commitment about social activism and anti-fascism political activity as "St. Pauli football club is the first football club in Germany who officially forbid right-wings political activity on their stadium". The Millerntor Stadium is the only ground of a professional football team in Europe with a rainbow flag waving above the stadium.

The majority of FC St. Pauli supporters around the globe are inclined to left - wing ideology and they have a distinct anti-racist and anti-sexist stance who according to Perdana (2016: 53) are "committed to political action and social education inside and outside Germany". Furthermore Totten (2014: 12) attempts to explain why this team is so different from the majority of football clubs, "Sankt Pauli is largely distinguished amongst football clubs by what is done in addition to the football in terms of left-wing political activism, and a commitment to act to promote their views known and work to achieve their goals".

The role of football has been central in their success, because of its popularity and mass appeal and as Merkel (2012: 361) writes, "is an integral and prominent part of the struggle for hegemony in German society". Furthermore, according to Totten (2014: 4) football is also used in order "to address social and political issues which are not directly related to football at all".

The political outlook of the fans is drawn from a coalition of activists; anti-fascist, anti-racist, anti-homophobic, feminist, anarchist, socialist and communist. As McDougall (2013: 237) argues, "many of these supporters shared a common world view which tended to be working class, suspicious of nationalism, opposed to the right and sharing a generally leftist orientation".

It has repeatedly been proven (Haasen, 2018) that FC St. Pauli's merchandize is stronger than that of most first division football clubs and whoever is wearing the St. Pauli logo (skull and bones) is a political statement similar to wearing a T-shirt with a Che silhouette. The profits from merchandizing, alongside any other coming from actions or events goes out to help "Viva con Agua" projects which, as Perdana (2016: 47) is explaining "have the objective to relieve the global problem of insufficient water and sanitary supplies".

3.3 Ultras: Media Representation

In his research about the Turkish Ultras Nuhrat (2018: 875) writes that every time he was talking about his work with Ultras the reaction from non-fans was that he is working with crazy people, "this discourse feeds off of and into conventional characterizations of football fans as irrational and crazy people with perverse priorities or concerns". This is mainly because of the false portrayal by the mainstream media of football Ultras as these mindless thugs whose end goal is just to cause mayhem. Football hooliganism is relatively an under-researched area (Poulton, 2005; Dunning *et al,* 2002) and one of the main goals of my film is to challenge public opinion about Ultras.

Dunning *et al.* (2002: 2) claim that football hooliganism "is not so much a scientific sociological or psychological concept as a construct of politicians and the media".

Mainstream media repeatedly exaggerates when reporting football related violence by using as Poulton (2005: 28) highlights, "hysterical headlines, emotive language, evocative imagery, and graphic photographs all help to frame the football fan hooligan as a member of a homogenous group of drunken, tattooed crop headed oafs". Hall (1978: 34) accuses the media of causing 'moral panics' when it comes to football violence and that the journalists with their 'news-making' agenda "have a bearing on how the problem will be seen and understood by the public".

When it comes to addressing football hooliganism, popular discussions are limited to shallow explanations of the reasons behind the problem. According to Poulton (2005: 37) the media continue to contribute to this simplistic approach, as she notes, "the apparent source of the hooligans' anti-social, problematic behaviour is commonly viewed by the press to be the hooligans themselves and their 'natural' lunacy and savagery". Unfortunately, important factors that cause these problems are ostentatiously ignored such as for example the provocative behaviour by the police, or attacks by right wing inclined hooligans, which can force Ultras to a defensive stance. Furthermore, poverty and sociological exclusion may force Ultras to resort to acts of violence just to try to make a point. Scalia (2009) rejected mainstream media's shallow analysis of football violence and offered a rationale for violent events in football stadiums highlighting the need to consider also non – footballing factors that cause violence. In mainstream media, there was always the tendency to play the blame game by pointing fingers, accusing a group of people, which according to the headlines is an irrational collective with an animal instinct, contacting meaningless acts of violence. It is no coincidence that a violent minority get most of the attention by the media while the quiet peaceful majority are ignored. The need to move away from characterising all football fans as a homogenous group is necessary. Poulton (2005: 42) suggests,

> "A balanced approach to the treatment of football supporters by the media is required, rather than framing them all as would-be or wannabe 'hooligans'. More considered, more measured, more accurate and, at times, more sensitive reporting, is called for. This involves a degree of reflexivity and circumspection. First, the 'hooligan' is not some bestial 'other'; he represents a particular side of fan culture that cannot be ignored".

What the mainstream media have failed to acknowledge and report is the fact that in contemporary football fandom, attitudes have changed with many fans embracing activism through the popular sport. Kennedy & Kennedy (2013: 120) argue, "attitudes have evolved from the (rather well-worn) blanket hostility and disregard meted out to the game in an earlier period to one where the possibilities of harnessing the energy of the game and the activism of its supporters to progressive ends is the dominant discourse".

3.4 The Turkish alliance, 'Istanbul United' and the 'Çarşı' phenomenon

Even though this research project is using mainly the FC. St. Pauli Ultras as a vehicle to demonstrate that football can become a means of practicing activism and resistance; it feels almost necessary to refer to the 2013 Gezi Park Uprising in Turkey. What is noteworthy is the fact that the Ultras of the three biggest football teams in Istanbul united and massively participated alongside the everyday citizen, fighting against repression and demanding equal basic social rights.

Before I go into more details about the Gezi Park protests, it would be useful to present Ultras' identity in Turkey; how they are perceived, under which circumstances they function, and finally if there is a connection between politics and football in an openly authoritarian environment. Nuhrat (2018: 873) writes, "ultras imagine their subjectivity as 24-h fans who congregate whether or not there is a match. This communitarian life reinforces their identity and allows them to keep organizing towards performing support for the team". In other words, Ultras in Turkey do not just meet during match days but also during the week to interact, prepare banners and write songs for the next game. This is a good example to comprehend how 'Relational Sociology' applies in fan culture. Ultras in Turkey refer to their football team as a 'common language' (Nuhrat, 2018).

As it was clearly stated earlier in this chapter football fans are perceived by the mainstream media as mindless hooligans resorting to violence for no reason. Turkish public opinion shares the same ideas when it comes to Ultras as Nuhrat (2018: 874) notes, "'amigos' or 'hooligans' are imagined here as looters or lowlifes with no social attachments to prevent them from acting violently". The political situation in Turkey is quite unstable especially after the attempt of a coup in 2016. Opposing voices to PM Erdoğan are often dealt with by oppression and violence. Football as already stated in this chapter can be used as a means of resistance and that is why the Turkish authorities are trying to keep the popular sport and politics separate. They aim to keep football in the realm of entertainment as Nuhrat (2018: 872) argues, "class-based othering works towards containing ultras in the supposedly more innocuous realm of culture thereby both removing ultras from the political site and also realizing a specific political goal, which discursively disconnects the sites of culture and that of politics".

In May of 2013, a peaceful demonstration against the gentrification of a park in the city of Istanbul became the beginning of a massive protest against the Erdoğan regime. It was a genuine outburst of people from all classes, sexes and ages standing their ground against governmental authority. As Turan & Özçetin (2017: 3) explain, "the Gezi Park protests opened up an episode of contention in which heterogeneous and largely unorganized masses

responded to major threats of commodification of nature and other shared spaces". What made this uprising more interesting was the fact that Ultras from all three teams of the city united under the same cause. It was only then that the demonstrations became livelier, more massive. Nuhrat (2018: 877) notes, "a momentous development in relation to ultras identifying with political viewpoints took place during and in the aftermath of the Gezi Uprising". Ultras in Istanbul share leftist ideologies (anarchists and other leftist groups) and as football grounds according to Nuhrat (2018: 878) are the only "legitimate gathering sites for politically motivated masses in the aftermath of the 1980 coup in Turkey" the struggle against the government moved into the stands. The latter comes in correlation with what one of the F.C. St. Pauli Thessaloniki fan club members is referring to in *"Freedom through Football"* when he talks about Ultras making the protests in Greece against recession more dynamic and that he can only see a change coming through solely from football grounds.

3.4.1 *The 'Çarşı' phenomenon*

One distinctive characteristic that describes Ultras around the world is their neighbourhood. It can be quite evident when someone is entering an area that it has been "marked", by stickers, graffiti, flags or even occupied buildings. That "occupation" of urban space in big cities proves the need for keeping the idea of the neighbourhood alive with the Ultras constituting the last guardians. Similar to St. Pauli district in Hamburg which is thoroughly presented in *"Freedom through Football"* is Çarşı district. Çarşı, which in Turkish means marketplace, is also the name of the biggest Ultras group of Beşiktaş J.K., one of the three big football teams based in Istanbul, which participated at the Gezi Park uprising. What is clear in both places are the strong bonds between the people within the neighbourhood, plus the strong fan identity. This is not a homogenous group of fans as there is a variety of people from different backgrounds known mainly for their left-wing orientations. FC St. Pauli and Beşiktaş J.K's. heterogeneity is the reason behind their unity and their set of ethical codes. In both cases, their basic ethical code is to help the oppressed and fight against any injustice wherever it derives from.

Çarşı's involvement to the Gezi Park protests according to Turan & Özçetin (2017: 2) was "an exemplar of transgressive contention". After all, it is common within their ranks to be involved in protests for social and political matters (environment; animal rights; fascism; pedophilia; military interventions). According to Turan & Özçetin (2017: 16) "collective interpretations of fans are not examples of classical political mobilization", however, "they include interpreting the course of events and determining who is right and who is wrong". In other words, football fans do not have to be following a specific political dogma to

comprehend the injustices and inequalities, which are happening around them in order to be active. Turan & Özçetin (2017: 16) explain, "fandom culture encourages dissemination of such interpretations through a series of symbols, banners and chants".

In conclusion, the Turkish Ultras consist the perfect example of 'societal others', that group of people who refuse to stand aside against the reconfiguration of social sites, satisfy the capital interests and conservative neoliberal politics.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the relational ties that people develop by attending football matches that can lead to the formation of social movements and therefore practicing activism. The rise of Neoliberalism resulted in a new cast of activists who started fighting against injustices created by the capitalist system. Football Ultras initially formed their movements to fight against the commercialization of the popular game but this need for resistance spread against any kind of injustice, meaning not only football related issues. Football's popularity is key in the creation of these transnational football fan cultures, which, even though, they have their limitations can become quite effective in the fight against oppression wherever it derives from. Furthermore, I have demonstrated how football and politics are largely interconnected, as Perdana (2016: 52) notes, "football and politics have always proved a tangible mix" and as Kuhn (2011: 106) highlights "football victories have served as catalysts for public rebellion". In addition, I have analyzed in depth the Gezi Park uprising in Turkey where football Ultras United against the government-oppressor, as Turan & Özçetin (2017: 17) explain, "the football habitus has implications for a larger socio-political context." Finally, I have argued how the media are exaggerating the problem of football violence framing the Ultras without researching in depth the real causes of the phenomenon.

Chapter 3. Documentary Film as Research Method

Introduction

The position of documentary film in the field of knowledge production associated with social sciences is a subject of an ongoing debate. Many traditional social researchers question the political or ideological nature of documentary film as research. Prosser (1998: 100) argues, "the limited acceptance of image-based research can be tracked back to the epistemological roots of the various academic disciplines". On the other hand, many contemporary visual sociologists and visual anthropologists believe that this audio-visual-based genre can contribute to research. Schnettler & Raab (2008: par.15) note that, "video-cameras, camcorders and webcams offer novel modes of data collection for the social sciences. These devices do not only allow for a comprehensive documentation of social action and interaction. Moreover, they provide researchers with new qualities and quantities of data".

As Wood & Brown (2010: 522) argue, "despite its potential use in social science practice, there is as yet relatively little published scholarship that explicitly analyses how documentary film methods can inform social science research processes". Therefore, in this chapter I make the case for considering the production of a documentary as a valid form of social science research.

However, and before going into more in-depth analysis on the position of documentary film within the field of knowledge production, we need to respond to these questions: What is knowledge? How do we define positivism and interpretivism and where does documentary film sit in that theoretical framework of knowledge production?

1 Documentary Film and the production of knowledge: Positivism and Interpretivism

The study of knowledge or in other words epistemology is the search for truth. Epistemology is trying to answer a set of questions: what is the nature of knowledge? what are the obstacles to the obtainment of knowledge? what can be known? and finally how does knowledge differ from opinion or belief? "The philosophical study of how such knowledge is acquired is referred to as epistemology" (Gratton and Jones, 2004: 14). Different ontological and epistemological assumptions underpin positivist and interpretivist approaches. Positivism and interpretivism are two broad approaches to the nature of knowledge and as Gratton and Jones (2004: 15) argue, "each one has differing implications for the methodology adopted by the researcher, the data that is collected and the interpretation of such data". According to Gratton and Jones (2004) in positivism, accurate knowledge reflects exactly the world as it is. Meaning exists in the world and knowledge reflects reality. On the other hand, in

interpretivism, knowledge provides suggestive interpretations by particular people at particular times. Meaning exists in our interpretations of the world and finally knowledge is interpretation.

1.1 Positivism

Bryman (2004: Box 1.7, 11) defines positivism as, "an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond. But the term stretches beyond this principle, through the constituent elements vary between authors". According to Gratton and Jones (2004: 17), "the positivist approach has its undoubted strengths in terms of precision control and objectivity" as the positivist researcher is generally more straightforward in terms of planning. Positivism, in other words, "wants to articulate an ideal of science for a group of disciplines. The group in question includes the natural sciences and the so called behavioural sciences" (Radnitzky, 1968: xvi). Finally, Gray (1996: 12) argues that the "positivist paradigm of inquiry is characterized by a realist ontology, that reality exists out there and an objectivist epistemology which means that the researcher is detached".

In relation to film, Wayne (2008: 82) argues that,

> "documentaries can of course draw on the quantitive methodologies of statistical analysis that are associated with what is known in the social sciences as the positivist paradigm"

A documentary film which illustrates Wayne's argument is Morgan Spurlock's (2004) *"Super Size Me"* where the quantitative methodologies of a statistical analysis is drawn on at the beginning of the film with numerical data presented on deaths in America due to obesity. In essence, we see the uncovering of statistical regularities in observable phenomena.

