Article

Nation-Building, Africanism and the 2010 Fifa World Cup: what did they do for social cohesion in post-apartheid South Africa

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Abstract
This paper addresses issues of nation-building and Africanism as seen through the lens of South Africa’s hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. It discusses the challenges posed to social cohesion and critically examines the shift in South Africa’s national identity toward Africanism through the World Cup. The paper draws upon some findings from the Gauteng City-Region Observatory’s (GCRO) 2010 FIFA World Cup longitudinal study as reference points for the paper. The research was conducted amongst a sample of small and micro-entrepreneurs in Gauteng in order to gauge the expectations and impact of the FIFA World Cup on small business in the province. Such key findings from the research include the contention amongst 92 per cent of respondents that Ghana’s performance in the World Cup ‘brought (us) together as Africans’, while 62 per cent of respondents responded positively to the statement that ‘foreigners are taking our benefits’. This data is indicative of South Africa’s ambivalent relationship with the African continent and allows a critical perspective on the prospects for social cohesion in a post-apartheid society. The paper concludes by reflecting on the impact and meaning of the World Cup for South Africa and its ambitions to unite South Africans behind both a nation-building project and an Africanist agenda which looks to mobilise the African continent.

Introduction: why a World Cup for South Africa and Africa?
The 2010 FIFA (International Federation of Association Football or Fédération Internationale de Football Association) World Cup was introduced to the world as both a South African and an African event in a way which appeared quite unprecedented in the history of World Cup tournaments. Previous hosting countries had never hosted the tournament
on a ‘double bill’ as such, ie for the country as well as the continent to which the country belongs. It was the first time for the prestigious tournament to be held in Africa away from its traditional power bases in Europe and South America.

The sense of the World Cup as a symbolic turning point in the fortunes of the continent was captured in the official World Cup slogan ‘Ke Nako (It’s time): Celebrate Africa’s humanity’. The South African government hailed the 2010 World Cup as a ‘priceless’ opportunity to challenge prejudices about Africa and decisively change perceptions of Africa and South Africa:

The true legacy of this spectacle will be in our ability to showcase South African and African hospitality and humanity-to change once and for all, the perceptions of our country and our continent amongst peoples of the world. That depends on all of us and for that we can have no price. (Motlantle 2009)

The 2010 World Cup was fundamentally about South Africa as an emerging power asserting itself on the global stage. In the same vein, the tournament was seen as a historic opportunity to showcase Africa’s ability to host a mega-sporting event to the same or better standards than Europe and vigorously dispel Afro-pessimist notions. Moreover, the World Cup could also be seen as a sign of some rapprochement between South Africa and the African continent, given historic divisions based on South Africa’s economic and military power and concerns about the extent of South Africa’s post-apartheid economic involvement in Africa (Daniel, Naidu and Naidoo 2003). In sporting terms the 2010 World Cup could be seen as surmounting the continent’s peripheral status in international football. African representation at the World Cup, seen as ‘restricted by a Eurocentric bias at the heart of FIFA’ is historically a site of intense politicisation (Darby 2005). An African World Cup could possibly be seen as a highly significant step toward breaking the traditional European monopoly on global football.

Similarly for South Africa, hosting the 2010 World Cup signalled an important connection to FIFA. This reconnection to FIFA held a great deal of symbolism given that South Africa’s suspension from FIFA in 1961 marked the first international sanction for the apartheid regime. Indeed the 2010 World Cup was about South Africa categorically reclaiming its spot in the world of international sport which had served as such an important ally in the struggle against apartheid (van der Merwe 2007). Therefore the World Cup could be seen as a nod to the success of a transforming South Africa which had left the dust of apartheid behind in its tracks and was now
projecting its leadership credentials to Africa as well as the world. A romantic symbolism was projected in the transformational role played by sport in rekindling the deferred dreams of the ‘rainbow nation’ and in turn ‘the African family of nations’ (Desai and Vahed 2010).

