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samples of editing work

From the volume of essays, *Christianity and Modernity in Eastern Europe* (Central European University Press, 2010)

Introduction to essay, original version, Romanian author:

In 1987 the Italian journalist Francesco Strazzari journeyed throughout Eastern Europe investigating the life of the Christian church in its encounters with the state. His book holds several interviews taken in Romania under the title: The effects of the political allegiance (*Gli effetti del lealismo politico*). Strazzari managed to interview briefly the Romanian Patriarch Teoctist and Bishop Nicoale Mihăiţă, specialist in ecumenism of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the person in charge with the contacts between the Orthodox Church and the Department for Religious Denominations. Strazzari's concerns: the religious life in Romania, particularly the demolition of church buildings in Bucharest in the process of urban systematization. The answer was strikingly similar up to being identical in some parts to the one given by the same Bishop[1] in an interview for France Press in 1988. These answers were designed for an international audience growingly concerned about the status of the religious life in Romania. "Urbanization always implied sacrifices. This happened even in Paris when they made the large boulevards. This has happened in Bucharest in the interwar period when a first attempt to modernize the city was made" said Mihăiţă.[2]

Church demolitions, village destruction, random and forceful urbanization and industrialization, this is what the international audience knew about Romania in the 1980s. The image was somber. It made little or no difference that much of the hierarchy was presenting a different perspective. Considering the practice until that moment, this campaign of the hierarchy was most probably orchestrated by the state. The gray areas were disregarded in the Western anticommunist campaign. There was all throughout the communist period an activity of building places of worship, indeed not comparable with the one in interwar period but one that speaks about a specificity of religious life under the communist regime in Romania and about a constant negotiation for preserving a status quo in the life of religious denominations.

This research looks at the way in which the relationship between church and the communist regime was negotiated at a central level, renegotiated at the level of the community of believers looking at the interchangeability of these two levels of negotiation in the life of the church. I was primarily interested in

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[1] Bishop Nicolae Mihăiţă, (Nifon Ploeşteanul) is currently Archbishop of Târgovişte, one of the most important advisors to the current Patriarch Teoctist.

[2] Nifon Ploeşteanul, "Biserica şi sistematizarea oraşelor"(The Church and the towns systematisation) , in *Biserica Românească*, Vol. XIII, Issue 47, (January – March, 1988), p. 30; Francesco Strazzaru, *Tra Bosforo e Danubio chiese in fermento. Sulle orme di Cirillo e Metodio e della perestrojka*, Milan: Edizione Paoline, 1988, p. 34.

the way state central policy is put into practice with sometimes distinct and particular aspects at local levels. The research focused both on the Church as an institution and as a community of believers.[3]

In the late 1970s and 1980s when in Bucharest the state administration was destroying churches in the process of urban systematization[4] in the newly created Alba Iulia bishopric the Romanian Orthodox Church over 250 construction sites were opened. They were building churches, re-constructing damaged ones, painting them, building parish houses, deanery offices. They were in the middle of major works at the Grand Cathedral in Tîrgu-Mureş and at the Bishopric quarters. The bishopric was one big construction site. (See Annex 1) This was not singular but by far was the most frantic construction activity in the Orthodox Church.

The research is structured on answering two questions: why was this church building activity possible and how was it done. I have selected from the Alba Iulia bishopric the Mureş deanery as my case study and whithin the Mureş deanery I have focused on Cerghizel, a small village of 150 families (658 inhabitants), where during 1977–1982 the villagers built a new church next to the old wooden church from 1832. The reason for the selection of this case study are both theoretical and methodological. I used Cerghizel as a model for a pressure from bellow, from the community of believers that would impact the state policy in the area. It is on this model that I verify how the relationship between state central administration and Romanian Orthodox Church central hierarchy function. The match of state policy and church policy has tangible results in the construction of the church in Cerghizel? Or is this tangible result one that comes out of a local negociation favored by a specific context of the Mures region in the 1980s, a combination of local pressure and sympathetic local administration?

