German Regional Identity and Soccer: Comparison of Soccer’s Impact on Cultural and Political Identities in Munich and Dortmund, Germany

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German Regional Identity and Soccer: Comparison of Soccer’s Impact on Cultural and Political Identities in Munich and Dortmund, Germany

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By Megan Elizabeth DeGrafft

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for completion of the Bachelor of Arts degree in International Studies

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Abstract:

This paper aims to explore the relationship between soccer from a regional perspective using FC Bayern Munich and Munich, Germany and Borussia Dortmund and Dortmund, Germany and how those cities’ soccer teams elicit political and regional identities through the dichotomy between the fans and the business mindset of contemporary German soccer. A media analysis using two German language newspapers was used in order to collect articles that reported on the two soccer clubs apart from their result on the field. Pre-existing Twitter hashtags were also used to collect fan reactions towards the reported events. The findings revealed three different crises the teams had to contend with based on fan reactions towards the club’s actions away from the field. These three crises include international dealing, mass marketing and commerce, and extremism/Ultra Fans. The findings led to the conclusion that the actions of both teams away from the field influenced the fans’ identity in that it solidified the fans political-ethical values. Furthermore, the crises revealed two overarching themes which include, the tension between fan desire for a soccer club that prioritizes them and the realities of global soccer, which is big business. The second is the political identity of the fans and how the teams attempt to influence that.
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Section One: Background

Introduction:

July 8, 2014, the first semi-final match of the 2014 FIFA World Cup was played, and history was made. The German national team was up against the host nation, Brazil. Germany and Brazil have not only been World Cup champions more than anyone since the end of WWII, but also have been in the World Cup semi-finals and finals since the beginning of FIFA illustrating their dominance in soccer. Both teams started the game with attacking play and full-throttle offenses. In the eleventh minute Germany scored their first goal, from there the floodgates were open and four more goals followed, just in the first half. Brazil ended the half with no response to Germany’s five goals. The final result of the game was Germany seven and Brazil one. Germany’s win is the largest margin of victory in a FIFA World Cup semi-final.

This victory did not just represent a win for the national soccer team but represented a win for the country and its people in addition to payback for the 2002 FIFA World Cup where Germany lost to Brazil two to zero. This win is a symbol of Germany’s progression as a country through their success and progress in previous year’s FIFA World Cups since 2006. Writers from Der Spiegel believed that, “Until 2006, Germans saw themselves as a brooding society. But that changed after Germany hosted that year’s brilliantly successful World Cup” (non. 2014). Fast forward four years to 2010, the German national team changed it style of play and “at times played a graceful, attacking style that was beautiful to watch” (non. 2014). This garnered the attention of viewers abroad and the semi-final game against Brazil in 2014 continued the attention-grabbing play and raised the spirit of Germany. Germany’s World Cup history reflects the
transition of German identity and its importance in the world. Just like Germany’s World Cup success has changed, the country has changed as well.

The German National team is made up of players from regional clubs all over the country and regions of Germany. These regions of Germany are home to their own local soccer teams and local fans. Along with that comes their own local perception of their team and the region they come from. The German national team only plays every four years for the FIFA World Cup and on even years for the Euro Cup. These players spend more time with their regional teams and it can be argued that the National team borrows them when it comes time. Each region in Germany houses their own stereotype or their identifying characteristics. For example, in the Ruhr Region in north west Germany, it is known for its industrial sector. The regional soccer clubs in each city tend to represent the city and are spokespeople for that region. This means that they are representatives of the region/city and their actions reflect onto the fans of the soccer club from that region/city.

Furthermore, based on a personal experience during the World Cup in Germany emphasizes the impact that soccer has on people and their outlooks on life. When first visiting Germany, there were not flags flown outside houses and no one spoke openly about German pride. That was until the start of the World Cup. Once the soccer games began, a flood of flags surfaced; on cars, houses, t-shirts, and all sorts of objects featured the black, red, and yellow. Speaking about the 2014 World Cup, Christine Meier emphasizes this sentiment of German color explosion by stating, “’We wear necklaces and hats with the colors of the German flag…sometimes I make a noodle salad in black, red and yellow’” (Der Spiegel Staff 2014). I also experienced this same burst of team spirit while studying abroad in Cologne, Germany. However, the colors were red and white, and the fans supported FC Köln, the soccer team of their city. I realized that this
team spirit did not just exist for the National Team but for the regional/city teams as well, inspiring me to question how German identities are revealed through soccer by using the regional teams.

This paper aims to explore the relationship between soccer from a regional perspective using Munich, Germany and Dortmund, Germany and how those cities’ soccer teams elicit political and regional identities through the dichotomy between the fans and the business mindset of contemporary German soccer. Identity for the purpose of this research is defined as self-perception related to nationality, locality, and political and social groups. Furthermore, the paper focuses on political identity based around political ethical values of the fans and the clubs.