It is certain that positivism has influenced a set of established traditions in documentary filmmaking. According to Wayne (2008: 83), these are, first the appeal to the 'objectivity' between subject and researcher (value–neutrality) and second the belief in the absolute objectivity, independent from and uninfluenced by the researcher, of the phenomena that is being studied. He argues,

> "positivism grounds itself in the iconic nature of the visual sign (the image resembles that which it represents) and the indexical relationship implied (at least before digital technology) that the reality captured by the image must once have been there, present before the camera (itself often conceived as an objective, mechanical instrument)".

1.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism constitutes an approach to social science that opposes the positivism of natural

science. As Bryman (2004: Box 1.9, 13) argues, "Interpretivism is a term that usually denotes an alternative to the positivist orthodoxy that has held sway for decades. It is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action". Gratton and Jones (2004) argue that positivism does not take into account feelings, emotions or anything else that cannot be measured numerically. In the interpretivist paradigm the gathered data is interpreted by the researcher, who attempts to uncover meanings, values, explanations and so on. According to Wayne, (2008: 84) documentary film lies in the paradigm of qualitative research practices. He writes,

> "The interpretive paradigm places emphasis on qualitative analysis. Its focus is on the variability of meanings, which are understood to be context–dependent rather than universal and standardized".

When it comes to research as practice Knudsen (2004) is against the positivist paradigm and puts artistic expression over research endeavour. For him, 'the key ingredients in artistic expression are centered around its 'irrationality' – an attempt to express 'feelings' and 'emotions', while Grady (1991) highlights qualitative research as a necessary part of sociological inquiry. Finally, in terms of documentary's contribution towards knowledge Wayne (2008: 84) argues that it tends to be qualitative as it "provides an audio-visual record of particular people, particular places and particular events". Wagner (2001: 7) views positivist and interpretivist approaches as reflecting two abiding ambiguities and in order to understand better the difference between positivism and interpretivism in researcher–created visual data argues the following,

> The first refers to how an image or artefact can and should be read – as an explicit, precise, and matter-of-fact communication or as a polysemic and ambiguous social and cultural artefact. The second ambiguity refers to how images in general can and should be used in social inquiry–as information–rich data for extending scientific investigations or as evocative artefacts for challenging or stepping away from a science too narrowly conceived.

1.3 Critical Theory and Documentary Practice

According to Wayne (2008: 89) Critical Theory and Documentary Practice share a number of common ideas, "documentary research is not a full realization of the principles of Critical Theory but there are nevertheless some interesting points of contact and similarity". Both Critical Theory and Documentary Practice share the same goal, which is to overcome the dichotomy between positivist and interpretivist paradigm. As Wayne (2008: 83) argues,

> "Documentary sits at the intersection of contradictory philosophical streams and manifests this in its theory and practice. While positivist attitudes are common, the

dualistic split between subject and object typical of positivism is challenged by the fact that documentary filmmaking involves engagement with value-laden contexts and people, begging the question of the documentary filmmaker's own evaluative responses to these people and the political and ethical conditions of intervention into these contexts".

Wayne (2008) is referring to Critical Theory as a reflexive theory and as Marcuse (1989: 72) argues, "it is critical of itself and of the social forces that make up its own basis". In documentary practice, Wayne (2008: 90) suggests that, "rather than insisting that every documentary interrogate its own conditions of production, we ought to recognize the broader self-reflexive knowledge about media culture that is now in play". Michael Moore's (2002) *"Bowling For Columbine"* about America's gun control and critique on the news, mirrors academic criticism on American television news and brings it into the mainstream. Furthermore, Critical Theory and Documentary Practice share a tendency of critiquing the dominant capitalist ideology/society and how it works through its various institutions. Finally, Wayne (2008: 91) points out the need of integration between Critical Theory and Documentary Practice in order to achieve a change. He notes, "in the Marxist tradition, the integration of Theory and Practice, which is an essential pre-condition of adequacy for both knowing and doing, is called Praxis". Critical Theorists and the academia in general are more interested in interpreting rather than changing the world. Documentary films like Robert Greenwald's (2004) *"Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism"* and Michael Moore's (2004) *"Fahrenheit 9/11"* speak a less specialized language, which is more open to the publics, and they are bringing to the fore groups of people who are struggling for social change.

2 The emergence of Practice-led research

Practice-led research (hereinafter PLR) constitutes a novice contributor in the field of scholarly knowledge production. One of its outputs is film and many research practitioners have used the art of documentary filmmaking in order to generate new knowledge. The production of new knowledge within the academy is something that "we know all too little about" (Bell, 2009: 253), therefore, it makes it even harder for finding a place specifically for creative arts production within academia. This is the reason why Sullivan (2009: 47) points out that "the status of knowledge production in the visual arts remains a vexed question for many". However, according to Haseman (2006: 100), the answer to this question lies within the recent radical tendency of placing practice, not only within the research process, but to lead research through practice. Practitioners by perceiving their art as research, result in offering invaluable insights into the art and the practice of art as it happens, but most

importantly, "throw new and unexpected light onto a range of topics including cognition, discourse, psychology, history, culture, and sociology" (Skains, 2018: 84).

Sociology was the field in which my project has attempted to shed new light by chronicling the actions and lives of football fan activists (see Chapter 2.) In PLR the practitioner/researcher in order to answer her main research question has to initially design and subsequently produce a creative project that appeals to her art, in this case film. By bringing practice to the fore she manages to create something novel with the necessary processes and techniques, as Candy & Edmonds (2018: 64) argue, "above all, "practice" connotes doing something that extends beyond everyday thinking into actions that may lead to new outcomes". PLR has a clear primary goal, and that is to advance the knowledge within practice. In this current project, there is an attempt to advance the knowledge of documentary film practice and film in general as a vehicle for research. As Kerrigan & Callaghan (2018: 230) argue, "filmmaking practice research offers a unique way to create new knowledge and to advance understandings of filmmaking creative practices". More specifically by using the medium of film and the documentary filmmaking language, I am trying to support its position within academia and its ability to produce new knowledge. In academia, the films are a means; the knowledge is the end, as Gibson (2017: xiii) notes, "the work we do as filmmakers in the academy is pre-eminently the work of knowledge production rather than the work of film production. Practice can be creative and as Candy & Edmonds (2018: 64) suggest, "practice that is creative is characterized not only by a focus on creating something new but also by the way that the making process itself leads to a transformation in the ideas—which in turn leads to new works".

In her attempt to define practice-led research, Gray (1996: 3) presents two main tendencies. In the first place, she puts this kind of research that is initiated in practice, where questions, problems and challenges are identified and formed by the needs of practice and practitioners. In the second place and according to her views, we find the research strategy that is carried out through practice, using predominantly methodologies and specific methods familiar to us as practitioners in the visual arts, "in this sense, practice and research together operate in such a way as to generate new knowledge that can be shared and scrutinized. (Candy & Edmonds, 2018: 63) In a more broad statement, Smith and Dean (2009: 5) write that "practice - led research is about practice leading to research insights", but a more solid definition on what PLR represents comes from the Arts and Humanities Research Board (2003:10), where:

> "Practice-led research is a distinctive feature of the research activity in the creative and performing arts. As with other research conducted by arts and humanities researchers, it involves the identification of research questions and problems, but the research

methods, contexts and outputs then involve a significant focus on creative practice. This type of research thus aims, through creativity and practice, to illuminate or bring about new knowledge and understanding, and it results in outputs that may not be text-based, but rather a performance (music, dance, drama), design, film or exhibition".

In an attempt to approach its very nature, many scholars underscore the reflexive, responsive and evocative features of PLR. These three characteristics are placing PLR into a more interactive role, encouraging dialogue and generating debate. According to Sullivan (2009: 50), "the reflexive tradition of the arts enables both the artist and the viewer to participate in an exchange that is mediated by an artwork whereby change and transformation often results".

The aim with this written piece of work is to offer insights into the process of producing the film. Reflection is a common method amongst practitioners frequently applied to their creative projects. The resulting creative artwork and the critical exegesis are bound together; it is what Skains (2018: 96) calls, "practice as an empirical form of research". Gray (1996: 15) argues that methodology used in PLR "acknowledges complexity and real experience and practice", while Hamilton and Jaaniste (2010: 34) put more emphasis on the evocative nature of PLR supporting that "the research intent, and the role of the artefact, is to produce affect and resonance through evocation. We would therefore describe it as evocative research".

In PLR, practitioners-researchers are establishing different relationships with the research problem, which drives the research project. As Haseman (2006: 100) writes, "they don't start a research project based on a problem. They tent to dive in the problem commencing practicing to see what emerges" so in that way, "they eschew the constraints of narrow problem setting and rigid methodological requirements at the outset of a project". Sullivan (2009: 48) takes this notion one-step further by saying that, unlike traditional researchers, practice-led researchers take imaginative steps to the unknown, hoping to reach critical insights in order to change what we already know. This is – perhaps – the reason why in most cases of practice-led research projects, research questions remain open-ended for a significant amount of time, thus resisting their reduction to a single, more specific, problem. As Hamilton and Jaaniste (2010: 36) argue, "it is such an open-ended approach that allows the practice and artefact to remain irreducible in its meaning". Furthermore, during the actual research process creative art can diverge from the initial idea, as it was the case with this film project (see Chapter 5). The reasons behind that divergence are, amongst others things, a lack of time or subsequent inspiration, "what is important in this phase is to remain open to these new directions – to serendipity – and to maintain the *in situ* research log and observation notes throughout. (Skains, 2018: 95)

As already mentioned, film constitutes one of the outputs of PLR. Barbash and Taylor (1997:

70) notice a resemblance between the act of filming and the documentation or demonstration of research that precedes and determines it, since:

> "It is seen to provide a record of intellectual work that, in essence, exists apart from it. The assumption misconceives the kind of interventions that take place when you film. . . . Film images have an inextricable relationship to their object, and, while shooting, you're selecting and editorializing in ways that will be intrinsic to your final film. Once you recognize this, it's difficult to see research and filming as altogether separate stages".

Audiovisual forms of research, such as films, are discursive and can contribute in the generation of new knowledge. Burgin (2006: 105) tries to delineate the function of audiovisual forms as compared to the conventional written one; for him, "if audiovisual forms are inherently discursive, then an intellectual argument can equally well be presented in the form of a film or video as in a more conventional written form". Film–based researchers are using a different epistemology in order to achieve their goals. Barone (2003: 209) notes, "they do not make truth claims but rather seek out alternative meanings. They aim to call into question stale, tired ways of viewing the world and sometimes to interrogate the prevailing imaginary". For Haseman (2006: 102), "when research findings are made as presentational forms they deploy symbolic data in the material forms of practice; forms of still and moving images; forms of music and sound; forms of live action and digital code". Finally, film-based researchers are using a different strategy, which however does "resemble those of social science–based qualitative researchers" (Barone, 2003: 210).

Nevertheless, many traditional academics are doubtful towards the methodologies used in practice-led research. They are accusing practitioner-researchers of not taking into consideration traditional research work. MacNamara (2012: 10) writes that one of the main problems is "to dismiss a whole host of writers, thinkers, researchers or research paradigms as 'traditional' when in fact most are well known or established precisely because in many cases they are nimble, imaginative and critically creative". For some researchers as Flick (1998: 206), the danger is that "questions of methods and how to apply them are strongly pushed to the back or filed as being outdated". On the other hand, though, arguments that the outcome lacks quality in terms of actual scientific research and thus it will never be as effective as theory-led research could also be found. For example, Candlin (2000: 98) supports that "although the creative work may demonstrate originality and so on, it is actually only the written research that can adequately clarify those factors and provide a basis for judgment". Petelin (2006: 26) notes that the "actual practice from a practitioner's perspective was not considered research or even capable of being accommodated in the academic research framework" and for McNamara (2012: 2) the "artistic works or design production were

simply incapable of justifying their contribution to the field of knowledge”. Summarizing, Lincoln and Denzin (2003: 7) applauded this turn in qualitative research arguing that it has “reshaped entirely the debates around ‘appropriate’ scientific discourse, the technical and rhetorical conventions of scientific writing, and the meaning of research itself”. Despite the limitations, PLR constitutes an effective form of research. As Smith and Dean (2009: 5) argue, “creative work in itself is a form of research and generates detectable research outputs” and Sullivan (2009: 44) notes “creative arts practices can be rationalized as a form of research because of the unique contribution made to the generation of new knowledge”. McNamara (2012: 8) explains what a good PLR is:

> “It’s a complicated affair necessitating a complex, back-and-forth interaction between the practice and its conceptual framework or articulation. It forces one to consider how each component – the creative practice and exegetical research framework – is capable of producing knowledge, and thus of furnishing unique understanding and insights”.

Finally, Gray (1996: 8) thinks that PLR dismisses any criticisms “through asking questions of ourselves about the place and value of the visual arts in society and encouraging an intellectual social dialogue; through clear and critical thinking and expression; through the articulation of a paradigm, in order to make ‘new culture’, and gain the understanding and support of society for this”.

3 Documentary film as research method

In the field of social sciences, the majority of traditional researchers are following observational methods in order to undertake and complete a research project. However, a significant number of contemporary visual sociologists and anthropologists are using film in order to answer their research questions. As Shrum, Duque and Brown (2005: 1) argue, “a convergence of digital video technologies with practices of social surveillance portends a methodological shift towards a new variety of qualitative methodology”. Film has started emerging as a research method within academia therefore filmmaking researchers follow a specific procedure before they commence their research project, during and towards the end. This procedure does not considerably differ from the one that traditional theory-based researchers follow. Firstly, they identify the topics of their films and secondly, they start researching it by engaging with their subjects and the community. Finally, through the making of the film and the dissemination of it, filmmaking researchers attempt to refine it. Similar technique has been followed in the creation of this project. This filmmaking researcher first came up with the topic of the film i.e. football fan activism, then researched it by engaging with Ultras’ community and finally refined it by actually being out in the field

making it, whilst the dissemination of the film helped to finalize it. The numerous test screenings alongside the immediate feedback from the subjects was of significant importance. Kerrigan & Callaghan (2018: 231) argue, "It is possible to describe how the filmmaking is underpinned by the research and the strongest cases will reference methodologies like ethnography or practice as research approaches".