The research is based on archival research in the Ministry for Religious denominations Archives in Bucharest, the archives of the Holy Synod of the Romania Orthodox Church and those of the Orthodox Archbishopric in Alba Iulia, interviews with priests, state functionaries and villagers. The paper offers an overview of the relationship between state and church in Romania with the specificity of the case, giving a

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[3] I would like to thank His Excellency Andrei, Archbishop of Alba Iulia for His affability and willingness in helping with this research project. Also I want to extend my thanks to the administrative councillor of Alba Iulia Archbishopric, Father Remus Onisor for taking the time to review the archival materials with me and to locate the files that refer to the economic sector of the Bishopric administration. I express my gratitude for the archivist Ms Elena Gheaja and Gheorghe Avram from the technical service of the Archbishopric that have located various files that were not processed in the archives that proved central to my research.

[4] According to the Report of the Presidential Commission on Analysing Communist Dictatorship in Romania where the demolition of Churches in Bucharest received special attention starts this activity of the Party State in 1977 with the destruction of the Enei Church in Bucharest. This activity in the 1980s systemic and has behind a clear policy that is not specifically antireligious but rather stems from power positions in negotiations between the Party State and the central hierarchy of the Orthodox Church. See Cristian Vasile, Anca Sincan, Dorin Dobrincu, Regimul comunist si cultele religioase, (The communist regime and the religious denominations) in Raportul Final al Comisiei prezidentiale pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste din Romania (The Final Report of the Presidential Commission for Analysing the Communist Dictatorship in Romania), Bucharest, 2006, p. 467

administrative and legislative context. This is followed by a brief characterization of the sides involved in the negociation process and ends with the case study of the church building in Cerghizel.

Final version, after editing and email exchanges with author:

In 1987 the Italian journalist Francesco Strazzari journeyed throughout Eastern Europe investigating the life of the Christian church in its encounters with the communist state. In Romania, Strazzari managed to briefly interview Orthodox Patriarch Teoctist and Bishop Nicoale Mihăiţă, the Church's specialist in ecumenism and chief liaison between the Church and the state's Ministry for Religious Denominations. Strazzari raised questions about religious life in Romania, particularly the demolition of church buildings in Bucharest in the process of urban redevelopment.[5] The answer he received was designed for an international audience with growing concern about the status of religious life in Romania. According to Bishop Mihăiţă, "Urbanization always implied sacrifices. This happened even in Paris when they made the large boulevards. This has happened in Bucharest in the interwar period when a first attempt to modernize the city was made."[6]

Church demolitions, destruction of villages, random and forced urbanization and industrialization—this is what the international audience knew about Romania in the 1980s. The West saw the communist government's behavior toward religious groups as particularly repressive, taking into account the dissolution of the Greek Catholic Church, mistreatment[7] of Neo-Protestant groups,[8] and constraints and control over the Orthodox and traditional Protestant churches. These were the characteristics of religious life in Romania: imprisonments of priests and believers, the destruction of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox monastic life, and control over the religious schooling and the appointment of hierarchs and clergy. But this somber image of the relationship between the state and religious denominations in Romania was misleading, for the relationship was multi-faceted and changed with time. Throughout the communist period, religious life continued: places of worship were built, though not at the same rate as during the interwar period; the training of priests continued; and several theologians of the period were educated in institutes abroad (Oxford, Geneva, Athens, Regensburg).

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[5] The answer was strikingly similar—in some parts even identical—to the one given by Bishop Nicolae Mihăiţă (Nifon Ploeşteanul), currently archbishop of Târgovişte, one of the most important advisors to the current Patriarch Teoctist, in an interview for France Press in 1988.

[6] Nifon Ploeşteanul, "Biserica şi sistematizarea oraşelor," in *Biserica Românească*, Vol. XIII, Issue 47, (January – March, 1988), 30; and Francesco Strazzaru, *Tra Bosforo e Danubio chiese in fermento. Sulle orme di Cirillo e Metodio e della perestrojka* (Milan: Edizione Paoline, 1988), 34.