For South Africa, hosting the World Cup was viewed internally as a remarkable coup particularly in terms of ‘world class’ aspirations and achievements. Toward this end South Africa had seized many prime opportunities to host prestigious international sporting events in the first two decades of its post-apartheid dispensation. Key examples include the 1995 Rugby World Cup, the 1996 Africa Cup of Nations and the 2003 Cricket World Cup. Hosting of the FIFA World Cup was seen as the pinnacle of achievement in terms of mega-sporting events. The tournament was touted by FIFA and the South African government to be capable of bringing multiple benefits to South Africa and the African continent. It appeared to combine a myriad of expected or ‘proven’ benefits (poverty alleviation, job creation, infrastructural development, image enhancement, increased tourism, nation building and social cohesion) into a single unique opportunity to strengthen South Africa and the African continent (GCIS Communications 2010). This set the scene for a ritual celebration of the ‘rainbow nation’ which was disseminated discursively through the media and other forms of public discourse. A robust discourse of state nationalism was reconstructed and transmitted through slogans and strategies such as ‘one team, one nation’ and the showcasing of national cultural symbols and artefacts such as the national flag (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2011). South Africans from all racial, class and ethnic backgrounds proudly displayed symbols such as the national flag, learned the diski dance, donned their sports regalia on ‘Football Fridays’ and rallied behind the national team Bafana Bafana. This resulted in a highly mobilised society with the requisite levels of support and excitement for the event. This process of mobilisation included the creation of hopes for economic benefits and spin-offs on the part of the marginalised or poor. The debate on how the tournament should be planned to maximise benefits to South Africa and the wider continent of Africa is one that colours the broader politics surrounding the planning towards the 2010 World Cup. In addition, the way in which the tournament was to be managed and the degree of its success and failure in this regard has been widely viewed as an important litmus test for all developing countries.

This paper speaks to a substantial digest of key international literature which critically challenges the merits of sporting mega-events as extolled by
host countries, local and multinational corporate interests and urban elites. Some of the literature draws on key global mega-sporting events such as the Barcelona Olympic Games of 1992, the Beijing Summer Olympic Games in 2008, the Delhi Commonwealth Games in 2010 and projects ahead to the Winter Olympic Games and the Brazilian FIFA World Cup, both in 2014 (Horne 2011, Horne 2007, Uppal and Ghosh 2010, Horne and Manzenreiter 2007, Dimeo and Kay 2005. Matheson and Baade 2004). This particular set of critical literature poses tough and awkward questions about the costs and benefits of sporting mega-events including assessments of the analyses which construct estimations of benefits to host countries and the methodologies which underpin them. Some of the questions addressed include the value and the real beneficiaries of once-off sporting mega-events. It asks which social groups are excluded and analyses the scope for possible contestation allowed by sporting mega-events. Importantly the literature critiques the extent to which sporting mega-events represent a shift of public funds to private interests and are in fact shaped by undemocratic organisations which prioritise their own economic interests over that of host countries and local communities.

Such questions are crucial in accurately assessing the development prospects involved in such an ambitious undertaking. According to Horne (2007:1) ‘It is essential to look critically at the assumptions, beliefs and misrepresentations that are often suppressed or even repressed - the “unknown knowns”- of sports mega-events’. The fact that such questions were never seriously raised or debated in public forums speaks to missed opportunities in South Africa to engage about the full costs and benefits of the 2010 World Cup in truly inclusive and consultative ways which could have resulted in more realism, less expectation and a genuine sense of nationhood, African unity and social cohesion.

Social cohesion and inclusion
One of the most compelling rationales for South Africa hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup was its purported impact on social cohesion and its expected inclusive and unifying impacts. It was expected that the FIFA World Cup would reproduce the extraordinary unifying effect of the 1995 Rugby World Cup, another mega-sporting event in South Africa’s history of similar proportions to the 2010 World Cup (Steenveld and Strelitz 1998). It was also expected that the social cohesion benefits would extend further than the country to the continent. Held a year after the first democratic elections of
1994, the Rugby World Cup was marked by a sense of almost transcendental euphoria centrally located in the discourses of the ‘rainbow nation’ and reconciliation being dramatically played out on the rugby field. The nation-building aspect of the Rugby World Cup is symbolised through iconic images of the final game in which former President Nelson Mandela made the powerful gesture of appearing on the rugby field wearing a Springbok jersey in support of the largely white team playing a historically Afrikaner-dominated sport.2

Evaluating social cohesion presents something of a methodological challenge in terms of unpacking the complex and intangible nature of the legacy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Social cohesion remains and has always been a highly contested concept, with various uses and definitions in the development community as well as in the academic and policy arena. It is commonly used as a broad and multi-dimensional theoretical framework for assessing the quality of life and living conditions in society, often coupled with a set of indicators or criteria which look to measure the latter. Some usages of the concept may choose to highlight different components of social cohesion as particularly relevant to the society in question, eg the extent of political equality or economic security in a society depending on the societal goals being addressed by different stakeholders and actors. For some, social cohesion means primarily the ability to construct a sense of belonging and collective identity which in turn can help grow strong social capital and community networks. Other concepts emphasise equality of opportunity in terms of the eradication of social exclusions (O’Connell 1998). Given its intangible and difficult to measure nature, social cohesion may lend itself toward different political ends (Bernard 1999, Lin 2001).