Film as research method faces a lot of criticism in terms of the impact it can achieve in both social sciences and humanities. Film is made in order to make sure that the research findings are being disseminated to niche audiences or even to the wider public. Kerrigan & Callaghan (2018: 239) in their research talk about 'Filmmaking Research as Impact' and they argue, "the impact of a research film is proven when there is evidence of behaviour changes that have come about as a direct result of the dissemination of the film containing the research". A good example of a successful dissemination of findings and furthermore of impacting audiences was Joshua Oppenheimer's (2012) film *"Act of Killing"* in which he researched and exposed the individuals who participated in the mass killings of communists in Indonesia. *"The Act of Killing"* (2012) is an example where the film's inherent value was used to achieve impact on audiences" (Kerrigan & Callaghan, 2018: 236) .

In *"Freedom through Football",* the idea behind the research was to produce new knowledge on a social issue such as activism through football in a period when the extreme far right was on the rise. The impact that this research project had was to engage a community i.e. football fans and niche audiences through the film's dissemination. Furthermore, one can identify the power of film as a cultural medium by the proven impact it had on audiences especially during the test screenings, as it managed to change the preoccupied notion of Ultras being seen as mindless football hooligans and to present an alternative form of understanding Ultras. As Kerrigan & Callaghan (2018: 239) mention,

> "Providing new understandings and knowledge, to a range of identifiable communities shows the power of film as a cultural medium that illuminates unique ways of seeing social and cultural issues. Evidence that supports and illustrates the impact of behaviour change and understandings that occur as a result of the making and dissemination of the film are necessary to support the researcher's claim about impact".

Social interactional studies developed alongside the use of film/video recording and for that reason Goldman and McDermott (2009:110) argue, "the use of video in social research became foundational to this theoretical approach – and vice versa". Ravetz and Grimshaw (2009) go straight to the heart of anthropology and the filmic practice. They call the observational style a skilled practice and attribute to it intellectual inquiry in its own right. They address its potentials and reconsider its approaches within contemporary ethnographic

research. Grady (1991: 27) notes that "not only is the world depicted visually more exciting; it is also tacitly accepted as being more real than anything in print". Finally, Kerrigan & Callaghan (2018: 229), note, "filmmaking research pushes at the boundaries of traditional filmmaking and traditional research methods by adopting distinct approaches to professional and critical practices".

In the following sub chapters, I will present the pros and cons of documentary film as a research method and with the reference to two completely different documentary films; I will attempt to make a supplementary case on the impact of filmmaking research in social sciences and humanities.

3.1 Forest of Bliss

"Forest of Bliss" (1986) is a documentary film by the filmmaker/researcher Robert Gardner on the significance of the city of Banaras in Hindu tradition where death is believed to free people from the eternal cycle of birth and rebirth. As Zimmer (1946: 171) points out, "the essential problem of human life then is to unravel this trick of sight and to free oneself from the seductions of the material world by meditating on its unreality". Kapur (1997) makes a significant comment on Gardner's technique on knowledge production. She writes, "Gardner attempts a break with the modernizing impulses of anthropology by attempting to represent behavior, and facets of another culture that cannot be reduced to scientific explanations" (Kapur, 1997: 169). Weinberger (1996), in praise of the film, states that art is able to show the complexity of reality that science cannot even approach. In addition to that, Kapur (1997: 180) argues that, "the absence of subtitles and voice-over further enhances this sense of unmediated reality. Images form the "raw data" which are arranged and rearranged by the fine craft of the filmmaker. It is here that the distinction between science and art begins to slip".

3.2 Documentary film as research method: Pros

Many scholars and researchers/filmmakers consider documentary film as an important tool in the field of knowledge production. More specifically observational filmmakers privilege showing over telling which is providing the audience with the impression that they are witnessing lived time, as MacDougall (1998: 126) argues:

> "They are observational in their manner of filming, placing the viewer in the role of an observer, a witness of events. They are essentially revelatory rather than illustrative, for they explore substance before theory. They are, nevertheless, evidence of what the filmmaker finds significant".

The use of observational filmmaking in research projects can produce solid and palpable findings compared to the traditional way of theory-based fieldwork. Tope, Chamberlain,

Crawley and Hodson (2005) state, that some things learned through direct observation in natural settings are difficult or impossible to learn in any other way. Harper (2000: 38) argues, "images allow us to make statements which cannot be made by words, and the world we see is saturated with sociological meaning". Banks (2001: 114) refers to documentation as a way "to record things that were too complex to be described in a notebook". Ruby (2000: 47) explains, "the complexity of bodies moving through space and time is such that the unaided eye cannot take in all that is happening. So logically scholars gravitated toward the camera as a means of recording data". Additionally, Banks and Morphy (1999) write that documentary film can engage audiences beyond what is normally achieved by text on its own and finally, Gray (2010) and Grimshaw & Ravetz (2009) suggest that film is a mature means in anthropological research, offering something that written accounts cannot.

Many scholars oppose accusations that people act less naturally with the presence of the camera and they strongly believe that the camera does not affect the behavior of people being filmed. Therefore, researchers can come up with better and clearer results in their research projects. However, this can only be achieved through patient observation. The filmmaker/researcher spends a significant amount of time filming his/her subjects, eventually becoming a part of their everyday life. That is when truthfulness and reality can be captured on film. People tend to feel more comfortable being filmed rather than being observed by any other kind of observers. In Frederick Wiseman's *"Titicut Follies"* (1967), the director was adamant that people did not change their behavior for the camera. (MacDougall, 1998; Grant, 1998). Furthermore, Kapur (1997: 180) praises how in *"Forest of Bliss"* (1986) Robert Gardner establishes its connections with reality because of "the conventional denial of people's awareness of their being filmed because that immediately refers to the subjectivity of the filmmaker". In *"Freedom through Football"*, I have spent a considerable amount of time with my subjects documenting their activities. During that time, what I have experienced was that after the initial awareness of them being filmed, they started ignoring the fact that there was a camera present. Film can say much about how individuals live within a culture because as MacDougall (1998: 63) argues; "it poses fundamental challenges to anthropological ways of speaking and knowing. It reflects the changing climate of thinking about anthropological representation itself".

Banks (2001: 112) highlights the humanistic and analytical aspects of visual research, "humanistic: it seems more morally laudable to recognize the co – humanity of those we work with than to treat them as experimental subjects. Analytical social knowledge is a processual aspect of human social relations, not a static thing to be discovered and seized".

The camera is a tool that advances, as Harper (2000: 30) argues, "the purpose of an empirical science, of which sociology has traditionally been part". Furthermore, the camera gives the opportunity to the filmmaker/researcher to capture the richness of human behavior and the tendency of participants to talk about their affairs, past or present which according to MacDougall (1998: 132) "is what allows this method of inquiry to succeed". Finally, Wood & Brown (2012: 130) talk about filmmaking as a "highly affective qualitative research in itself, with its own distinctive mode of communicating thoughts and feelings together".

3.3 Documentary film as research method: Cons

In contrast to the aforementioned positive remarks about the usage of filmmaking as a research method Ruby (2000: 52) reminds us why visual research is still not that popular within social sciences. She writes, "the perceived conflict between filmmaking's aesthetic conventions and positivism's scholarly requirements for researchable data caused film to be underutilized as an analytic technique". When researchers/filmmakers incorporate documentary film as research method they have to deal with issues of interpretation, impact and validity (Gibbs, Friese, & Mangabeira, 2002). The presence of a camera in the field of research can work reductively towards the collection of invaluable data as it can affect what Pauwels (2010: 553) refers to "naturally occurring or spontaneous behavior". Participants might not react when they acknowledge the presence of the camera around them. Furthermore, the manipulation of the collected material in the editing table reduces objectivity from the outcome. The researcher/filmmaker's personal view becomes more evident in the edited version leaving aside the realities observed, "the visual essay is just too subjective (Grady, 1991: 28). Truth claims and reality are always going to be tested and questioned in the world of documentary film, "not only against the testimony of the camera, as it the case with all films, but also against reality as we may know it independently of that testimony" (Rothman, 1998: 27).

Harper (2012) questions the truthfulness of documentary films and wonders if they can be perceived as empirical data but Wagner (2012: 213) gives an answer to his question when he writes, "materials are presented, for example, without being fully interpreted or analyzed, with the expectation that some dimensions of analysis are appropriately left to the reader or viewer. That may make documentary studies somewhat more ambiguous than social scientific reports, but it doesn't make them any less empirical". Observational documentaries tend to observe reality, steering viewers to reach whatever conclusions they feel they have deduced "films create a new reality in which the viewer plays a central role, or at least is invited to do so" (MacDougall, 1998: 71). Finally, Ruby (2000) writes that film should be perceived as a

culturally bound communication usable in a variety of discourses and MacDougall (1998: 136) concludes, "a film can become the arena of an inquiry".

3.4 The "Alive Inside" case study

At the beginning of this chapter there was a reference to the ongoing discourse about documentary's position in the field of knowledge production. The majority of theory-based researchers challenge the possibility of this audio-visual-based genre in contributing to research. Ruby (2000: 48) notes that film seems to lack a convincing theoretical basis, "a well-developed set of methods, or much evidence that the technology produces analyzable data of a quantity and a quality unique enough to support its use". In addition, even though MacDougall (1998: 68) characterizes visual as "too open to misinterpretation and too seductive" he also notes that film could, in effect, "present cultural patterns and account for them within a theoretical framework". (MacDougall, 1998: 74)

Wagner (2012: 192) argues that, "eyewitness accounts and photo or video recordings may provide evidence not available in any other form". Pauwels (2010) notes that theory is needed to give scientific research some direction and that visual researchers can make use of several theoretical frameworks, which have been adapted over the course of the years to visual analysis.

Michael Rossato-Bennett's (2014) film *"Alive Inside"* constitutes a robust example of how the visual can produce knowledge and better understanding than a written research essay. There has been an extensive scientific research and formal studies on how music is affecting Alzheimer patients. Cuddy & Duffin (2005); Fornazzari, Castle, *et al* (2006); Crystal, Grober, Masur (1989); Cowles *et al* (2003) have all agreed by researching and working with Alzheimer patients that therapeutic music is having a positive effect on them. They have concluded that when used appropriately, music can shift mood, manage stress-induced agitation, stimulate positive interactions, facilitate cognitive function, and coordinate motor movements. Sacks (2007: 344) argues,

> It is astonishing to see mute, isolated, confused individuals warm to music, recognize it as familiar, and start to sing, start to bond with a therapist. It is even more astonishing to see a dozen deeply demented people—all in worlds or nonworlds of their own, seemingly incapable of any coherent reactions, let alone interactions—and how they respond to the presence of a music therapist who begins to play music in front of them.

In *"Alive Inside"* (2014), filmmaker Michael Rossato-Bennett follows social worker Dan Cohen, as he introduces iPods with personalized playlists to Alzheimer's patients. The aim of this 77-minute piece is to raise awareness about the therapeutic use of music. The filmmaker shows that the part of the brain which processes music is not affected as much by Alzheimer's

disease as other parts of the brain, explaining why music can often "awaken" strong memories and deep emotions that have seemed to lie dormant for years. The visuals are so powerful and engaging that a rough-cut clip[1] of the film showing one of the patients (Henry) coming "alive" while listening to jazz music went viral attracting thousands of views on the internet. Furthermore, this film portrays one person's attempt, social worker Dan Cohen, to make a difference by seeking funding in order to introduce therapeutic music to more Alzheimer patients and finally the filmmaker addresses systemic issues within the healthcare system and nursing homes in the United States.

However, the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) (2014) blamed the director for misinformation of the public because the film never clearly distinguished the personalized music, which Dan Cohen was introducing to patients, and the actual clinical music therapy being already used in hospitals and care homes. Furthermore, (AMTA) (2014) made clear that it takes properly trained and qualified personnel in order to help Alzheimer disease patients with music, plus the introduction of personalized music will lead to less certified music therapists being hired by care home administrators. This illustrates in the best way Wagner's (2012: 192) quote that "video recordings can introduce judgements that depart from the facts of the matter".

4 Documentaries as forms of radical sociological practice

From its beginning, documentary filmmaking has focused on the dilemmas of social life, seeking to discover new meanings about life and reveal them to a wider audience. The research and presentation of sociological issues was the epicenter of documentary film since its introduction. Throughout the years, numerous filmmakers had different approaches on how to research and present these sociological issues. Documentary film as a form of radical sociological practice has a rich history. It starts from the prewar and postwar years, an era marked by the Griersonian principles, in which as Nichols (2010) argues a model of government-sponsored documentary was introduced presenting documentary filmmaker as an orator. Followed by the Free cinema, 'Black Films' and the contemporary documentaries era in which as Chanan (2007) states, filmmakers have focused on the oppressed of today's societies bringing to the fore issues and problems which were supposed to remain hidden. Pioneer in the contemporary era of documentary film as a radical sociological practice is filmmaker Frederick Wiseman.

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[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FWn4JB2YLU link to the clip from documentary film *"Alive Inside"* (2014) [Accessed 20 August 2017]

4.1 Documentary Definition and the Griersonian Principles

Documentary film has shifted towards the presentation of sociological issues converting it into a form of radical sociological practice. Before we go into more detail on the aforementioned shift, it would be useful to point out the definition of documentary. Winston (1995) more broadly argues that documentary and its source word 'document' (derived from the Latin documentum = a lesson) speaks of something written or inscribed and carries with it the connotation of evidence or information, while Nichols (2010: 14) defines documentary as such:

> "Documentary film speaks about situations and events involving real people (social actors) who present themselves to us as themselves in stories that convey a plausible proposal about, or perspective on, the lives, situations and events portrayed. The distinct point of view of the filmmaker shapes this story into a way of seeing the historical world directly rather than a fictional allegory."

Documentary film started addressing sociological issues in prewar and postwar years following the patterns of the Griersonian principles with the attempt to build a sense of national identity. John Grierson who was a pioneer in documentary filmmaking managed to convince the British government to use film as an art form in order to build a sense of national identity and shared community analogous with its own political agenda. Nichols (2010: 220) writes, "Grierson gave the documentary film an institutional base, cultivated a community of practitioners, championed selected forms of documentary convention, and encouraged a specific set of audience expectations". With films like *"The Drifters"* (1929), *"Coal Face"* (1935), *"The Night Mail"* (1936) and *"The Song of Ceylon"* (1934) Grierson and his collaborators "promoted the notion that government served the common good therefore the common man [sic] should serve the government with good faith" (Nichols, 2010: 222). However, with *"Housing Problems"* (1935), Grierson showed his increasing frustration having to work under the constraints of government sponsorship.