[7] Especially after the Helsinki Accords in 1975 an increase number of complaints on disrespecting human rights reached the West from Romania, a large number of them regarding Neo-Protestant believers and pastors.

[8] I use the terminology by which these denominations were and still are known in Romania.

Furthermore, continuing the tradition of the interwar period, the state's building of national ideology during the 1960s took into consideration religious motifs and the pantheon of Romanian saints, and figures of Romanian church history made their way into the national canon. These gray areas in which the state allowed religion to function were disregarded in the Western anti-communist campaign, or were branded as evidence of the Orthodox Church's cooption.

This paper examines one of these gray areas by looking at the ways in which the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the Communist regime was negotiated at a central level and renegotiated at the local level. In investigating the distinctions between these two levels of church-state relations. I am primarily interested in the distinct applications of central policy at the local level. In my research, I focus both on the Church as an institution and the local church as a community of believers.[9]

In the late 1970s and 1980s, at the same time that the state administration was razing churches in Bucharest in the process of urban redevelopment,[10] the Romanian Orthodox Church opened over 250 construction sites in the newly created Alba Iulia bishopric. New churches were built and damaged ones refurbished; parish houses and deanery offices were constructed; and major works were carried out at the Grand Cathedral in Tîrgu-Mureş and the seat of the bishopric. By far, the bishopric of Alba Iulia saw the most frantic construction activity in the Romanian Orthodox Church at the time (see Appendix 1).

My research is structured on two questions: why was this church-building activity possible, and how was it done? I have selected the Mureş deanery from the Alba Iulia bishopric as my case study, and within the Mureş deanery, I will focus on Cerghizel, a small village of 150 families (658 inhabitants), where, between 1977–1982, villagers built a new church next to an old wooden church dating to 1832. I selected this case study for both theoretical and methodological reasons. The successful construction of the church at Cerghizel lends itself to inquiry: how was this building possible? Did pressure from the community on local officials bring about a change in state policy? Was it the result of local negotiation? Or, was the construction of the church in this small village a tangible result of the alignment of the interests of higher authorities in the Church and state?

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[9] I would like to thank His Excellency Andrei, Archbishop of Alba Iulia, for His affability and willingness in helping with this research project. Also I want to extend my thanks to the administrative councilor of Alba Iulia Archbishopric, Father Remus Onisor, for taking the time to review the archival materials with me and to locate the files that refer to the economic sector of the Bishopric administration. I express my gratitude to the archivist Ms Elena Gheaja and Gheorghe Avram from the technical service of the Archbishopric for locating various files that were not processed in the archives but that proved central to my research.

[10] According to the Report of the Presidential Commission for the Analysis of Communist Dictatorship in Romania, where the demolition of Churches in Bucharest received special attention, the activity of the party-state started in 1977 with the destruction of the Enei Church in Bucharest. In the 1980s this activity was systematic and had behind it a clear policy that was not specifically anti-religious, but rather stemmed from power positions in negotiations between the party-state and the central hierarchy of the Orthodox Church. See Cristian Vasile, Anca Şincan, Dorin Dobrincu, "Regimul comunist si cultele religioase," in *Raportul Final al Comisiei prezidentiale pentru analiza dictaturii comuniste din Romania* (Bucharest: 2006), 467

One of my favorite scenes of last year's men's soccer World Cup in Brazil was not a tackle, a trick or a goal, but actually a situation of ruling. Seventy-five minutes into the game Spain vs Netherlands, the referee gave a free kick to Spain. As was the newly introduced practice for this World Cup he put out a can from a holster attached to his belt and sprayed a line of foam on the field to mark the minimum distance of 10 yard, which the Dutch defenders had to remain from the ball. (As its colloquial name indicates: the foam dissolves within a few minutes and doesn't leave a trace on the pitch.) The white substance from the referee's can, however, also covered the toe-cap of Dutch defender Bruno Martins Indi's, who immediately wiped the foam of his shoes and gestured his indignation towards the referee. At least in the Netherlands, the situation – condensed in a gif – became mildly viral (http://www.apparata.nl/nieuws/alles-dat-je-moet-weten-over-het-magische-schuim-dat-scheidsrechters-gebruiken-op-het-wk-7818).

