Timm Beichelt
Substitute Playing Fields - On the Relationship between Football and Power

Rights available

About

The selection of Russia and Qatar as hosts of the 2018 and 2022 FIFA World Cups have once more shown that the football pitch is never merely a green rectangle on which 22 players chase after a ball. (Professional) football is always a substitute pitch on which politics operate simultaneously: political leaders of all types draw attention to themselves, norms like competitive thinking are rehearsed, national teams are an indicator as to which groups are regarded as belonging to the nation and which groups aren’t.

By providing examples from Germany, France and Russia, Timm Beichelt examines the relationship between football and power. At the same time, he explores in his essay the question of whether the game still holds the possibility of serving as a platform for equality, tolerance and an authentic life today.

Praise

»Whoever wants to know how football is set up internationally will learn what the connections are in Substitute Playing Fields.« rbb 2

»In his extremely readable book Timm Beichelt analyses how sports officials secure influence and how little they care to know about fundamental democratic principles.« Deutschlandfunk Kultur

»This clever book talks about how capitalism’s boundaries have been removed from the business field of football, and about how values like self-expression, participation, and sincerity, which limit athletic and economic expectations of profit, are in turn sacrificed.« General-Anzeiger

The Politics of Football in Russia: Repressive and Rational (ZOiS Spotlight 22/2018 by Timm Beichelt)