4.2 Free Cinema and "Black Films"

Unlike Grierson and his collaborators, other filmmakers, as Nichols (2010: 223) explains, "proposed a sense of community based on actions, and changes that governments seemed unprepared to accept, or make. Their films took up positions that opposed the policies of governments and industries. These filmmakers constituted the political avant – garde of documentary filmmaking". That was the movement of Free Cinema, which emerged just after the end of Second World War mainly in Europe as well as in USA and was formed by a group of filmmakers. As MacDonald & Cousins (2006: 212) write, "outspoken in its criticism of

conventional, class – bound British cinema; they derided 'glossy stylistic perfection' and insisted on shooting real people in real locations, frequently with a hand-held camera, foreshadowing many of the techniques of cinema veritě". Characteristic examples of Free Cinema films among others were Joris Ivens's (1946) *"Indonesia Calling"* and Lionel Rogosin's (1955) *"On the Browery"* both touching subjects, which nobody would ever consider. That was a step towards addressing sociological issues by filming immediate reality. Alongside Free Cinema movement was the term of "Black Films" which were addressing sociological issues mainly in Eastern Europe attacking problems that were not supposed to exist. As Chanan (2007: 188) argues,

> The Black films movement represents the revival of documentary as the investigation of social reality in peacetime in a similar but more politicized way to the impulse, for example, behind Free Cinema in England. It seeks the documentary subject that calls to it from social reality, not the office of the bureaucrat".

Contemporary documentary films attract sociological interest because of their treatment of subjects, offering arguments with explanations and interpretations for the situations they portray. As Wayne (2008: 91) argues, "the emergence of feature film documentary as a prominent player within the sphere of public opinion formation has evidently crystallized around the great assault on corporate capitalism, consumerism and globalization of market relations that has been such a welcome feature of the recent political landscape". Films like Michael Moore's (2007) *"Sicko"*, Alex Gibney's (2005) *"Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room"* and Tia Lessin and Carl Deal's (2008) *"Trouble the Water"* are really good examples of contemporary documentary films which are helping to unmask problems. Chanan (2007: 188) notes, "documentary played a crucial role in forcing authority to publicly admit to social phenomena they would rather not acknowledge. It still does". Both Wayne (2008) and Chanan (2007) place documentary film in the mass media where it practices freedom of speech speaking a language that is generally less specialized and more open to lay publics than "philosophy" or academia.

But how closely do films come to achieving the goals of sociological practice adding to empirical and theoretical knowledge about the structure of the social world, its processes, its consequences, and effects on human action? Nichols (2010: 248) attempts to give an answer:

> "The task of documentaries is to move us toward a predisposition or perspective regarding some aspect of the world. This goal calls for close attention to the three Cs of credible, convincing and compelling rhetoric. Drawing our attention to the social issues that unite and divide us as a people and profiling the complex and revealing lives of specific individuals are two of the most recurring choices filmmakers make. Films that combine these two tendencies demonstrate that we are dealing with a spectrum of possibilities rather than a black-and-white choice. Across this spectrum films adopt a

rhetorical voice aimed at the questions of what happened or what we should do, on the one hand, and to questions of the strengths and weaknesses of individuals, on the other".

4.3 Wiseman: Radical Film Practice

Through the use of observational documentary practice, Wiseman makes documentary films researching institutions, challenging hegemonic practices based on ideology and power. As MacDougall (1969: 16) writes, "his work constitutes a form of ethnographic cinema that looks at the filmmaker's own culture rather than another". Grant (1998) highlights the similarities between Grierson and Wiseman in terms of social concern. He writes, "like Grierson, Wiseman conceives of the documentary within the context of social reform and sees it as a potential source of information for the purpose of creating an informed and responsible citizenship" (Grant, 1998: 250).

Armstrong (1983: 4) gives a hint of Wiseman's evolution of politics in his films which as he argues starts, "from liberal reformism in the early films, through an increasing disillusionment in the middle films, and finally to a considerably more radical vision, essentially in harmony with the perspectives of historical materialism". In their readings of Wiseman's films Benson & Anderson (2002: 3) argue that, "Frederick Wiseman's documentaries are both artistic experiences and social documents. The films speak to us about the politics of American institutions and about difficult legal, social, educational, scientific and other public matters".

In his critique, Armstrong (1990: 35) notes that, "Wiseman's domestic films investigate the social mechanisms that constrain and ultimately constitute the subject as an object to be manipulated and controlled, a process of objectification in which institutional gazes are directed in ways that promote individual docility and social utility".

Two of his most characteristic films are *"Meat"* (1976) and *"Model"* (1980). According to Tuch (1978: 14) *"Meat"* (1976) is a film, which presents a process of alienation and reification so total that, the workers themselves "have been reduced, in effect, to mere bodies, to meat". In *"Model"* (1980), Armstrong (1983: 2) writes that Wiseman "self-reflexively examines the codes and conventions of cinematic and photographic representation. This film represents the fullest development of Wiseman's art and politics".

According to Benson & Anderson (2002), Wiseman is using the term "reality fictions" in order to point out "the inevitably constructive nature of documentary film". Grant (1998: 240) who also talks about Wiseman's creative manipulation in his films writes that "it is in the process of editing, this "thinking through the material", that Wiseman engages in a kind of second order looking".

Following Kracauer's comments (1960: 31) about Louis Lumiere films that "it was life at its least controllable and most unconscious moments, a jumble of transient, forever dissolving

patterns accessible only to the camera", Wiseman can be said to be attempting to capture reality, thus to "capture nature in the act", to "reproduce life".

As Grant (1998: 240) writes, "life captured on film spontaneously, is more revealing, more truthful, to the complexities of experience than either fiction or documentary reconstruction". Furthermore, Armstrong (1984: 6) notes that Wiseman, like Vertov before him "simultaneously provides a critique of daily life (though a narrower slice of it) and of the illusionary nature of photographic and cinematic representation".

Wiseman's films are according to Armstrong (1984: 2) "an open text which creates audience distance and critical reflection, committing the spectator to a (not Puritanical) work of co-producing meaning". In order to position the spectator as a subject, Armstrong (1990: 39) writes about the requirement of the creation of a politically effective cinema "that would develop formal strategies and means of representing social reality which short circuit this process of subject-construction". Benson & Anderson (2002: 6) talk about Wiseman's films as "a form of social discourse, it seems to us, but never rigidly didactic, inviting the spectator not so much to accept an argument as to participate in a vision, to share an attitude, to experience a recognition". So therefore, Grant (1998: 251) writes, "Wiseman's style in fact constitutes a profoundly political cinema because of the open way it engages viewers".

Finally, Armstrong (1983: 9) concludes,

> Wiseman's documentaries explode our in-grained expectations and temporarily repair the cleavage between work and play that defines ordinary daily life and cultural experience. As we watch these films, the realm of the quotidian is rescued from the obfuscations of "the obvious." By making the familiar strange and the strange familiar, Wiseman helps to restore our capacity to take back the control of our lives.

Another reason, which to differentiate Wiseman's work from other filmmakers, is the fact that he distances himself from the mainstream. According to Walley (2011: 3) Wiseman is clearly against the formative documentary genre "the talking heads plus B-roll" format (hereafter "the format") that predominates in most contemporary documentaries". Furthermore, Armstrong (1983: 2) explains that Wiseman is "working against the grain of the culinary cinema produced by the dominant apparatus in America both the Hollywood narrative feature film and the standard documentary".

Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the advantages of observational documentary film and how it can contribute in the field of knowledge production. Even though there are clear questions of objectivity, lack of truthfulness and ambiguity I strongly believe that when it comes to researching sociological issues the moving image can contribute to a better understanding of

the world around us. Documentary film is observing reality and has an interactionist nature allowing the viewers to co–create meanings or even generate their own understandings in an attempt to help them comprehend complex issues. Wood & Brown (2012: 144) write, "the contribution of film itself as a mode of thinking lies precisely in the extent that it can be used to evoke, elicit and engage viewers in affective dynamisms that comprise physical phenomena and our sensuous perceptions". Grimshaw and Ravetz (2009) summarize that observation is not about showing objectivity. The camera is not a surveyor, but it is engaged in observation. There is obvious sensibility of a filmmaker towards the filmed subjects and the (filmed) world. The observational style of filmmaking does not impose the message of the author either on the viewers or on the filmed subjects. It rather allows things to unfold under the attentive eyes of a filmmaker as well as the viewers. As Banks and Morphy (1999) argue the ability of documentary film in particular to engage audiences, has a long tradition in anthropology and ethnography.

The emergence of audiovisual technologies has created a shift towards a new variety of qualitative research. The two key advantages from this shift as Shrum, Duque & Brown (2005: 4) note are "first, audiovisual inscriptions of events may be reviewed by multiple observers that were not present when the events transpired". Second, the inscriptions may be stored. Through these means, event records may be re-analyzed, examined for inter-coder reliability and retrieved by future generations of researchers". For that reason and as Wood & Brown (2012: 144) argue, "creative arts practices deserve greater recognition in future qualitative research projects".

Chapter 4. Overview/critique of activist documentary film

Introduction

Due to the absence of practice–led research about football fan activism and more particularly about FC St. Pauli in the social sciences, and furthermore the lack of significant work on the role of documentary genre to accomplish social and political change, my film project is a distinctive contribution to the field of activist documentary. According to Aguayo (2005; in Aitken, 2005: 9), film has played a significant role in the generation of political and societal changes. "During the past century, documentary film has figured prominently in the public sphere as a powerful means of persuasion utilized by governments, rich patrons, academics and working people alike". Activist filmmakers have tried to capture the essence of social movements by filming and presenting demonstrations and actions, which tend not to be aired on mainstream media. Fred Wiseman's 1967 film "*Titicut Follies*", which was an attempt to create a portrait of the Massachusetts Institute of the criminally insane, faced massive criticism from the state of Massachusetts under the fear of political embarrassment. However, the filmmaker argued that people who pay taxes to support these institutes need to know what happens in them, "the process of documentary production could also be a valuable activist strategy" (Aguayo, 2005; in Aitken, 2005: 7). Barbra Kopple in her 1976 film "*Harlan County, USA*" portrayed the life of American miners through crisis and finally Roger Moore in both of his films "*Roger and Me*" (1989) and "*Bowling for Columbine*" (2002) played a significant role in contemporary activist documentary.

1 Historical overview of activist documentary genre - Development over the years

The usage of documentary film as a vehicle for societal change began timidly in the 1930s in both Europe and the US when filmmakers realised that documentary film can be more than just a propagandistic tool used by governments. Barnouw (1993: 286) writes, "in most periods of documentary history, production has been controlled by groups in power". Filmmakers acknowledged its strength as a means of education and a way of raising awareness focusing on social problems and inequalities. Their films started serving non-government groups as a medium of dissent, being stimulated by social upheaval. Technological achievements in terms of equipment (portable light cameras, synchronous sound recording with build in microphones) helped the gradual spread of the activist genre in the rest of the world as Barnouw (1993: 291) notes, "in much of the world, documentary was indeed taking a growing role in political disputes and involving an increasing spectrum of participants". However, this new trend met by scepticism from the ruling class and any attempts to criticise officialdom faced repression and retaliation. Nevertheless, as Barnouw (1993: 268) states, "critical films

have clearly contributed to public enlightenment and social sanity". In addition, Chanan (2007: 189) highlights that "documentary is associated with freedom of speech in the mass media of the modern public sphere" and Dusan Makavejev's 1962 film *"Parade"* on the May Day parade is an excellent example as he decided to depict in his film the preparations and not the actual parade. The film focuses on the people attempting to show them as they are. For him cinema was a Guerilla operation, "Guerilla against everything that is fixed, defined, established, dogmatic, eternal". (Makavejev, in Arthur 2001: 11)

1.1 Free Cinema, "Black Films" and Latin American "Third Cinema"

Important movements in the activist documentary genre are firstly, Free Cinema movement originating from England using film as a witness of daily reality, bringing a living document to the screen. Secondly, is the more radical Black Films movement, which began from Eastern Europe and attacked problems that were not supposed to exist like juvenile delinquency, housing problems, prostitution. (Free Cinema and Black Films movements stated in more depth in Chapter 3 "Documentary as a Research Method", subchapter 4.2)

Additionally, Latin American cinema contributed towards the activist documentary genre, and transformed it into what is known as Third Cinema. More radical in its approach than activist films in Europe, Latin American filmmakers like Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino established the movement of Third Cinema, which rejects personal expression (Second Cinema) through film, "author cinema" (Solanas, 1979 in Willemen, 1989: 9) and sees the filmmaker as a part of a collective. What makes Third Cinema appealing towards the masses is the fact that it is presenting the truth and has as an aim to inspire revolutionary activism. As Chanan (2007) argues, "Third Cinema films are engaging audience in a dialogue about a social process to which film and audience both belong". However, Latin American Cinema was not always like that at the beginning, as it did not escape the conventions of being a travelogue or a scientific documentary presenting traditional festivities and tourist scenes, official ceremonies and military parades. Change came with the introduction of the portable camera and the rejection of, according to Barnouw (1993: 194) "the cultural imperialism of the gringos and the crass commercialism of local film industries" by the new generation of filmmakers. This new style of documentary was turning the camera on the actuality of the social world, giving voice and image to the marginalised who were condemned to live in invisibility. In other words, it was breaking the culture of silence. Barnouw (1993: 203), concludes on the importance of Latin American cinema,

> "Latin American documentary became involved in the creation of an alternative audio visual public sphere at the level of community and its popular organizations, and

sharing the same preoccupation to give voice to people normally excluded from public speech and outside the political power structures."

Perhaps the best film example of that movement was Patricio Guzman's three part chronicle of the Battle of Chile *La batalla de Chile* (1975, 76, 79) a film about the military coup of 1973 in which president Allende was overthrown. What is interesting about this film is the observational approach adopted recording an ongoing event giving voice to the people in the streets, which as Barnouw (1993: 205) argues, "would add up to a map of the key battlegrounds within the larger conflict".