The scene easily could be taken as an allegory of the commodification of soccer: A player being outraged not by a foul or a wrong decision but by the referee soiling the precious shoes which are presented as both fashion objects and high-tech marvels in countless commercials. Yet, the scene is also an insightful example for how the ruling of soccer (and of sports more generally, I would like to argue) got transformed through technological innovation. Especially, it provokes reflection of what happens when the usually static and solid lines determining all kinds of sports now become mobile and ephemeral. The history of sports also is a history of changing technologies to rule the game – and the vanishing spray is a remarkable addition of the heterogeneous congregation of stop-watches and whistles, flags and coded gestures, instant replay and Hawk-Eye technology. After all, drawing a line is not only constitutive for all sports but one of the most basic practices of human culture. Through drawing a line in the ground with the plough, the difference between nature and culture was constituted; through further materialization of this line, e.g. by a fence, a piece of land is not only guarded from wild animals but also marked as a property.

Ruling the game with lines
Officials offered a number of reasons for the introduction of the vanishing spray: It was supposed to increase the number of goals from free-kicks since it guarantees that defenders give the shooter enough space (at least during the world cup, the conversion rate of free-kicks was however pretty low [https://uk.eurosport.yahoo.com/blogs/pitchside-europe/reflection-why-vanishing-spray-could-lead-vanishing-goals-085429322.html] and I didn't find any statistical proof that vanishing spray up to now did actually lead towards more goals). The sprayed line was also supposed to protect the flow of the

game, since quite often free-kicks suffered from the tenacious efforts of referees to get the defending players at the required distance. Additionally, the vanishing spray is used to mark the right spot of the ball, thereby taming all efforts of the shooter to covertly put the ball closer and closer to the goal while pretending to avoid ditches in the grass. Most basically, the vanishing spray makes a specific situation of the game more accountable: Before, the distance between ball and defenders and therefore also the ruling of the players' behavior was a matter of intuition – now, a defender crossing the line gets a yellow card. The foam line reduces ambiguity.

The technology was already used before 2014 in some South American competitions and it was officially tested by FIFA during the Confederation Cup in Brazil 2013. From 2014 on it is used in most major national leagues of Europe as also in the European Champions League. In contrast to the controversial goal-line technology that uses digital video to detect if a ball shot on the goal actually crossed the goal line, the vanishing spray came without much resistance – not least because it is a cheap and artisan-like solution, not overloading the game with too much high tech. It is not part of the universally standardized laws of the game, but rather a practice whose application is decided upon by the organizers of a league or a tournament. Nevertheless it can be considered as a timely and innovative addition to the other lines on the field, which actually are defined by the laws of the game. While having been stable for some decades now, these other lines – the sidelines and goal lines, the halfway line and the penalty area – historically took quite some time to develop. John Bale, in his book "Landscapes of Sports" has an insightful graphic showing the development of the soccer pitch from the 1860s to 1937 in several steps: At the start, it was the physical givens (a yard or a piece of land) that delineated the space of the game; when it became an attraction for spectators, the audience itself acted as the boundary of the playing field. In the process of becoming a rule-bound modern sports, visible lines delineating an inside from an outside and clearly separating players and spectators became standard in the 1880s. Quite quickly additional lines were added inside the delineated area, segmenting the space of the game to allow for a more differentiated set of practices and also a more differentiated ruling of the game – a tackle inside the lines of the penalty area now is a different thing than a tackle outside of these lines. In 1909 most of the lines we know today were in place, only the penalty arc was added in 1937 – similar to the vanishing spray's role in a free kick situation, the penalty arc is to keep the players at a distance of 10 yards from the ball during a penalty kick.