While this paper is keenly aware of conceptual debates which reveal different notions of the concept of social cohesion, it is beyond my scope to review the multi-dimensional range of theoretical approaches. For the specific purposes of this work, this paper chooses to locate social cohesion as the interplay between the goal of strengthening social networks, interactions and ties amongst members of a society and the inter-related goal of pursuing equal opportunities and reducing disparities and divisions within a society (Berger-Schmitt 2002). Drawing from leading theoretical work on social cohesion, the paper focuses on ‘social inclusion’, which is a key aspect of social cohesion focused on the politics of inclusion and exclusion for disadvantaged and marginalised groups in society. Apart from the over-arching umbrella framework of social cohesion, the notion of social
‘inclusion’ is in itself increasing in global popularity as a means of broadly informing debates on socio-economic polarisation (poverty, inequality, marginalisation of certain groups of society etc.) and thus helping to theorise more inclusive patterns of economic and social development (OECD 2010, ODI 2009, Sen 2000, Silver 1994). Social inclusion has been defined as ‘based on the belief that we all fare better when no one is left to fall too far behind and the economy works for everyone’ (CEPR Working Paper 2007).

This paper uses the concept of social inclusion in order to capture the main issues raised by this paper such as the complex multi-dimensional relationship between issues of economic exclusion (eg the exclusion of ‘ordinary’ people from FIFA’s economic opportunities) and social marginalisation (eg xenophobia, racism, removals and displacement of the poor). It concludes that overall gains were skewed in favour of economic and political elites and that the nature of social cohesion engendered by the World Cup was of a short-term, transient and illusory nature in both South Africa and Africa. It concludes that many more critical questions still need to be asked about the legacy of the tournament; as well as at a theoretical level about social cohesion.

Economic opportunities afforded by the 2010 FIFA World Cup: did the FIFA World Cup do enough for economic development?

This paper reflects here on the economic aspects of the 2010 World Cup as emerging from the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) 2010 FIFA World Cup survey as an indicator of the economic exclusion which is closely intertwined with broader issues of social cohesion. The 2010 FIFA World Cup was widely promoted as an opportunity to grow local entrepreneurship with specific ‘local benefit’ policies intended to empower black and particularly female businesses. However such aims of local economic development did not cohere with FIFA policies and its monopoly on most areas of economic activity. As a privately funded organisation, FIFA sponsors (known as FIFA Rights Holders) are given monopoly preference on all economic opportunities associated with the FIFA World Cup. FIFA’s strict policies on protecting its own economic interests disappointed the hopes of many small-scale and informal traders who had hoped to capitalise on the tournament. It also marginalised many informal traders to peripheral locations where they were unable to effectively ply their trade to tourists and local soccer fans.

The initial baseline survey conducted before the FIFA World Cup showed 73 per cent of respondents expecting their ‘profits to increase a lot during the FIFA World Cup’. However the subsequent survey in November
2010 indicated a more realistic attitude toward profits from the FIFA World Cup, with 41 per cent saying that they ‘got more than they expected’, 13 per cent saying that they ‘got just what they expected’, and 45 per cent saying that they ‘got less than they expected’ (GCRO 2010).

The GCRO 2010 FIFA tracking survey notes a pessimistic mood toward material benefits from the tournament amongst respondents in the aftermath of the event. In the November 2010 survey 64 per cent of respondents answered positively to the statement that the FIFA World Cup benefited big business. Similarly 66 per cent of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that FIFA was the real beneficiary of the FIFA World Cup (GCRO 2010). The acknowledgement of the control exercised by FIFA and the limitations placed upon the potential for local economic development may be seen to indicate an attitude of realism and acceptance.

The trickle-down effect of the FIFA World Cup on ‘ordinary’ South Africans has been documented and critiqued by a number of key studies (Desai and Vahed 2010, Briedenham 2011, Bénit-Gbaffou 2009, Czegledy 2009). Although the 2010 FIFA World Cup offered a wealth of opportunities to local and international corporate elites (marketing, sponsorships, investment, etc) the majority of ‘ordinary’ South Africans remained excluded from the benefits. Even attendance of FIFA World Cup matches remained largely unaffordable to ordinary South Africans, with ticket prices beginning at R150, which constitutes 3 per cent of the average South African monthly income (Statistics South Africa Census 2011). Tickets to FIFA World Cup matches were also only available online. The combination of costly ticket prices and necessity of access to internet ensured that the tournament could be enjoyed only by way of private viewing on television.