1.2 1930s American Cinema

In 1930s America, lavish Hollywood productions were the norm (First Cinema), as Solanas, (1979 in Willemmen, 1989: 9) explains "expressing imperialist, capitalist, bourgeois ideas. Big monopoly capital finances big spectacle cinema as well as authorial and informational cinema". At that time, US establishment was against any kind of independent productions and tried to keep them in the margins. The turning point, which helped lead the film trend towards documentary expression, was the big depression. Independent non-fiction filmmakers started to see film as a vehicle for persuasion and expression. Keil (1998: 120) writes, "the influx of a great number of artists from diverse fields into documentary film production elevated its artistic stature while confirming the importance of its activist mandate". Real experience was integral for the development of cinema in the US as a tool for social change, as Keil (1998: 121) writes, "the experiential qualities of cinema would affect the successful merger of expression and persuasion, art and politics". This synthesis occurs on the level of style artistry and social effectivity converged in the systematic deployment of cinematic techniques. Nichols (1983: 18) calls it the documentary's voice, "voice is perhaps akin to that intangible, moiré-like pattern formed by the unique interaction of all a film's codes, and it applies to all modes of documentary".

Pare Lorentz (1936) film *"The Plow That Broke The Plains"* constitutes a characteristic example of the transition of American Cinema towards a more activist way of filmmaking. This film is voice-over narrated based, which was the norm at that time, giving a more didactic and authoritative feeling to the audience as Keil (1998: 127), notes, "a film that fuses persuasion and expression through a variety of stylistic means, but often locates its voice primarily within the atemporal qualities of the voice over commentary". Voice of God narration aside (didacticism), *"The Plow That Broke The Plains",* according to Barnouw (1993: 117), "illuminated a national problem with strong documentation, and with emotional power and beauty". Finally, with the introduction of synchronous sound the mode moved away from the voice over narration.

1.3 John Grierson and the First Wave of Activist films

John Grierson in the 1930s was the pioneer of the first wave of activist documentary. He achieved in taking away the element of entertainment from film and brought to the fore sociological issues turning documentary into a more educational medium in the widest sense of the term. As Aguayo (2005; in Aitken, 2005: 7) argues "he was the most vocal about the potential for documentary to create social change […] it became Grierson's mission to produce films that dramatized issues and their implications in a meaningful way". Grierson's film *"Drifters"* (1929) is about herring fishermen, and what distinguishes this film from the norm was the fact that it portrayed the workers as heroes. Now the marginalised of society had their voices heard and that multi vocality approach had a different impact in the audience. Chanan (2007: 137) highlights this shift by referring to how "Grierson therefore dissociated documentary from 'art', and substituted a discourse of 'public service' and 'public education'".

Apart from the sociological aspect that Grierson attempted to give in cinema, he also highlighted its political possibilities. The 1930s was a troubled decade with the rise of Fascism in Europe and Grierson grasped the opportunity to use film as a political tool. For Grierson, in order to have a functioning democratic system the electorate needed to be accurately informed, and that according to his view was only achievable by having the three elements such as knowledge, information and discussion circulated freely with freedom of speech being guaranteed. As Chanan (2007: 133), writes,

> "Grierson conceived his documentary project against the background of rising Fascism, as a means to help strengthen the democratic system through civic education. In short, he maintained that the weakness of the system could be addressed by using the mass media in the interests of education for citizenship, and that documentary, which he proceeded to define accordingly, was an ideal tool for the job

Grierson's films in essence achieved what the official documentary of the times avoided, meaning what Chanan (2007: 143) notes "the politics of class confrontation".

1.4 Second Wave, the role of the observer, Direct Cinema & Cinéma verité

In the 1960s, continuous political crisis and the development of low-cost filmmaking equipment created the ideal ground for a new population of filmmakers. Unlike the first movement in the 30s where the audience faced the manipulation of the narration, which did not leave any room for interpretation, the second wave of activist film introduced the filmmaker as the observer. "Reacting to an era of promoting corporate interests, filmmakers of the early 1960s began embracing the role as observer". (Aguayo, 2005; in Aitken, 2005: 7) Films of this movement, often called Direct Cinema (Barnouw, 1993; Chanan 2007), started

becoming more than just a public address as with the help of technology (recording of synchronous sound) subjects in films could literally speak for themselves. The absence of the narrator made films non-didactic and their ambiguous nature made them more open for interpretation by the audience.

Pioneers of the Direct Cinema genre in the US, among others, were Robert Drew and the Maysles brothers. In Direct Cinema, filmmakers adopted a more observational approach, letting the action happen in front of the camera as Aguayo (2005; in Aitken, 2005: 7) argues, "the function of direct cinema was to bear witness and to place judgment in the hands of the audience". However, the audience felt that they were still subject to what filmmakers felt was important to film and/or not to film while the editing process was manipulative towards the final product as still the filmmaker had to determine what makes the final cut.

Almost at the same time in France, cinéma verité made its appearance, and unlike the Direct Cinema movement, filmmakers were moving away from observation and started leaning towards intervention. In the 1961 film *"Chronicle of a Summer"* by Jean Rouche and Edgar Morin we see the filmmakers participating in the film creating a different reality, however within the conventions of non-fiction film as the participants are not invented characters. "Filmmakers came out from behind the camera and intervened in the world around them". (Aguayo, 2005; in Aitken, 2005: 7)

Barnouw (1993: 254) gives a clear idea of the differences between the two dominant filmmaking movements of the 1960s,

> The direct cinema documentarist took his camera to a situation of tension and waited hopefully for a crisis; the Rouch version of Cinéma verité tried to precipitate one. The direct cinema artist aspired to invisibility; the Rouch cinéma verité artist was often avowed participant. The direct cinema artist played the role of uninvolved bystander the cinéma verité espoused that of provocateur. Direct cinema found its truth in events available to the camera. Cinéma verité was committed to a paradox: that artificial circumstances could bring hidden truth to the surface.

Additionally, one of the filmmakers who left their mark with the second wave of activist documentary films was Frederick Wiseman (stated in more depth in Chapter 3 "Documentary as a Research Method", subchapter 4.3 Wiseman: Radical Film Practice). Wiseman wanted to research institutions and as Barnouw (1993: 244) notes, "all of his films became studies in the exercise of power in American Society—not at the high levels, but at the community level". Finally the 70s and 80s activist film introduced filmmaking collectives consisted of filmmakers living together in communal areas, who had the "tell it as it is" viewpoint "from within the crowd, subjective and involved" (Boyle, 1985: 228). It was the time of video documentarists, who adopted a more Guerilla style of filmmaking. Boyle (1985: 229) defines

Guerilla Television as "a technological radicalism that claimed that commercial television, with its mass audiences, was a conditioning agent rather than a source of enlightenment". One of the most iconic works of Guerilla television was the coverage of the 1972 Republican convention by the TVTV collective. By focusing on the differences between the young voters for Nixon and the "Vietnam Vets Against the War", *"Four More Years"* offered a different perspective of an event in which the mainstream media focused on what was happening on the podium. However, the initial promise that the Cable and public access channels gave to Guerilla filmmakers a more democratic alternative fell through "by federal deregulation and footloose franchise agreements". (Boyle, 1985: 232)

1.5 Third Wave Michael Moore and the Internet

The third wave of activist documentary began to develop in the early 90s and it was characterised by a concern with labour issues, highlighting manager-worker relations. Michael Moore's 1989 film *"Roger and Me"*, for which I will present a critique later in this chapter, was a robust example. Guerilla documentary technique was adopted by Moore in his two films, *"Bowling for Columbine"* (2002) and *"Fahrenheit 9/11"* (2004), following *"Roger and Me"* playing a significant role in shaping the texture of contemporary activist documentary.

An interesting debate that contemporary films like *"Bowling For Columbine"* (2002),*"Fahrenheit 9/11"* (2004) and Morgan Spurlock's *"Supersize Me"* (2004) have sparked was how effective can activist films be when they are distributed by commercial global broadcasting corporations. "Much of contemporary activist media is at home in the slick world of corporate broadcasting that is dependent on maintaining a loyal viewership". (Aguayo, 2005; in Aitken, 2005: 8) All of the aforementioned films, even though they were distributed widely by big corporations they managed to stay true to their activist cause as their filmmakers attacked corrupted corporations, politicians and food industries. "The strategy of third-wave activist documentary is to place films in major distribution houses for the maximum audience without compromising activist content". (Aguayo, 2005; in Aitken, 2005: 9)

One important characteristic about the third wave of activist documentary is the development of the Internet. Just as the technological breakthroughs of the Second Wave, such as the introduction of light portable cameras with synchronous sound recording and Television, the Internet enforced activism through film in the Third Wave. Activist filmmakers can produce and distribute their own work online with minimum cost while the audience can engage by having direct access. "The activist Internet video movement is a significant force that

challenges the content and ideological commitments of a primary profit-driven media apparatus. This may become an invaluable and necessary agitational strategy to sustain the process of systematic social change". (Aguayo, 2005; in Aitken, 2005: 9)

2 Critique of Activist Documentary film genre

After going through the stages of development of activist documentary film through the years, I will present a critique of the genre in order to contribute in the ongoing discourse about the effectiveness of the film medium to achieve political and social change. Even though there is a continuous shift in how the audience perceive activist documentary films, Nisbet & Aufderheide (2009: 451) highlight that "documentary film, despite its growing influence and many impacts, has mostly been overlooked by social scientists studying the media and communication".

Two main tendencies qualify a documentary film as an activist one. These are the filmmaker's ideological position outside filmmaking and the content. If the film is political or it brings to the fore a controversy it tends to be characterized as an activist film. However, if the film is not successful in what it sets out to achieve then the impact will be minimum. As Aguayo (2005; in Aitken, 2005: 7) argues, "it is not enough for documentary to ''be'' activist; it must help in creating the space for activism and invested in producing material and cultural change".

According to Nisbet & Aufderheide (2009: 452) "activist documentary films has three sets of responsibilities, towards their subjects, viewers and the filmmaker's own artistic vision and production pressures". In other words, there needs to be an understanding between the triangle consisted of filmmaker, documentary and audience. Documentary film can be rhetorical and is using the cinematic language in order to inform, educate, spark social change, raise awareness, and change perspectives. The foundations of an activist documentary film are the struggles for political and social power.

In his research work, Whiteman (2009) distinguishes activist films as issue-centered and distribution-centered. The former according to Whiteman (2009: 457), allows "a more comprehensive and systematic analysis of the full range of political impact, including impact on producers, activists, and policymakers" whereas the latter "focus primarily on the effects a documentary may have on individual citizens reached through mainstream distribution channels". (Whiteman, 2009: 458) Schiller (2009: 499) has a solid point on distribution-centered films as she argues, "the meaning of a film is shaped not only by its composition but by who is responsible for its circulation, when and where the film is screened, and the contextual information provided to the audience".

People who run mainstream media have often accused activist filmmakers of a lack of objectivity. Strong partisan views from activist filmmakers do not allow them to offer the opposition the opportunity to share their views because as they proclaim the mainstream media is doing that for them. Media system for them is problematic as it is leaning towards the powerful. "Activists filmmakers may be sympathetic or active participants in organizations for social change" (Bullert, 1997: 13). Public television insiders perceive the work of activist filmmakers as propaganda as they say it is one sided. In moments of political and social crisis, activist documentary appears to counter the mainstream media, tracking the missing and unreported stories.

Difficulties, limitations and restrictions push people towards the production of a documentary film in order to touch a sensitive topic or problem rather than tackling it from their original position. As Whiteman (2009: 458), writes "the production and distribution of social-issue documentaries can have a wide range of significant impact on community organizations, educational institutions, citizens, and policy makers". Social movements use the medium of film focusing on recruitment, education, mobilization. Tarrow's (1994) analysis of how mass media become a resource for social movements suggests two possible roles for film: helping new movements gain initial attention and helping ''established movements maintain support by bolstering the feeling of status of their members and communicating their activities to their supporters' (Tarrow, 1994 : 127).

A film needs to answer successfully societal impact questions; Nisbet & Aufderheide (2009: 453) highlight a few,

> "what influence can a film have on informal learning about a complex policy topic? Moreover, what about the influence on publics beyond those who actually watch the film? Specifically, how can a film reframe an issue relative to wider public understanding, news coverage, and policy debate? From an evaluation standpoint, how can research in these areas inform the design, distribution, and marketing of a film?"

Recent films like *"An Inconvenient Truth"* (2006), *Sicko* (2007) and *"Food Inc."* (2008) are considered part of a larger effort to spark debate, and build activist networks. In short, scholars need to distinguish between films who engage and empower people and political or interest group campaigns which might use video and film as a component. According to Boyle (1997) film should be used not as weapon but as a cultural tool bringing people together, thus, filmmaker becomes a social animator "creative control of one's work, refined aesthetic criteria, and professional standards of production were abandoned for a more democratic process in which the ultimate goal was social change not artistic excellence" (Boyle, 1997: 33).

3 Critique of Contemporary Activist films – Roger and Me, Food Inc., Harlan County, USA

Contemporary activist documentary films have a variety of styles and techniques in highlighting social issues like manager-worker relations, struggles of the working class, health issues and the food industry. I am going to focus on three documentary films, which constitute representative examples of different approaches in the activist genre. In his film *"Roger and Me"* (1989) Michael Moore adopts a combination of cinéma verité, guerilla documentary and personal film essay to highlight the different realities of General Motors board members and workers. The film documents Moore's failed attempts to interview the CEO of the company to get him to explain the layoffs of his workers. In *"Food Inc."* (2008) Robert Kenner presents a critique of the commodification of food. He raised health issues by researching the food industry and used talking head techniques, interviewing food specialists, scientists and people who work within the food industry. Finally, in "*Harlan County, USA*" (1976), Kopple by using partisan filmmaking brought to the fore the struggle of American miners on strike demanding better salary and working conditions. What makes this film interesting is how the director managed also to focus the attention on the women (wives of mineworkers) raising gender issues.

3.1 Roger and Me

Michael Moore's (1989) film *"Roger and Me"* is about the effects of corporate capitalism on the residents of Flint, Michigan. The film is heavily based on interviews. Moore is the presenter and the driving force of the film with his perceptions and understandings of what happened in Flint, Michigan give a sense of partialness. Moore likes to provoke in the film using a technique that Jean Rouch introduced, "Moore here appears to be operating on the same principle of brash provocation as Jean Rouch employed when he asked the unsuspecting Landry about Marcelline's tattooed concentration camp numbers in Chronicle of a Summer" (Bernstein, 1994: 11). Therefore, humour plays a significant role in Moore's depiction of class inequality compared to how Grierson showed his subjects as victims back in the 1930s. Moore has created a new wave of activist documentary filmmaking. Paul Arthur (1993: 127) suggests, "Roger and Me is part of a new ethos - derived from poststructuralist thought and postmodernist form". In order to grasp a better understanding of Arthur's suggestion about Moore's film we have to visit Wayne's (2001: 117), explanation of poststructuralism and postmodernism. The former is a linguistic theory, which argues that meaning is generated by difference, while the latter argues that culture is the all-powerful and embracing force and model of the (post) modern era.