Visible and invisible lines
Lines, thus, achieve several things: First of all, they demarcate a space inside of which behavior is structured by this space but even more by highly specific laws that don't apply outside of this space. Fellow Allrounder Andrew Moore pointed out how important that distinction between inside and outside

is for example for the acceptance of behavior that would be considered violent outside of the games (http://theallrounder.co/2015/01/08/football-is-not-a-violent-game/). I would like to add, however, that even if a visible line demarcates the field, the distinction between inside and outside, throughout the history of each sport, rather is a constantly contested area of exchange than a clear demarcation. Second, the lines do internally segment the space and thereby specify the kind of behavior, and allow for different roles and different tactics to develop. This increasing segmentation and differentiation of space connects the development of sports to broader social developments. Third, and most importantly for the case of the vanishing spray, the lines create a shared visibility for athletes, referees and audience and thus are the main reference point for understanding the game – and for opposing interpretations of situations. The lines enable the referees to judge the behavior but they also allow the audience to criticize the referee. This becomes especially obvious if we consider soccer's most notorious rule, the offside. Not so different from baseball's strike zone, the rule essentially is based on an imaginary line, which is monitored by the referees without being visible for players or audience. In soccer, the imaginary offside-line is supposed to be safeguarded by the referee's two assistants who are not only physically bound to run up and down one line throughout the match, but they are also asked to position themselves always in one line with the second-last player of the defending team so that they can judge if the opposing team passes the ball forward to an attacking player standing closer to the goal than this second-last defending player. In television, of course, this imaginary line, since quite some years, subsequently is added digitally to instant replays to second-guess the referee's decision. While there doesn't seem to be a technical solution for making the offside line visible for everybody already during the game anytime soon, the vanishing spray does something comparable and therefore figures as a decisive moment in the history of the game: It materializes and thus makes visible a line that formerly was only indicated by gestures and decisions of the referee.

Lines on the move
On the one hand, the vanishing spray is part of a longer history of increasing spatial segmentation and differentiation that connects sports to other cultural practices. It might be of interest here, that none less than philosopher John Searle uses the lines of sports to exemplify his definition of institutions. According to Searle, institutions consist in the collective assignment of functions to people, objects – or lines for that matter – which go beyond their actual capacities: Materially, a ball can cross the sideline of a pitch and the players can continue playing. As an institutional demarcation, the line prevents the players from playing outside of it. In contrast to the offside rule, the execution of a free kick gains additional institutional solidity. Even if the foam might end on the-toe cap of a player any now and then, it contributes to a visible – if short-term – organization of space in such a way, that the space itself

structures the possible (and rule-bound) behavior. If television ads lines to the images of a game that explicate and survey the rules, these lines will have a tendency to eventually also appear on the field. On the other hand, however, the usually static and solid lines determining all kinds of sports now become mobile and ephemeral – not only on television with its digital overlays but also on the pitch itself. This development might have a broader cultural significance. Sports, in the modern era, has become one of the most conspicuous practices of drawing lines. This however also gave sports a somewhat outdated, old-fashioned character. The French philosopher Gilles Deleuze famously stated in the 1990: 'Everywhere surfing has already replaced the older sports.' The implication was that sports with its well defined spaces and fixed lines belongs to the ceasing disciplinary society characterized by institutions like prisons, schools, and factories, while the looming society of control rather is based on open environments and the surveillance of contingent movement. Deleuze might have underestimated the flexibility of sports' lines more generally. These always were porose; they do not work as strict boundaries but rather as zones of intensified trespassing – by substitutes, coaches (communicating with the athletes through gestures of wireless microphones), or the battle calls (and invective) of fans. With the vanishing spray, I would argue, sport conclusively proves to be ready for and participating in the mobile and ephemeral mechanisms of a post-disciplinary form of power.