One of the major arguments against support for the FIFA World Cup is the expenditure on FIFA World Cup-related infrastructure development which could have been better directed toward South Africa’s developmental priorities (eg the eradication of unemployment, poverty, homelessness, HIV/AIDS and crime). According to Gelb (2009:86):

> a rough estimate of the opportunity cost of the FIFA World Cup is 90 000 additional new houses per year over and above the 225 000 new houses per year planned for the four year period to 2010. The question which needs to be asked is: what is our priority – the FIFA World Cup or 90 000 new houses a year for four years? This sort of choice needs to be made more often and discussed more thoroughly if we are to repair the social fabric and avoid future upheavals like those witnessed in May 2008.
A case in point is the construction and refurbishment of stadiums for the tournament. It is here that the general population, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds who are identified as key beneficiaries, were expected to benefit from employment opportunities. However the construction of stadiums was focused rather on low-paid and short term employment and did not result in meaningful job creation. Rather than benefiting the poor and unemployed South Africans, the gains of stadium construction went to established white-owned construction companies such as Group Five and Murray and Roberts. Pillay and Bass (2009) have pointed out the temporary nature of FIFA World Cup employment creation (mostly in the form of construction and tourism projects for the duration of the FIFA World Cup). Yet they concluded that there would be a strong likelihood of increased urban employment after the event.

**Human rights issues: removals and displacement of locals**

A substantial body of international research shows how sporting mega-events ‘manipulate’ and reconstitute urban space in order to protect and sanitise images of the city and country for the benefit of global audiences and media (Black and van der Westhuizen 2004, Dimeo and Kay 2004, Schimmel 2006, Darnell 2010). The literature documents the lengths to which local elites go in order to create the necessary infrastructure for the sporting mega-event. This often includes evictions and relocations of the poor and marginalised population in order to make way for the construction of stadiums and other associated infrastructure needs.

Although an agreement was secured with host cities to consult with the urban poor on any possible impact on livelihoods or homes, South Africa’s 2010 FIFA World Cup experience is replete with examples of how the tournament impacted on the more vulnerable and socially marginalised segments of the population (eg street children, sex workers, the homeless, etc) and the ways in which it reinforced social inequalities and undermined possible social cohesion benefits (Bénit-Gbaffou 2009, Desai and Vahed 2010). This is in part due to FIFA’s uncompromising stance on the management by host cities of vagrancy, homelessness and other anti-social urban problems which could prove detrimental to the hosting of the tournament.

Duncan reveals the extent of government efforts to stifle protest action during the FIFA World Cup, including a series of blanket bans on protest marches imposed by several municipalities. According to Gauteng MEC for Local Government and Housing Kgaogelo Lekgoro:
As Gauteng we have made it a point that we focus on the bigger projects such as the FIFA World Cup and Gautrain. As it has been said by FIFA President Sepp Blatter, the FIFA World Cup will leave a lasting legacy. Therefore we cannot allow a situation where communities vandalise property, burn libraries and form illegal barricades with tyres on the very same road that is a link to the community activity and put other people’s lives in danger. (South African Government Information Service 11 March 2010)

Evictions and removals took place ahead of the tournament in various host cities such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. In particular Bénit-Gbaffou (2009) illustrates how the development of the sports precinct around the Ellis Park stadium in Gauteng resulted in evictions and displacement of the local population as part of the Greater Ellis Park Development Project. Bénit-Gbaffou’s work shows the limited nature of the official space allowed for contestation by local communities and civil society stakeholders; hence the evictions having been undertaken without any large-scale protest taking place.

Xenophobia and racism: was the 2010 FIFA World Cup really a ‘celebration of Africa’s humanity’?

Four years after South Africa was awarded the bid for the 2010 FIFA World Cup as a ‘South African and African event’, the banality of the World Cup’s Africanist rhetoric was summarily exposed in May 2008 by an outbreak of xenophobic attacks against other-African nationals or ‘foreigners’. The attacks earned the label of ‘xenophobic’ because they were targeted principally at black African non-nationals. The victims were mostly from neighbouring southern African countries such as Mozambique and Zimbabwe as well as migrants from countries such as Nigeria and Somalia. A third of the victims of the attacks were South African citizens. The attacks took place in largely poor urban neighbourhoods and informal settlements in different parts of South Africa where African non-nationals and South Africans citizens lived in close proximity to each other (Nyar 2010).