"Both influences are highly relativistic, providing little foundation on which to organise a politics of progressive change, and both are profoundly idealist in the philosophical sense that it is ideas, values, beliefs or (to use the preferred term) discourses that constitute the ultimate horizon of explanation".

This is a film settling into the expository mode with authority resting with the film and not with its subjects. "Expository documentaries embody the epistemological assumption that knowledge about the world is readily accessible to the filmmaker. Such films thus give an impression of objectivity and of well-substantiated argument". (Bernstein, 1994: 4) In expository documentaries, Nichols (1983: 26) notes, "Images serve as illustrations or counterpoint of the verbal argument". Even though someone would argue that Moore's film is objective, he is managing to keep the opposing viewpoints away from the audience with using constant cross-cutting. "The cross-cutting pattern reaches its rhetorical climax of course when Moore cuts back and forth between Roger Smith's Christmas party speech and Ross's eviction of one furious tenant before Christmas, using Smith's voice-over to accompany the scenes of eviction". (Bernstein, 1994: 8)

Finally, is Moore's film a documentary or a satire? Bernstein (1994: 3), attempts an answer, "defining the documentary is difficult, whether documentary is identified by its formal features, its assumptions about the construction of knowledge, its approach to narration, its assertions of authority, the expectations it evokes in the audience - or all of the above".

3.2 Food Inc.

In *"Food Inc."* (2008) Robert Kenner and his team make a statement on the food we consume as part of a critique of the global capitalist food system. A combination of interviews and visuals bring to the fore health issues about food that consumers did not know about. According to Lindefeld (2010: 378) Hollywood narrative films "largely support the commodification and fetishization of food", on the other hand food documentary films like *Food Inc.* "collectively unpack the fetishization of food that mainstream media has helped to create by calling, naming, and laying bare the traces of reproduction that underlie the US's food system". In other words and as Flowers & Swan (2011: 244), note, "by informing us, the film seeks to turn us from relatively ignorant viewers into food social activists". However, is the film effective in producing knowledge about food, in order to change people's food eating habits and most of all in creating more activists? It partially does, as by interviewing scientists and specialists about the issue the amount of knowledge that is produced is satisfactory. However, Flowers & Swan (2011) are critical of the filmmaker over-depending on specialists knowledge, resulting to real useful knowledge losing its strength. Furthermore, in order to expose people to right knowledge films like *"Food Inc."* end up

"construct those they seek to mobilise as having the wrong kind of knowledge". (Flowers & Swan 2011: 246) Finally, the film lacks female voices as it is based on white male scientists, farmers and journalists in order to produce knowledge.

On the other hand, Lindefeld (2010: 382) finds the film effective mainly because of its high production value making it engaging and entertaining. "*Food Inc.*'s statement on food (combined with the efforts of journalists Schlosser and Pollan that the film clearly attempts to communicate) has the potential to facilitate significant change, and these collective efforts have already helped to raise awareness and change behaviour". To sum up even though Flowers & Swan (2011: 244) proclaim that knowledge production amongst social movements can be 'messy', they agree, "the film is using knowledge as a resource to expose viewers to 'truths' about food production".

3.3 Harlan County, USA

Barbara Kopple's 1976 "*Harlan County, USA*" film is more polemic in style than the aforementioned ones. The filmmaker uses partisan filmmaking "intimate involvement with the people she filmed, the risks she took, the places—jails, courtrooms, stockholder's meetings—into which she forced her camera" (Biskind, 1977: 1) to record the struggle of coal miners in Kentucky, USA against inequalities and injustices created by the capitalist system. What Kopple managed to do in her documentary was to film and present class struggle however, without staying impartial during the filming process. She is an involved camera, as Kaplan (1977: 12) argues, "the camera participates in events rather than trying to record them". This result in questions of objectivity i.e. how much is the filmmaker letting things happen in front of the camera. Biskind (1977: 7) however believes that, "she has stayed with it and had the good sense to keep out of its way, letting it, after a fashion, speak for itself". Furthermore, another really, important factor in the film is the use of music. The soundtrack of the film is full of ballads and union songs evoking feelings towards the struggle of the coal miners. In my opinion, the film's visual images are strong enough which makes music redundant.

"*Harlan County, USA*" is not an ethnographic study, the film is full of images of struggle and what makes it even more interesting is the fact that Kopple is avoiding aestheticizing the miners. There are not artfully composed shots, which is a result of the partisan filmmaking meaning mainly hand-held action shots. Women have a central role in Kopple's film, equally important as the one of the men, raising gender equality issues. She is presenting the wives of the coal miners as a group of fearless, strong, independent women who are not afraid to stand

against oppression.

According to Kaplan (1977: 12), "*Harlan County, USA*" is an unusual documentary film,

> "raising new problems of the relation between actuality and film, life and art. Perhaps this kind of documentary belongs in some category of its own, representing a series of screen images that complement lived experience rather than images that stand completely on their own, forming aesthetic patterns related to, yet quite distinct from, life".

Barbara Kopple's film is not just about the miners, but also about the importance of standing up for one's rights and against poverty. It may be debatable whether Kopple's film is a documentary or not, but one thing remains true. There is a strong narrative structure to this film with a strong message.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined commentaries and critiques of the activist film genre. "What is activist documentary film and video? Documentary films that reflect the interests of social movements are important but to what end, and in what rhetorical situations are these strategies more effective for social change?" (Aguayo, 2005; in Aitken, 2005: 7). Throughout the years, activist documentary filmmaking has played a significant role in the generation of political and societal changes. Activist filmmakers have tried to capture the essence of social movements by filming and presenting to the everyday viewers demonstrations and actions, which the mainstream media would not air. From the early stages where the filmmaker tried to manipulate his footage in order to pass to the audience his or her own views or the views of the establishment he or she was serving, to the presentation of actual events and subjects which speak for themselves and finally to foregrounded social and political problems. Activist documentary film has developed through the years from being just a propaganda tool to raising issues of socio-political importance. Technological achievements have managed to give voice to the marginalised of our society "democratising the medium once reserved for the few" (Barnouw, 1993: 286). By analysing contemporary activist films, I argue that documentary film can play a significant role in informing and engaging. "Documentaries, as a form of political information, have the potential to strongly influence public opinion". (Nisbet & Aufderheide (2009: 453) Even though there are issues of objectivity, I strongly believe that activist documentary films can be a tool for political and social change.

Chapter 5. Critical reflection on Practice

In August of 2014, I had to write a film proposal for a place at the PhD Film by Practice program at Newcastle University. I had to come up with an idea for a documentary film, with which I would be able to demonstrate academic research skills, as it had to have aims and objectives, but most importantly answering to a research question, "academic research involves conducting a research inquiry to establish new knowledge. This involves investigation, finding things and drawing conclusions". (Nelson, 2013: 25) Furthermore, due to its practice-based nature I had to show competence in filmmaking and editing. The film, according to my supervisor, had to have a robust topic, with development potentiality, in order to create a conversation between film theory and practice.

As a filmmaker/researcher, I have always been fascinated by the way, in which other filmmakers could research sociological and political issues through sport themed documentaries. Ever since I came across documentary filmmaking and studying film practices, I have realized that it is an extremely interesting field, which can contribute to the generation of knowledge. As Sullivan (2011: 99) writes, "to see is to think. Information received, situations encountered, or systems experienced, are always being felt as much as framed because there is always another way to look at something". Coming from a journalistic background, I have enjoyed studying sociological issues through sport; therefore, I brought my sociological interests to this project. I wanted to focus on football but approach it from a different angle, researching its socio-political impacts. After all, football as a sport is a social phenomenon. The sociology of football informed my project as football became rapidly politicized in Greece during the socio-economic crisis.

In Chapter 1, I attempted to place this research project in a political context. I wanted to outline the circumstances under which people are practicing activism in football is lived in Greece. When the economic crisis hit the nation, it resulted a dramatic shift in political ideologies with on the one hand, the rise of the extreme Right, and on the other, the emergence of the radical Left. Football emerged as an important factor among the ranks of the radical Left in terms of practicing activism, as Zaimakis (2018: 266) writes, "during the era of the financial crisis, football became a fertile ground where the borders between football, politics, economy and society became increasingly blurred". That emergence was the reason why I decided to focus on the members of the F.C St. Pauli Thessaloniki fans, and to chronicle their activities. These activists emerged from the crisis because the establishment and the mainstream parties betrayed them and compelled them to form grassroots movements and communities. As Zaimakis (2018: 253) suggests, in the crisis years, there was a football

fandom osmosis with political activism in order to reinterpret and re-negotiate their identities. He writes,

> "The process of fan politicization came to a head during the period of Greek severe economic crisis when organized football fans participated in the protest movement against austerity policies and fierce political disputes occurred between anti-fascist and nationalist fans". (Zaimakis, 2018: 253)

There is a scene in *'Freedom through Football'*, where Tasos is his car and actually points out that the demonstrations against the first memorandum, which lead to the first package of austerity measures, only became dynamic when the Ultras, participated. There was a clear politicization in Football fan culture in Greece, which aimed at wider social and political changes. Politicized fans have constructed resistant ideologies, performing through street politics, collective action and protest demonstration against strict austerity and state authoritarianism. The aforementioned elements contributed to my decision to focus on football fan activism and highlight the social and political meaning of football.

As I mentioned earlier coming from a journalistic background, I had the inclination of attempting to spot and then highlight the sociological issues through the sport of football. Football is a special, interesting and exciting activity in which all people can engage in. With this project I attempted to humanise the activists by bringing to the fore those small relationships, those social interactions where these fans engaged in, something that transformed into a universal social movement (I discuss about transnational fan cultures in Chapter 2).

The idea of relational sociology informed my project in order to determine and understand the bonding and the relationships the activists have when they meet for the first time in a football ground or a fan club. Furthermore, one of the major sociological issues in football is the commercialization of the game. In the film, this issue is being elegantly presented in the scene where in the St. Pauli boutique one of the main characters, Thomas, is holding up a jacket highlighting to the other members how expensive it is. This indicates how the sociological issues were always emerging in the film.

In my research, I investigate the reasons behind the usage of football as a means to achieve political change, and the timing of the establishment of the fan club in Greece. As a practitioner, I see my work as broadening the terms of discourse for issues like football fan culture and its emerging activist side.

"Freedom through Football" was an idea out of curiosity, personal interest and of course the sharing of the same political beliefs and values with the participants in the film. The latter was my main concern as to the extent to which the filmmaking and editing process were going to

be accused of lacking objectivity.

Idea generation for a documentary film can be a long and hard process. The hunt for the compelling story that I was after was eventually fruitful when I decided to look at football fan activism and more specifically focusing on the F.C. St. Pauli Thessaloniki fan club. As I was researching for an idea, I concluded that there is a significant lack of observational documentary films produced about F.C. St. Pauli and most importantly the left-wing ideology behind it. The short films made so far by platforms like VICE Sports, COPA90, The Guardian are journalistic in their approach. The outcome is mainly superficial, adopting a more fast-paced rhythm, using a music video clip aesthetic or a more conventional talking heads with B-Roll technique, like the one adopted in the film *"Paulinen Platz"* (2011), in order to portray the alternative view of football and not researching in depth the left wing ideology behind the club that leads to activism. Furthermore, there has never been a detailed filmic endeavour looking at a similar fan base in Greece apart from films, like *"Αυτοοργάνωσέ το"* (2015), which sheds a light on the establishment of anarcho-autonomous amateur football clubs throughout the country which are presented as the alternative to modern commercialised football.

Since the beginning of this endeavour, even before contextualising the idea for a PhD I was convinced that in order to achieve a better result and gain knowledge about football fan culture I had to adopt a practice-led research method, which it would result to a feature documentary film. Film as a sub-discipline which contributes to knowledge is novel, recently established and frequently marginalized in academia (Nelson, 2013; Berkeley, 2018), but as Berkeley (2018: 44) suggests "research through the production of a film can be used to produce knowledge in a wide range of disciplines, across the sciences, social sciences, humanities and creative arts". Sullivan (2011: 99) gives a thorough explanation on how art practice as research can be effective in the production of new knowledge,

> Only within a notion of art practice as research the full potential of cognition and creativity as informing human capacities can be realised. Artistic cognition can be described as seeing and thinking that is partially shaped by the cultural contexts that inform 'what' it is we see, and partially governed by the biological processes that connect 'how' we see.

As a filmmaker/researcher, I felt that a documentary film would create an impact, especially by bringing to the fore the issue of fan activism within football fan culture. In retrospect, after conducting test screenings, I have realised that this specific topic was not familiar to the majority of the audiences. Furthermore, by displaying my work in progress to audiences, I managed to gather invaluable and constructive feedback, as Berkeley (2018: 43) argues, "test screenings are all methods to incorporate reflection and evaluation into the creative practice

being undertaken". One of the key challenges of Practice as Research is to make tacit knowledge more explicit. When I was filming, I had my own feelings and intuitions. So now, I had the challenge to externalise it in the form of a filmic text making it more explicit, "a distinct filmic text is available for interrogation as is the process of its production and the researcher as author has a measure of privileged access to process and product". (Desmond, 2011: 6) So why conduct research through a documentary film? Hannula (2004: 71) argues that the artist-researcher has a "desire to say something about something to someone". Artistic research, can transform unknown issues into known through its stages of knowledge, creation and construction. With this project, I am exploring as Aparna (2018: 162) writes, "documentary's potential in opening our perceptions to perspectives hitherto unknown". Furthermore, Desmond (2011: 4) argues, "film-making is always an exploration and testing of ideas about the medium, its creative capacities and its mode of public address". Therefore, I have decided to explore human sociality through filmmaking as it captures "a field of social actions which is enacted in planes of time and space through objects and bodies, landscapes and emotions, as well as thought" (Banks, 2005: 16). In other words, my goal was for my own approaches to come into dialogue with my subjects' interpretations and understandings of their cultural life.