Final version:

One of my favorite scenes of last year's men's World Cup in Brazil was not a tackle, a trick, or a goal. It was an instance of a referee making a ruling on the field. Seventy-five minutes into the opening game between Spain and Netherlands, the referee gave a free kick to Spain. Following the newly introduced practice for this World Cup, he pulled a can from a holster attached to his belt and sprayed a line of foam on the grass, marking the ten-yard distance where the Dutch defenders had to remain before the kick. The white substance from the referee's can also covered the toe-cap of Dutch defender Bruno Martins Indi, who immediately gestured his indignation towards the referee. Condensed in a gif, the scene went viral, at least in the Netherlands.

The brief episode can be taken as an allegory of the commodification of soccer: A player is outraged not by a foul or a wrong decision but by the referee soiling his precious shoes, presented in countless commercials as both fashion objects and marvels of technology. Yet the scene is also an insightful example of how the ruling of soccer (and of sports more generally, I would argue) has been transformed through technological innovation. Vanishing spray provokes reflection about what happens when the usually static and solid lines marking all kinds of sports become mobile and ephemeral.

As I've argued in the first two essays of this series, the history of modern sport is one of changing technologies used to rule the games. Vanishing spray is a remarkable addition to the heterogeneous collection of stop-watches and whistles, flags and coded gestures, instant replay and Hawk-Eye technology. After all, drawing a line is not only constitutive for nearly all sports but also one of the most basic practices of human culture. Through drawing a line in the ground with the plough, the difference between nature and culture was constituted; through further materialization of that line, such as by a fence, a piece of land was guarded and marked as a property. What does it mean when the lines we draw to bring order to sports can be moved from place to place, and fade away in minutes?

Football officials offered a number of reasons for the introduction of vanishing spray: It was supposed to increase the number of goals from free-kicks, since it guarantees enough space for the shooter (the conversion rate of free-kicks was pretty low during the World Cup, and I haven't found any statistical proof that vanishing spray has actually led to more goals). The sprayed line was also supposed to protect the flow of the game. The tenacious efforts of referees to keep defenders at the required distance before free-kicks often delays the action, but with the ten-yard line visible on the grass, the referee no longer has to waste time corralling drifting players. Additionally, the vanishing spray would also be used to mark the right spot of the ball, thereby taming all efforts of the shooter to covertly put the ball closer and closer to the goal while pretending to avoid ditches in the grass. Most basically, vanishing spray makes a specific situation of the game more accountable: Before, the distance between ball and defenders, and therefore also the ruling of the players' behavior, was a matter of intuition – now, a defender crossing the line gets a yellow card. The foam line reduces ambiguity.

Vanishing-spray technology was already used before 2014 in some South American competitions and was officially tested by FIFA during the 2013 Confederation Cup in Brazil. Since 2014, it has been used in most major national leagues of Europe as well as the UEFA Champions League. In contrast to the controversial goal-line technology that uses digital video to detect if a ball actually crossed the goal line, vanishing spray came without much resistance – not least because it is a cheap and artisan-like solution, one that doesn't overload the game with too much high tech. Vanishing spray was not made part of the universally standardized laws of the game, but rather its application is decided upon by the organizers of a league or tournament. Nevertheless, it can be considered a timely and innovative addition to the other lines on the field, which actually are defined by the laws of the game.

The permanent lines on the soccer pitch – the sidelines and goal lines, the halfway line and the penalty area – have been stable for decades, but they took quite some time historically to be established. John Bale's book *Landscapes of Modern Sport* has an insightful graphic showing the development of the

soccer pitch from the 1860s to 1937 in several steps. At the sport's origins, the given physical space (a particular yard or a piece of land) delineated the space of the game. Later, when football became an attraction for spectators, the audience itself acted as the boundary of the playing field. Visible lines delineating an inside from an outside and clearly separating players and spectators became standard in the 1880s. Additional lines were quickly added inside the delineated area, segmenting the space of the game to allow for a more differentiated set of practices and also a more differentiated ruling of the game – for example, a tackle inside the lines of the penalty area was a different thing than a tackle outside of these lines. By 1909 most of the lines we know today were in place, with the penalty arc later added in 1937. Similar to the role of vanishing spray in a free-kick situation today, the arc was intended to keep players at a ten-yard distance during a penalty kick.