Although there is an extended and well-documented history of xenophobia in South Africa (CoRMSA 2011), the scale and magnitude of the attacks distinguished it from other comparable incidences and experiences of xenophobia and xenophobic violence. The attacks were characterised by lawlessness, brutality and inhumanity. Victims were singled out and attacked on the basis of crude markers of ‘foreignness’ such as skin colour, language and inoculation marks meant to distinguish South Africans from ‘foreigners’
(Nyar 2010). The attacks involved murder, beatings, burnings, rape, theft and looting and used a variety of weapons such as axes, pangas, machetes, bricks and stones. Such was the scale of brutality in the xenophobic attacks that FIFA and the 2010 FIFA World Cup organising committee was prompted to confront the possibility of the FIFA World Cup being moved elsewhere (Desai and Vahed 2010).

The South African government’s tardy response toward the May 2008 xenophobic attacks had the effect of downplaying xenophobia and effectively denying any historical memory of the on-going nature of post-1994 xenophobic violence. The declaration of a national state of emergency and the deployment of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) was too late to prevent the full brunt of violence being perpetrated. Government had its overall competency in crisis management severely tested by the challenges of overseeing the humanitarian response for victims of the xenophobic attacks. Other African governments acted swiftly to recall their nationals.

The fact that the victims of the violence were exclusively black immigrants from Africa or amakwerekwere raised critical and uncomfortable questions for South Africa about an internalised racism on the part of black South Africans, and an overall sense of national superiority in relation to the rest of Africa. The common denominator of the victims is their blackness, with victims often singled out for attack based on the darkness of their skin. The racial devaluation of black lives and the internalisation of an inferiority complex may possibly be seen as a historical continuity from the morally repugnant apartheid value system. Uncomfortable questions are raised about what Gqola calls ‘negrophobia’ (Gqola, 2008).

The advent of the 2010 FIFA FIFA World Cup presented an interesting opportunity to re-examine popular attitudes toward black Africans from the continent of Africa and whether the tournament billed as a ‘celebration of Africa’s humanity’ would help to alleviate or exacerbate xenophobic tensions. At this point the paper makes reference to relevant data emerging from the GCRO longitudinal study of the impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup on small and micro businesses in Gauteng. The study sought to explore the perspective of ‘ordinary’ South Africans expected to reap benefits from the FIFA World Cup in relation to the hosting of the FIFA World Cup. The study was conducted amongst a sample of small and micro-scale traders in Gauteng, a cohort understood to have significant economic needs and most likely to benefit from job creation and entrepreneurial opportunities offered by the
When asked about ‘foreigners taking benefits meant for South Africans’ 63 and 66 per cent of respondents in the November 2010 and July 2011 surveys respectively undertaken (GCRO FIFA 2010) responded ‘Yes’ to the statement. While the survey question was intended to probe attitudes toward African migrants, it is also conceded that this question could have been interpreted as a reference to FIFA and other FIFA World Cup corporate sponsors benefiting materially from the tournament. The same question relating to ‘foreigners’ was asked in the GCRO 2009 Quality of Life survey. Some 69 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘Foreigners are taking benefits meant for South Africans’. As indicated in Figure 1 below, the data show disturbingly similar attitudes to the question of ‘foreigners’. It is consistent even across respondents with no education and those with tertiary education, as well as those living in formal and informal dwellings (GCRO 2009).

**Figure 1: Finding on ‘foreigners are taking our benefits’ from the 2009 and 2011 GCRO quality of life surveys**
Survey data consistently indicates that xenophobic attitudes appear entrenched at community level and are widespread across race, class and gender divides. It sheds interesting light on the attitude of South Africans toward their fellow African nationals and the relevance of the discourse of Africanism and African Renaissance to the vast majority of women and men in South Africa who are poor, unemployed or otherwise occupied with the business of survival. Certainly the xenophobic attacks of 2008 lent a bitter note to the FIFA World Cup slogans chosen by the Local Organising Committee: ‘Celebrate Africa’s humanity’ as well as ‘It’s Africa’s turn’.

It is possible to see a dual dynamic in attitudes currently in play which concedes pride in Africa on the soccer field but which degenerates into intolerance and prejudice at community level. While xenophobic sentiments are strong, they remain nonetheless disconnected from feelings of pride and delight in African football teams and players as strongly evinced by the majority of survey respondents. For example 84 per cent of survey respondents claimed that the FIFA World Cup had helped them learn a great deal about the rest of Africa. Furthermore 92 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that ‘Ghana brought us together’ (GCRO 2010). The latter finding, only months after the conclusion of the FIFA World Cup, assumes particular significance given persisting fears and anxieties about a renewal of xenophobic attacks in the wake of the FIFA World Cup. In 2009 reports of a ‘whispering campaign’ to oust black African nationals after its conclusion aroused fears of a renewal of xenophobic attacks. Human rights organisations such as the Black Sash, Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) and the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA) warned of community-level threats to violently expel ‘foreigners’ (Nyar 2010).