The direct cinema movement and the history of documentaries as forms of radical sociological practice focusing on Frederick Wiseman's radical film practice initially and the evolution of the activist film genre subsequently informed the sense of the film I was starting to construct in my head. Due to its socio-political nature, I had to place it in a context. At this point, I have to stress that I neither am a sociologist nor have extended knowledge about politics. However, I realised early on, that it would have been impossible for me to reveal football's socio-political impact before I have started the filmmaking process. I had the feeling that engaging with my subjects, capturing their activities, listening to their conversations would help me find the ideal context. "When working with a film camera in a 'documentary' setting, the process is substantially driven by an unconscious interaction with the world I am working in". (Koppel, 2007: 317) By the time, I started filming; Greece was entering the seventh year of recession under constant European Union and IMF monitoring. Extreme nationalism and right-wing populism reached its peak with Golden Dawn. Golden Dawn managed to gain significant political power after the last general election in 2015 by entering the parliament as the third most popular party. Working under specific circumstances inevitably affects the filmmaking process. The environment has an impact on identifying a range of social, cultural political and personal factors that influence creativity (Lubart, 1999; Sharma 2018). At the same time, it started becoming clear to me that my subjects felt the

impacts of the political uncertainty in Greece, forcing them to engage in activism using football as a vehicle.

My film project was constantly evolving through its continuous filming and editing processes. The research question was changing every time I was returning in the editing table, reviewing my footage and finally placing it on a timeline. In a practice led research project, it is pointless to attempt to determine what the outcome will be, not at least until the filming and editing process is underway. As Nelson (2013: 30) argues, "it is unhelpful to overemphasize serendipity and simply say we won't know what the inquiry is until the praxis is underway". The film ended up being discovered in the making process even though I was investigating a predetermined topic i.e. Football fan activism.

Unlike, conventional documentary films, this project has a non-linear narrative with no clear beginning middle and end. It is mainly a chronicling of events and actions of this football fan collective. The initial idea with this project was to adopt a more observational approach of filmmaking, which was a choice, based on the attributes of the specific mode. As Aparna (2018: 167) argues, "observational cinema is characterised by an austere aesthetic in which meaning is created principally through film elements including framing, sound design and editing". In the first period of shooting this film, I was hesitant to interact with my subjects, as I wanted to be an unobtrusive participant-observer (Malinowski, 1932). However, according to McDougall (1995: 118) "this adherence to this principle could make it a dangerously narrow model for filmmakers in the future". I am going to agree with that remark because if I was to just ask the permission of my subjects to film and then just be in the background, adopting a secretive stance, without communicating with them this project would have had a different outcome. McDougall (1995: 124) writes, "in his refusal to give his subjects access to the film, the filmmaker refuses them access to himself, for this is clearly his most important activity when he is among them. In denying a part of his own humanity, he denies a part of theirs". Therefore, I adopted a more collaborative stance and started interacting with my subjects and finally I was able to explain to them the next steps in the filming and to communicate with them the editing process. A more thorough explanation of the pros and cons of the observational documentary mode is presented in Chapter 3.

During the editing process, I realised that in order to help the film move forward I had to incorporate a more participatory approach, as there were some significant problems in producing a feature length film solely depending on the attributes of the observational mode. Firstly, I acknowledged the fact that there was a lack of adequate footage. It is important to have a significant amount of material in order to produce a coherent, feature length observational documentary film. The fact that I was not able to spend as much time as I

wanted with these activists made my work more arduous. Secondly, the film during the first stages of the editing process was episodic, presenting different moments in different times of the lives of these football fan activists. I was facing significant linkages issues amongst the different sequences. Therefore, when I was going back to film, I had to shift from an observational/visual anthropology to a more interdisciplinary and participatory filmmaking approach. That was an artistic choice for the film to cohere as a piece and address its episodic structrure. As Nichols notes, "to some extent, each mode of documentary representation arises in part through a growing sense of dissatisfaction among filmmakers with other modes" (2010: 159). Therefore, I ended up filming talking head interviews and introduced voice over with B Roll visuals. During the creative process, I needed to make decisions according to the ever-changing circumstances under which I had to produce my film. I had to balance between different documentary modes without deviating from my original goal which was to be as detached and objective as I could be. All documentary modes co-exist and films from any historical period can utilize several modes at one, as Nichols (2010: 159) argues, "the modes do not constitute a genealogy of documentary film so much as a pool of resources available to all". Observation and Participation are both connected; the difference is in the discourse as well as in practice. Observational filmmakers do not intervene; they are trying to convey the feeling of being there as they adopt a "fly on the wall" approach. As Bruzzi (2006: 74) argues, "they attempted to keep authorial intervention to a minimum by adopting a more casual, observational style that had as its premise the desire to follow action rather than dictate it, to see and record what happened to evolve in front of the cameras". On the other hand, in participatory films, "filmmakers actively engage with the world, rather than unobtrusively observe, poetically reconfigure, or argumentatively assemble it" (Nichols, 2010: 182). They interact with their subjects in different ways. McDougall (1995: 125) recognises the possibility of Participatory Cinema, which lies beyond the observational mode of documentary. He writes,

> Here the filmmaker acknowledges his entry upon the world of his subjects and yet asks them to imprint directly upon the film their own culture. This should not imply a relaxation of the filmmaker's purposefulness, nor should it cause him to abandon the perspective that an outsider can bring to another culture. By revealing his role, the filmmaker enhances the value of his material as evidence. By entering actively into the world of his subjects, he can provoke a greater flow of information about them. By giving them access to the film, he makes possible the corrections, additions, and illuminations that only their response to the material can elicit. Through such an exchange, a film can begin to reflect the ways in which its subjects perceive the world.

In The Camera and Man, Jean Rouch (1995) identifies the importance of the camera being out there in the field. The camera can provide the filmmaker with the opportunity to communicate with the group that is under study. He calls it the 'Participant Camera'. He writes, "at certain times in certain places and around certain people, the camera (and especially the syncsound camera) seems to be necessary, […] or for political reasons (sharing in a revolt against an intolerable situation) (1995: 94-95). Stoller (2005: 123) identified in Rouch's work the need of provocation in order for the people he filmed and eventually the viewers to experience "new dimensions of sociocultural experience". Hence, the participation of the camera in his subjects' daily lives. In *Freedom through Football*, the camera is there in the field, filming these people trying to make a change through practicing activism, provoking them in revealing their motivations and recording their testimonies. I am confident that the success of this film in raising awareness of football fan activism initially and in changing peoples' minds about the role of left-wing Ultras subsequently is a result of the presence of a third party, the 'Participant Camera'. Camera can work as a Catalyst (Barnouw, 1993; Rouch, 1995) provoking the subjects into putting on performances, that are different from their normal forms of behaviour, which will reveal aspects of their characters (Henley, 2010). In *Freedom through Football*, we see many times Thomas performing for the camera as soon as he acknowledges it. He puts on special performances, like the scene where he is pretending to kick the door at the radio station or the scene where he is air drumming towards the end of the film. These performances are revealing an interesting aspect of his character, which is not evident most of the times in the film especially when he is mostly interacting with the others, as he is trying to be more dominant and act as a leader. Furthermore, in the discussion-taking place in the coffee house, where these activists are talking about organising future events or how they can sustain the club, the performances at times become very lively. We can see Thomas in fiery exchanges with one of the members of the club and vice versa. Should the discussion have been different if the camera was not there? It may have been or maybe not. The sure thing is that the presence of the camera worked as a catalyst in order for the discussion to get heated at times.

In Barbara Kopple's film (1976) *Harlan County, USA,* we as an audience get a sense of what it is like for the filmmaker to be there, her bodily presence, rather than the absence, locates the filmmaker on the scene. In *Freedom through Football,* the audience can acknowledge my presence on the scene from the sync sound exchanges between filmmaker and subjects. Filmmakers in the Participatory mode are not just simply observing events, but interacting with subjects, interviewing them, reflecting on encounters, reporting on developments and producing a dialogue. As Nichols (2010: 180) notes, "I speak with them for us (me and you)

as the filmmaker's interactions give us a distinctive window onto a particular portion of our world. The participatory mode has come to embrace the spectator as participant as well". Even though Kopple is not using any formal interviews in her film we still hear her interacting with the subjects asking questions behind the camera. I, too, have incorporated this technique in my project where in many cases I was asking questions behind the camera, being out there in the field participating in the situation. That technique is helping the film to move forward. It is what Foucault (1980: 98) characterises as "Socratic dialogue". He explains, "these forms all involve regulated forms of exchange, with an uneven distribution of power between client and institutional practitioner, and that they have a root in the religious tradition of the confessional". Similar technique is used in Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), as the film is dwelling on events in the present moment in which the filmmaker participates. Both Kopple and Moore are making their films more effective by participating rather than being solely observers. Kopple in her film is not being distant; she is not detaching herself from the participants in the film. By having incorporated a participatory approach, she is giving us, a sense of what it is like for the filmmaker to be in a given situation, and how that situation alters as a result. Unlike the more traditional approach of a researcher, who would go in the field, participate in the lives of others, gain an idea of what life in a given context is like and then reflect on it. Kopple is in the middle of the action, letting scenes come alive, watching people change through a period, "what's important for me is to be somewhere over a long period of time and watch how people deal with crises and react to change". (Kopple, 1991) The participatory mode can actually stress the lived encounter between filmmaker and participant achieving a different type of truth, as Nichols (2010: 184) argues,

> As "film truth", the idea emphasizes that this is the truth of an encounter rather than absolute or untampered truth. We see how the filmmaker and subject negotiate a relationship, how they act toward one another, what forms of power and control come into play, and what levels of revelation or rapport stem from this specific form of encounter. Cinema Veritè reveals the reality of what happens when people interact in the presence of a camera.

Character engagement in a documentary film is as important for the filmmaker as it is for the audience. In terms of the characters who appear in the film the initial idea was to construct their portraits. I wanted to follow them in their everyday life and attempt to dissect their personalities, showing to the world who are these people practicing activism through football. For myself to understand these people being filmed I had to immerse in their everyday life. I had to capture this everydayness and in order to achieve that I had to build a long-term relationship with them. As Colusso (2017: 146) argues, "the identification of key characters to accompany over time and, crucially, the importance of developing an intimate relationship

with them as they become, to a certain extent, partakers and accomplices in the filmmaking process". The participation of the subjects is thus central to the construction of the film. In this way, the film ends up being the result of a collaborative work between the filmmaker and the subjects, which took shape as our relationship built up during filming. Colusso (2017: 155) highlights the importance of having a 'view from the inside', which gives the filmmaker and the subjects the opportunity to reflect on the experience of making the film. Therefore, she sees filmmaking practice as a 'relational process', and more specifically "a way of connecting and making sense of the world, also capable of precipitating the ethical encounter with the film subject, of raising awareness of the responsibility towards the other". The trust I immediately felt towards these activists were clearly reciprocated by their openness to express views and ideas. Nevertheless, most importantly, the trust and bond that had developed between us were priceless: given the context and the themes, they needed to feel secure that I would not put their lives at risk. Some scenes in the film had to be re-edited, for example the establishment shot outside the house where they were preparing the banner for their anti-tournament. This scene had to be excluded from the final film in order to avoid revealing the location of their "headquarters".

Furthermore, my aim was to make this film engaging for the audience. By trying to identify key characters from this collective, I wanted to show under what circumstances these people are struggling to make a change. As Canet & Pérez (2016: 217) note, "the filmmaker might depict the problems of any social context, but if he wants the spectator to become emotionally involved, he must choose one or more inhabitants of that context to represent the whole, and narrate their daily struggle against the circumstances". According to Plantinga (2009a: 9) character engagement is when the viewer is responding emotionally when engaged with the characters in the film. Therefore, I tried to achieve that by using participatory observation through mostly handheld camerawork accompanying the characters over time, on my own. In addition, by applying a more participatory and interactive approach combining intimate moments of exchange with the main characters and more formal interviews, with the purely observational used mostly for the scenes representing collective moments, such as the anti – tournament, the coffee place discussion. Colusso (2017: 145) writes, "the image seems to offer itself as a possible space where self and world coexist, inscribed as one inseparable unity, an image-of-the-other-as seen-by-me". Eventually, the attempt to have one or maybe more characters standing out was abandoned during the process as the idea shifted to present this group more as a collective. Even though one might say that Thomas could clearly, be the main character in the film there were not enough elements to support it.

Retrospectively, I see my film as a journey especially if one focuses on my relationships with

my subjects, which they were constantly evolving through all the production stages. Bruzzi (2006: 81) argues that, 'journey films' is the notion of a journey based on encounters – most frequently between filmmaker and subjects". In my case these encounters were from the stage of pre-production where I had to start building a relationship of trust, all the way to the production period and the post production time where I had to be physically travelling from UK to Greece and back in order to film them, respecting their conditions, and mainly showing them the rushes in order to get their feedback.

Gaining access to this group of fans was never going to be possible without the help of Thomas, one of the main characters who appear in the film. I knew Thomas from a previous professional relationship, as we worked together in the past in the same medium as journalists. He arranged for me to attend one of their meetings so that I could introduce myself and talk to the rest of the group about my intentions. I was brought in front of a group of people, which I have never met in my life, and since, in Greece, the radical left was portrayed as this violent ideological group by the mainstream media I was not sure what I was going to face. Journey documentary films according to Bruzzi (2006: 82) are challenging the notions of certainty and predictability, she writes, "by taking the form of actual journeys, the films demonstrate how the foundation for any documentary is chance or the notion of not knowing what, during the course of making a film, the filmmakers are going to discover". However, as the discussion was going on, I have realised that I am dealing with well-educated people who were not inclined in using any form of violence unless they were provoked. After all, they were facing many attacks by right wing extremists (I have touched upon this issue in more depth in Chapter 2). After they inquired how this film is going to be used and where is it going to be screened, they set their conditions in order to participate in the film. Building solid relationships and gaining trust with one's filming subjects is an integral part for every successful documentary film. Therefore, when some of them asked as a condition not to have their faces filmed, I had but to respect it. These ethical considerations i.e. of what is shown or heard in the film are still an ongoing negotiation with my participants. I am going to touch upon this issue more thoroughly later in this chapter when I will refer to Jean Rouchs' idea of 'Audio-visual Counter gift'. Overall, this encounter was a good application of the direct democracy ideology, which constitutes a fundamental principal in the anarchist thought. As the production process was in progress, I was starting to gain their trust and that lead to an unconditional access to their events and private meetings. I managed to film discussions and interactions, which have helped the film to move forward. Furthermore, as a filmmaker I managed to get closer to these individuals especially in that first trip to Hamburg, where our relationships became more solid. Long after the completion of the film, many members of the

fan club have confided in me that my presence in that trip played a significant role in opening up to me as they said, "you have become one of us". In terms of filmmaking techniques, I continued using the observational approach with elements of the participatory mode as Bruzzi (2006: 81) argues, "many journey documentaries borrow from both observational traditions: the close attention to detail and personality of direct cinema and the focus upon the moment of encounter with the filmmaker of cinéma verité".