Lines thus achieve several things. First of all, they demarcate a space regulated by specific rules that don't apply outside of the space. In his *Allrounder* essay about violence in American football, Andrew Moore pointed out how important this distinction between inside and outside is for defining behavior that would be considered violent anywhere beyond the playing space. I would add, however, that even if a visible line demarcates the field, the distinction between inside and outside, throughout the history of each sport, has been a constantly contested area of exchange rather than a fixed border.

Second, and most important for the case of vanishing spray, lines create a shared visibility for athletes, referees, and spectators. Thus, they are the main reference point for understanding the game – and for opposing interpretations of situations. The lines enable the referees to judge players' behavior, but they also allow the audience to criticize the referee.

This becomes especially obvious if we consider soccer's most notorious rule, the offside. Not so different from baseball's strike zone, the rule essentially is based on an imaginary line, which is monitored by the referees without being visible for players or audience. In soccer, the imaginary offside-line is supposed to be safeguarded by the referee's two assistants, who are required not only to run up and down the sideline throughout the match but also to position themselves on a visual line with the second-last player of the defending team so that they can judge if the opposing team passes the ball forward to an attacking player standing closer to the goal. On television, of course, this imaginary line is added digitally to instant replays to better second-guess the assistants' judgments. While there doesn't seem to be a technical solution for making the offside line visible for everybody during the game, vanishing spray does something comparable. Therefore, the white foam sprayed from a can figures as a decisive moment in the history of the game: It materializes and thus makes visible a line that formerly was only indicated by gestures and decisions of the referee.

Third, the lines on a field segment the playing space, thereby specifying the kind of behavior within those divided areas and allowing for different roles and tactics to develop. This increasing spatial segmentation and differentiation connect the history of sports to other social developments and cultural practices. Philosopher John Searle refers to the lines used in sports to exemplify his definition of institutions. According to Searle, institutions consist in the collective assignment of functions to people, objects – or lines for that matter – which go beyond their actual capacities. Materially, a ball can cross the sideline of a pitch and the players can follow after it and continue playing. But as an institutional demarcation, the line prevents the players from playing in the space beyond it. Following Searle's theory, vanishing spray functions to establish an institutional demarcation. In contrast to the offside rule with its imaginary line, the execution of a free kick gains additional institutional solidity. Even if the foam ends up on the-toe cap of a player every now and then, it contributes to a visible – if short-term – organization of space in such a way that the space itself structures the possible (and rule-bound) behavior.

With both vanishing spray and the digital lines that explicate rules on television, the usually static and solid lines structuring all kinds of sports have now become mobile and ephemeral – on the screen and on the pitch itself. This development has a broader cultural significance. Sport is an area of modern life where we see the most conspicuous practice of drawing lines. This reliance on lines, however, also gives sport a somewhat outdated, old-fashioned character. French philosopher Gilles Deleuze famously stated in the 1992, "Everywhere surfing has already replaced the older sports." The implication was that the sports which developed in the nineteenth century, with their well-defined spaces and fixed lines, belong to the disciplinary society characterized by institutions like prisons, schools, and factories, while the looming society of control is based on open environments and the surveillance of contingent movement.

But Deleuze might have underestimated the flexibility of lines in sports. Throughout their history, these lines have always been porose. They do not work as strict boundaries but rather as zones of intensified trespassing – by substitutes, by coaches communicating with athletes through gestures or wireless microphones, by the battle calls (and invective) of fans, and by media technology capturing images and sound. With the use of vanishing spray, I would argue, sport shows itself ready to participate in the mobile and ephemeral mechanisms of post-disciplinary power.