The heightened fears about a resumption of xenophobic violence was cause for the preparation of plans to combat the latter and emergency security forces being placed on high alert. The content of the threats relating to the end of the 2010 World Cup appears to indicate an emerging attitude of realism on the part of communities who were becoming increasingly aware that economic benefits would neither be forthcoming nor equitably distributed through the FIFA World Cup. The economic basis of xenophobia is underscored by the persistence of entrenched negative attitudes in relation to black African non-nationals as takers of jobs and resources away from South Africans and particularly in relation to limited resources and opportunities such as employment, housing and education, available to poor communities with post-apartheid expectations of material improvement.
to the quality of their lives. Central to this belief is a sense of relative deprivation or that people are receiving less than they are rightfully entitled to (Nyar 2010).

Xenophobic values in South Africa appears to have remained largely impervious to the Africanist discourse of the 2010 FIFA World Cup. According to CoRMSA, xenophobic violence has continued unabated since the May 2008 attacks. CoRMSA has estimated that at least one attack on a group of African non-nationals has taken place every month since May 2008 (CoRMSA 2011:20). Prevailing xenophobic attitudes may well be said to be likely to continue given the contextual background of poverty and deprivation in local communities.

**Nation-building through the 2010 FIFA World Cup: what is the quality of the legacy?**

In considering the relationship between the 2010 FIFA World Cup and drives toward nation building and Africanism, it is important to make reference to the broader scholarship surrounding nationalism and the development of national identities. Much of the literature focuses on nations as historical constructs and analyses how such ideas about nationalism and national identities have developed over time (Anderson 1991, Smith 1983). In particular, this scholarship cautions against the presumption of a stable and fixed South African identity, as well as the non-recognition of the range of diversities inherent in South African society. As noted by Sewpaul (2010:150): ‘The synonyms for nationalism are: patriotism, chauvinism, jingoism, and xenophobia, all of which are negative and – in contrast with national unity – hold the potential for negative consequences’. Such work provides fertile ground for a thoughtful exploration of the nature of nation-building in South Africa, the strategies of inclusion and exclusion which have to be employed in order to support it and the resulting relationship to the now-popular discourse of Africanism (Filatova 1997, Chipkin 2007). These scholarly attempts to deconstruct the nature of nation-building help to illuminate the tensions implicit in the pursuit of South African nationalism and the simultaneous recognition of diversity particularly within the context of a common African identification.

The 2010 FIFA World Cup provides a truly interesting means of analysing the tensions between nation-building and Africanism. The tournament was cause for high levels of pride and confidence in the country. The GCRO 2010 FIFA World Cup tracking study in June 2010 found that an overwhelming
majority of 92 per cent of survey respondents stated that they were proud to be in South Africa for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. A more modest percentage of respondents (69 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that the country was going in the right direction. In the final leg of the tracking survey in July 2010 the percentage of respondents agreeing that South Africa was headed in the right direction decreased only marginally to 65 per cent (GCRO 2010). Such findings reinforce an overall optimism in the political and developmental trajectory of the country amongst respondents. This is so despite a forbidding socio-economic climate, only modest expectations of benefits from the FIFA World Cup and the loss of common purpose symbolised by the end of the event, which might have possibly predisposed respondents toward a bleaker outlook. Such attitudes indicating pride in South Africa and satisfaction with the direction of the country can be seen as one of the most encouraging findings emerging from the survey data.

The permeation of an Africanist consciousness into the discourse of nation-building has been evident in the post-apartheid dispensation, particularly as the mantle of the country’s leadership changed from former president Nelson Mandela to Thabo Mbeki. An Africanist theme was clear in Mbeki’s emotive ‘I am an African, I am born of the people of Africa’ speech made at the opening of the Constitutional Assembly in 1996. Mbeki also vigorously promoted the broader ‘African Renaissance’ ideal, the fulfilment of which must necessitate the rebirth of the continent and an active engagement with a new kind of developmental future. The African Renaissance project found expression through high-level continental initiatives such as the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