Since I was determined to produce a feature, length documentary film I decided to edit standalone sequences, resulting in one or more, short films for each day of shooting. This process was very helpful as it gave me the opportunity to comprehend the strengths and weaknesses of this film as Nelson (2013: 44) argues "critical reflection – pausing, standing back and thinking about what you are doing". Placing these sequences on the same timeline in order to create a cohesive film was a challenging task. Depending on what I wanted to convey, the order of the sequences was constantly changing. Furthermore, as I was going through the sequences, I had the feeling that their duration had to be edited down in order to become more effective. Koppel (2007: 321) is highlighting the importance of "making immediate and intuitive decisions about what to keep and what to lose based simply on a feeling". Production process has its own discipline and research dynamic. As Bell (2011: 5) notes, "the cognitive interest is exercised through reflective analysis and the critical appropriation of a creative process that has its own expressive dynamic". Every single standalone sequence in the film represents a moment in time of a different stage of relationship with my subjects. However, there had to be a narrative in order to give this film meaning, therefore I had to push these random events into a structure, into a logical form. Journey narrative imposes logic and if anyone could see the journey, my relationship had with these people from the beginning until the completion of the film could easily recognise a structure in the film. From the initial trip to Hamburg and the uncertainty; the reluctance; the fear of the unknown to the shooting in Greece and the second trip in Hamburg where this filmmaker and the subjects came together; built this unconditional trust and ended up filming interesting interactions. As Bruzzi (2006: 86) writes, "as with many early Direct Cinema documentaries, the pleasure of the journeys they undertake derives from observing people change over time, getting to know them, observing their growing familiarity with the filmmakers, predicting the future and frequently having those predictions overturned". Rouch (1995: 96) is talking about a new relationship, between the filmmaker and the group he is studying, called 'Shared Anthropology'. The filmmaker, having come down from his "Ivory Tower", is now in the very heart of knowledge, and for the first time the work that he has undertaken "is not being judged by a thesis committee but by the very people he came to

observe". Gaining and retaining the trust of my subjects throughout the entire filming and editing process helped me in completing this film. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, I had to take into consideration some ethical issues. I had to agree to some conditions in order to gain access in filming this collective. The main one was to respect their request not to reveal the identities of those who requested anonymity in the film. Due to the rise of nationalism in Greece, the participants in the film wanted to protect themselves from potential clashes with extreme right wing supporters. By sending edited rushes and finally the complete film for direct engagement and evaluation, I managed to gain their trust and support in finishing the project. In other words, the project became a collaborative process and at the end, we shared authorship. However, and I need to highlight that, even though my subjects played a significant role in the making of this film it is still baring my name as the final author. According to Henley (2010: 86) the filmmaker/researcher has an ethical obligation and duty to screen his/hers films to their subjects as this leads "to a highly active collaboration thereafter". By using this technique, which Rouch (1995: 96) is calling 'Audiovisual Countergift' I have managed to achieve mutual understanding and respect between the observer and observed. He writes,

> we can see already that, thanks to feedback, the anthropologist is no longer an entomologist observing his subject as if it were an insect (putting it down) but rather as if it were a stimulant for mutual understanding (hence dignity). This sort of research employing total participation, idealistic though it may be, seems to me to be the only morally and scientifically possible anthropological attitude today.

In my attempt to bring this film into the public sphere, this was and still is an ongoing negotiation. However, as the aim for this film is to travel the festival circuit abroad as well as in Greece, some of the participants continue to be sceptical about that potential. In one of the conversations I had with them, I tried to reassure them that I am only going to screen the film in radical film festivals with a same-minded audience. The response I got from them was that it would not make any difference or have no significant impact, as this film needs to target audiences from the exact opposite spectrum.

As I mentioned earlier, I had to incorporate the interview as a tool in order to help my film move forward, "filmmakers make use of the interview to bring different accounts together in a single story". (Nichols, 2010: 190) In *Freedom through Football,* I have arranged for the interviews in order to record the motivations that are driving these football fans towards practicing activism. The French anthropologist Griaule (1957) has suggested for the researcher to adopt a more pro-active stance with the usage of interviews. He called it the 'dialogical method' with which as Clifford (1988b:77) highlights "the interrogatory questions were aimed at provoking the subjects into revealing answers". If I was to expect these

conversations to happen amongst them, I might not have made it possible. Asking the person, the proper questions gives the filmmaker the opportunity to gain access in specialised knowledge, which it could not be possible only by observing (Potter, 2018; Bertrand & Hughes, 2005). Therefore, the questions I asked Thomas and Mihalis during the interviews were carefully thought and had solely the goal of revealing their motivations behind practicing activism. I pursued this notion of collaboration with my subjects in order to have a more solid argument in the film and to make the audience more engaged. When a filmmaker has to deal with complex topics, the need for extra exposition and explanation is inevitable. In other words, and as Villanueva (2015: 121) explains, "the film's director has the power to question and even compel the participants in the film to provide explanations for an event related to the development of the argument". Interviews are a distinct form of social encounter i.e. the building of relationships, which are achieved by the extended face-to-face verbal exchange. Highlighting the sense of a collective and the camaraderie within this group of people was of a vital significance for this filmmaker. Therefore, instead of having straight cuts between the sit-down interviews, which I felt it would indicate individualism and separation, I decided to let the shots linger and layer the audio of the next interview over the existing shot. This continuity technique shows that these people are sharing similar ideas instead of expressing just themselves. Placing my subjects in the middle of the frame was not accidental. Having a mid-close up shot of them, sitting in front of a white wall, talking directly to the camera was giving the sense that they were addressing directly to the audience. The idea behind the framing of the interview was that the audience could not only benefit from what it was said but also from as Plantinga (1997: 162) argues "the visual and aural information available in how it said – from facial expression to gestures to inflections of the voice". Interviews appeared to be of a massive significance in order to help make this film move forward, the challenge however was to manage to fit the interview into the rhetorical project of the film, "each interview has its own perspective, and the filmmaker wishing to make rhetorical points may want to fit those perspectives into the larger film's discursive project". (Plantinga, 1997: 162) Nichols (1991) identifies two major issues with interviews in films. First, lack of veracity and second, misleading audience. The former can be the result from interviewing people with whom the filmmaker shares the same ideology or agrees with while the latter can happen if the perspective of the film gets lost behind the interviews and the audience loses track of the interviews in the film's rhetoric. These issues which Nichols (1991) identified were also my concerns whilst making this film. As I have mentioned through this paper, I too share the same ideology with these activists. Therefore, in order to avoid being accused for lack of veracity my questions focused specifically on their

motivations. It was not an attempt to work in favour of their cause rather than just to give them an opportunity to express themselves helping the film move forward. The interviews were spread strategically in the film at the beginning, the middle and the end. With that technique, I tried to tackle Nichols' (1991) second identified issue of making the spectator lose the perspective of the film.

One of the main elements of the ideology behind F.C. St. Pauli is the place of women in the stands. At the Millerntor stadium in Hamburg, there is a sign barring the message "Football has no gender", seen also in the film, indicating clearly the stance of the club and its fans about women's participation and engagement with fan culture and potentially with activism. However, the absence of female fans in the film is more than evident. This raises the questions of how accessible and welcoming are these football fan collectives to women in Greece. The answer lies within the fact that contemporary Greek society is characterised by its conservatism and patriarchism. Football fans in Greece are mainly white males, from different ages and classes. Even though it has been worse in the past, the idea of a female football fan in Greece who will participate in radical forms of activism is still a taboo. By spending time, filming and engaging into conversations with the members of F.C. St. Pauli Thessaloniki fan club, I realised that it was hard for women to engage. By keeping that sign in the film, I wanted to make that juxtaposition clear to the audience, letting them construct their own meanings.

As a filmmaker, I had to consider two main areas. Aesthetics and cinematography. For the former I wanted to set the mood and the tone in my film through colour. Colour plays a significant role in the psychology of a film evoking feelings, emotions and setting the mood (Cheng-Yu Wei *et al,* 2004). For example, both sequences filmed and edited in Germany, colours are lively evoking feelings of happiness, optimism, tranquillity and peace. On the other hand, in all of the sequences shot and edited in Greece I reduced the saturation and boosted the blue colour in order to evoke the feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and isolation. For the majority of the film, I had to adopt a more hand-held technique due to its nature. As Greenhalgh (2018: 152) argues, "the hand-held camera is often used in documentaries and in feature films when closeness to the main characters is desired". In the film, one can see that I paid a lot of attention in small gestures and I chose to shoot long takes and many close-ups in order to create a flow of intensities.

Since day one when I embarked upon this PhD project, I kept a journal noting down all the actions I have taken until the completion of the film. A creative journal provides the data for analysis, which is related to practice, as McIntyre (2006a: 4) argues "the process of making the object, the keeping of field notes in the form of a journal and an examination of the

artefact itself, would add a much needed 'insider's' perspective to the total available stock of knowledge on creativity". Finally, Berkeley (2018: 34) highlights why the usage of a diary is an accepted method to capture data that, "can be subsequently examined to identify knowledge that has emerged from the research process".

This research is an attempt to create a conversation between film theory and practice. So, is film theory necessary for film production? For a practitioner/researcher film theory needs to be the starting point. By mastering the conventions and protocols of film then he/she can introduce them into his/her own practice. Film theory can be conveyed into film practice and the two can communicate through the reflection process, as Bolt (2010, 2007: 29) argues, "theory emerges from a reflexive practice at the same time as practice is informed by theory". In my research project, I visited the works of film theoreticians as to how I will treat my film going into my own practice. Knusden (2018: 124) notes, "Some practitioner-researchers may want to situate their practice within theory, or indeed use their practice as a method of interrogating or advancing a theory". Even though my approach to research is open and interdisciplinary, I do believe that a review of literature is necessary. As Sullivan (2011: 117) argues, "theorising is a reflexive process that can occur during the 'think-time' that happens when making art, or may be the consequence of reflective processes that take place afterwards".

Maras (2005: 101) questions the autonomy of film practice and how aware is the practitioner of his or her own training and disciplinarily. Wayne (1997: 9) offers two definitions of practice: first as an "activity which attempts to acquire a particular level of competence in an activity through repeated exercise", and second, "as a cultural knowledge in which students have already been trained". With this double definition, he opens up film practice for evaluation and discussion. By evaluating my own practice, one useful point of advice, especially within the observational mode, is the necessity for filmmakers to distinguish between their own habitual thinking – the Gramscian 'spontaneous consciousness' – and the favoured, self-reflexive process of 'critical awareness' (Wayne, 1997: 11). As I highlighted earlier in this chapter due to the absence of in depth documentaries on the ideology behind F.C. St. Pauli alongside the perpetual dominance of institutions in film theory I had my fears that my film practice will have no contribution whatsoever in the research process or the improvement of social conditions. However, by adopting an instinctive point-and-shoot mentality I managed to overcome these fears.

My documentary on football fan activism is an attempt to offer competing modes of knowing the issue. This is a move against the limited and reductive ways of knowing offered by the

mainstream media representations. Through practice-led research, I aim to depict a culture, construct meanings and discourses as Knusden (2018: 135) notes "the final film provides the dominant evidence of research findings". My processes of documentary making are characterised by innovation. I am trying to push the boundaries within the academia and the limits of what has been done before. As Bell (2018: 54) argues, "creative arts with their focus on 'ways of making and doing' have their own distinctive modes of apprehending and understanding the world".

Conclusion

With the rise of right-wing populism around the globe on the one hand and the formation of counter social football fan movements on the other, the timing for the realization of this project could not be more apposite.

This practice-led research project is documenting, in an adequate way, the emergence of counter movements focusing mainly on football fan activism. By placing this film in the current socio-political context of Greece, makes it evident as to why these football fans decided to establish their fan club. According to the findings, economic crisis has played a significant role in the rise of right wing extremism. As a result, repressive attitudes towards immigrants and left-wing activists have become the norm in contemporary Greek society with reports of injuries and sometimes-even deaths. The Greek fan club was established in order to fight against these repressive attitudes, with an attempt to achieve political and social change by using the popular sport of football.

These activists are organizing football events that are easily accessible and open to people to join, engage and participate in order to socialize and practice activism. Football here is used in order to bring people together from different backgrounds. It creates ties and bonds hence the utilization of Nick Crossley's theory of relational sociology (Chapter 2). As stated in the film by one of the participants, "football is not just a game of 22 idiots kicking the ball around", these activist-fans have a deeper understanding of the power that football possesses and of its importance. Being in the stands of a football ground helped them to learn about solidarity and how they could feel a part of a group willing to help anyone who is in need. Football works as a vehicle providing the opportunity for people to get together and work as a group towards activism.

What this work has offered is a contribution in the ongoing debate as to whether documentary film is sufficient in order to produce new knowledge. The film has addressed the research questions and because of its open-ended character of film as a research method, allows the audience to form their own interpretation and construct their own understandings and meanings. In most cases of practice-led research projects, research questions remain open-ended for a significant amount of time, thus resisting their reduction to a single, more specific, problem. Practice-led researchers take imaginative steps to the unknown, hoping to reach critical insights in order to change what we already know. This film not only informs the audiences about football fan activism, but also conveys something of the activist's motivations.

Finally, this project is helping the activist film genre to increase its potentiality in achieving substantial change. By utilizing the film medium in order to address political and sociological issues I am bringing to the fore football fan activism and the actions of the members of FC St. Pauli Thessaloniki fan club, which tend not to be aired by the mainstream media. I am pushing the boundaries of this genre by incorporating different techniques compared to the conventional activist films. By adopting a more observational approach while filming and editing, I am aiming to give an answer to the critics of accusing activist documentary films as being didactic and used as a tool of propaganda. Furthermore, this is a different type of activist documentary film as it focuses on the motivations of the activists and of the social relations underpinning the activism rather than solely on the issues. The goal of *"Freedom through Football"* is to inform the audience and challenge preconceptions of Ultras as a flock of mindless hooligans. This film is important in its field because of the lack of similar practice-led research on the activist side of football. In the future, I am planning to continue monitoring football fan activism as these movements are growing.

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