The combination of Mbeki’s ‘I am an African’ speech and the African Renaissance project appeared prima facie mutually to reinforce South Africa’s commitment to the continent. However this notion of an African identity has been criticised for surfacing divisive issues of race, racialisation and transformation as well as promoting a narrow and excluding kind of Africanism, so contrary to the all-inclusive ‘rainbow nation’ ethos espoused by Mandela. It evoked an equally passionate, even controversial, response, with regard to the issue of an African identity for all South Africans. Some questioned whether whites could be considered Africans, with some analysts cautioning Mbeki ‘not to use the term African in a way which would exclude Africans with white and brown skins’ (du Preez 2000). It has also possibly had the effect of reviving historical grievances about affirmative action,
‘reverse discrimination’ and overall marginalisation on the part of the social groupings in South Africa constructed as racial minorities, ie Indian and Coloured South Africans (Alexander 2002). Sewpaul cautions against South Africa’s national identity ‘being fossilised into a stereotypical image of an African identity’ (Sewpaul 2010:144), which may further polarise an already socially fragmented society and reinforce negative views about Africa. A serious diagnostic is needed of concepts such as ‘South African-ness’ and ‘African-ness’.

Conclusion: do we believe in the development narrative of 2010?
This paper has shown that while sporting mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup seem to contain compelling rationales for host countries, there ought to be an awareness of the gap between expected and actual impacts. Certainly it is rare that a post-event analysis available to the public of host countries where critical assessments can be openly made of the costs and benefits (Matheson and Baade 2004) including the pro-poor and development rhetoric which informs public discourses around the event. The hosting of sporting mega-events such as the World Cup should be approached with a high degree of critical rigour. Such a circumspect assessment of the actual developmental impacts ought ideally to incorporate a strong emphasis on learning from the experiences of other countries. Had South Africa chosen to employ such an approach, it may well have concluded that hosting such a sporting mega-event may not have been in the country’s best interests, given competing developmental priorities and pressing resource needs for both South Africa and Africa. Alternatively it may possibly have lent itself to a different kind of scenario whereby it laid the foundation for a social pacting arrangement amongst different stakeholders such as civil society and the private sector. In this way a clear-sighted vision of the costs and benefits for all stakeholders would have been identified and could have served as the basis for a collective effort in terms of pooling resources, strategies, ideas and visions toward a more egalitarian kind of tournament.

A different conceptualisation of the 2010 FIFA World Cup may well have set the scene for more measured expectations of its benefits, particularly so in the context of projections of socially cohesive effects of the tournament. It is important for any critical analysis of the social cohesion benefits of the 2010 FIFA World Cup to take cognisance of the contextual background to the hosting of the tournament in terms of the economic and socio-political conjuncture nationally and globally. The escapism and fantasy of the
tournament provided an allure to South Africans coping with ever-increasing pressures on the country’s unequal, race- and class-stratified social fabric. This may have served to mask another reality of socio-economic instability and polarisation as seen through waves of service delivery protest and strike action by stadium construction workers, security guards and stewards. A prolonged and violent civil service union strike took place nationally in August and September 2010 (Govender 2010). Post-event the strike may be said to have had the effect of inducing great pessimism and negativity. Ongoing xenophobia, strike action and protest activity were key indicators of South Africa’s class and race divisions and some of the main contradictions of the discourses of nation-building and Africanism. Political instability and deep racial tensions within the context of the ‘ousting’ of President Thabo Mbeki in 2008, racial tensions incited by the murder of right wing extremist organisation the Afrikaner Weerstand Beweging leader Eugene Terreblanche and the increasingly inflammatory rhetoric of ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema, showed clearly that such grand discourses lacked connection with the realities on the ground.

The Africanist rhetoric of the 2010 FIFA World Cup speaks to the challenge posed by the 2010 FIFA World Cup to develop a deeper and more substantive grounding of South Africa’s relationship to the African continent. Despite the robustness of the discourse Africa’s actual contribution to the 2010 FIFA World Cup was largely symbolic. Although the powerful messaging around a South African and African FIFA World Cup may well have led observers to assume that the FIFA World Cup was a multi-country tournament, the provision of training venues by some southern African countries was the one tangible contribution to the actual event beyond South Africa’s borders. The African Union (AU) provided political commitment to a (Pan-) African FIFA World Cup and member states of the AU pledged to implement national programmes in support of the African Legacy Programme for the FIFA World Cup. South Africa officially committed itself to working with African countries on football support and development. Yet the event did not draw large numbers of soccer fans from the continent outside of South Africa. It is estimated that 11,000 African soccer fans bought tickets. Some prohibitive factors for greater African attendance of the tournament included the high cost of tickets and access to FIFA’s online ticketing system (Visa was a major FIFA sponsor) requiring internet and credit card access. Although FIFA had organised showings with big screen televisions in many major European cities, this provision was not made for
any African cities, a further erosion of the tournament’s ‘African’ credentials. The debate will of course continue about which Africas the FIFA World Cup represented and will impact on the most. Africa is an immensely diverse continent. The failure to recognise Africa’s heterogeneity is argued by post-colonial scholars such as Kwame Anthony Appiah, to be the product of European colonialism (Appiah 1992, Mbembe 2005). Westerners – and Africans – tend to impose a single reality upon a hugely diverse continent. The 2010 FIFA World Cup may well have contributed to further misrepresentations of the African continent.

The social cohesion legacy of the tournament may well be described as the reinforcement of increased social polarisation. In support of this contention this paper has cited evidence of xenophobia, service delivery protest action, strikes and evictions combined with unequal outcomes in terms of economic benefits and opportunities. While the tournament may have provided some ‘social glue’ during its duration, particularly in terms of shared spaces on fan walks and public transport, etc, it is now possible to see that it held no meaningful long-term impact. Some academics and thinkers question the longevity of such feelings of optimism and pride in the 2010 FIFA World Cup and in the country. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2011:279) asks: ‘How long will this national unity survive the event? Is South Africa experiencing one month of fake nationhood?’ McKaiser (2010:10) writes of ‘socially constructed Nirvanas’ and argues that the tournament may be more likely to create an inauthentic sense of unity. This leads onto reflective questions about how to justify the returns for what essentially proved to be a temporary, emotional and psychological boost. This paper draws attention to the illusory nature of the concept of ‘social cohesion’. As a conceptual device, its flaws and limits are shown in the clear divide it exposes between different class interests in the FIFA World Cup. Further theoretical work on social cohesion is may be seen as a particularly compelling need, given the importance placed on social cohesion by the state, the policy community and other key stakeholders.

There is not sufficient scope within this paper to explore the implications of increased awareness about the costs and benefits of a mega-sporting event such as the 2010 FIFA World Cup and strategies to ensure that there will be greater circumspection in the event of another such event. Perhaps it may suffice to state that public discourse must remain aware of the dangers of inflated expectations and strive to balance the hope and euphoria embodied in such an event with a highly grounded sense of realism.
Notes
1. The diski dance is a style of dance created for the 2010 FIFA World Cup which is inspired by a series of rhythmic soccer-based moves.

2. However as anticipated and forewarned by analysts and scholars (Steenveld and Strelitz, 1998), the euphoria of the 1995 Rugby World Cup dissipated rapidly, particularly in light of on-going transformation pressures to achieve demographic representativity in sport and of course the reality check of everyday life in a transforming society post-Rugby World Cup.

3. FIFA Rights Holders are also given exclusive rights to all the official brands and trademarks associated with the tournament.

4. This was calculated using the income bands designated by Statistics South Africa on the basis of Census 2011 data.

5. This is one of the official 2010 FIFA World Cup slogans.

6. Amakwererekwere is the colloquial South African term used to refer to black Africans from other African countries. It has a derogatory meaning.

7. The findings of the survey are wide-ranging and span a broad range of data such as profit expectation, skills training, business classification and perceptions of local economic development mechanisms such as SEDA, GEP and NAFCOC. The survey also asked key questions about alienation and anomie, attitudes to other Africans, xenophobia and nation-building and reveals a powerful set of findings about the overall state of social cohesion in Gauteng.

8. The methodology involved a sample of 209 respondents older than 17 years drawn from small and micro-scale businesses operating in Soweto, Johannesburg and Pretoria. The survey involved three visits to the sample group. An initial face-to-face baseline survey was conducted in June 2010 before the commencement of the World Cup. Follow up visits happened in November 2010 and then again as a post-event evaluation in July 2011. The respondents were selected on the basis of (a) their location in popular tourist bases; (b) spatial proximity to high profile opening and final matches played at stadiums in Soweto and Johannesburg; and (c) economic activity such as street vending, selling food township, pub owners, township bed and breakfast (B&B) owners, craft sellers and tour guides. Most of the respondents (97 per cent) were black Africans with almost equal numbers of men (51 per cent) and women (49 per cent). Less than half the sample had matric (48 per cent) with secondary education at 38 per cent and primary education levels at 11 per cent. The largest age cohort in the group was 35-44 year olds (29 per cent) followed by 45-54 year olds (24 per cent), 25-34 year olds (23 per cent) and the oldest being aged 55+ (13 per cent). Young people (19-24 years old) constituted a marginal grouping amongst the respondents at 11 per cent.
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