Germans struggled with identity ever since World War II. Exploring this identity struggle through the most popular sport in the country provided a platform for an interesting perspective about German self-perception and whether or not Germans have reconciled with their past. There is an array of research on the relationship between national identities and soccer but missing in the research is a focus on regional identities. Germany is a special case to research, because of the various local soccer clubs which in turn allows me to look into the relationship of soccer and political identity based around political ethical values on a smaller regional scale. All of these soccer clubs are spread across various regions of Germany that hold their own local values and views of themselves along with their support for their local soccer club. For comparison purposes and a new approach, the regional level provides its own questions about how regional soccer reveals identities.
How does the support for local German soccer franchises relate to a political ideology or a regional identity? Locally speaking, the Bundesliga is the professional association football league in Germany and houses some of the most well-known soccer teams world-wide such as FC Bayern Munich and BVB Borussia Dortmund. This thesis uses the media to compare Munich, Germany and FC Bayern Munich and Dortmund, Germany and BVB Borussia Dortmund in order to answer the question: Do FC Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund’s business actions, global actions, and political actions away from the field impact the fans’ views of the club and how does it influence the fans’ political and regional identities? Yes, both soccer club’s actions away from the field impact the fans’ views of the club significantly in that the fans have negative reactions towards the club’s political dealings, international travels and implied goals of becoming a big business. In doing so, these actions reinforce the fans’ political and regional identities illustrated through their political ethical values, which differs from the club’s political ethical values.

This thesis provides further understanding about how Germans utilize soccer as a platform to assert their identities without concern about their sensitive history. These local teams allow us to examine the interrelationship between German identities and sports in the period between the big events where the national team takes center stage. These local teams allow fans a more personal and closer relationship with their club and in turn allows for a personalized reflection on their political identity in relation to their political ethical values.

Based on preliminary reading and research, Germans identify themselves regionally as opposed to nationally through soccer based on their support for their regional teams and the political ideologies those teams reflect. The national team does not
have explicit political leanings and relationships as opposed to the local clubs. The thesis utilizes newspapers and social media to assert that soccer is a platform to assert political identities related to political ideologies and are revealed through the sport. I assert that soccer in Germany is influenced by political ideologies and regional identities in relation to fan identities through politics and the realities of global soccer, which is big business. The soccer club’s actions away from the field influence the fans’ opinions towards the teams and elicits the fans’ individual political ethical values whether they differ from the team’s or not.

**Existing Scholarship**

**Identity:**

It is challenging to form a concrete definition of identity. Before discussing the specific definition of political identity and regional identity, we must first address the broader definition of identity by itself. In *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, the entry on “Identity,” states, “Identity, on its face, is simple and unproblematic: It is that relation that everything bears to itself and to nothing else (Borchert 2006, pg. 567). There is, however, confusion among scholars about how to best define identity. This encyclopedia approaches identity from a quantitative perspective and not a qualitative perspective, which is not completely applicable to this paper. However, under the subheading “Is identity definable” the encyclopedia does its best to form a definition for identity (Borchert 2006, pg.569). This section begins by acknowledging a potential definition for identity, which is “Identity characterized by quantifying over all relations.” Ultimately, the encyclopedia concludes that, “identity, at least as applied to the most basic entities, must be taken as primitive and unanalyzable; there is no fully general (noncircular) definition of identity” (Borchert 2006, pg. 570). Scholars provide a lot of research about
how to construct and define regional identity and political identity. Borchert’s entry in the encyclopedia approaches “identity” from a classical perspective, which might be used to contrast with modern perspective of identity as relational and multifaceted.

Political scientist Rogers Smith argues that “political science today needs to give higher priority to studies of the processes, especially the political processes, through which conceptions of political membership, allegiance, and identity are formed and transformed” (2004, pg. 301). Smith acknowledges a definition of identity formed by The American Heritage as, ‘the collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing is definitively recognizable or known…The set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which a person is recognizable as a member of a group” (2004, pg. 302) He further states, “By extension, a political identity can be conceived as the collective label for a set of characteristics by which persons are recognized by political actors as members of a political group” (Smith 2004, pg. 302). Rogers offers many sources for this recognition such as “party affiliation, nation-state membership, ethnicity, economic status, language” and so on (Smith 2004, 302). Furthermore, he makes the point that these political identities are not legitimate unless political actors treat them as such (Smith 2004, pg. 302). Thus, he defines political actors and political groups as “people who determine how governing power will be created, distributed, and exercised, and ended, in ways that partly decide, among other things, who gets what, when, and how” (Smith 2004, pg. 302). It is important to note that Rogers claims that this definition of political identity “allows political identities to form either when those who share those identities in ways others recognize voluntarily and actively come together, or when outsiders ascribe a common group identity to certain populations, even if many members of those populations resist (Smith 2004, pg. 302). This is especially helpful when discussing the
fan identities of both FC Bayern Munich and BVB Borussia Dortmund, because the fans rejection of actions of the teams in turn falls under this definition of political identity and exemplify the point about populations resisting.

On the other hand, another type of identity this paper will contend with is regional identity. Sedlacek, Kurka, and Maier discuss the concept of regional identity “in order to define the term and how it is embedded in regional developmental theory” (Sedlacek, Kurka & Meier 2008, pg. 180). In order to define regional identity, the authors discuss where the concept originated which was in human geography (Sedlacek, Kurka & Meier 2008, pg. 180). Below is a chart that outlines regional identity in a broader context:

![Regional Identity Diagram](image)

The authors acknowledge that regional identity is not well defined and further breaks down the chart in order to come up with a clearer picture about regional identity. They discuss the two images of a region which include internal and external. “Internal image depends upon people’s identification with the region although the image component covers mainly descriptive elements and can be defined as the internal perception of the region” (Sedlacek, Kurka & Meier 2008, pg. 184). External image refers to the empirical description such as the region’s economy, society and environment (Sedlacek, Kurka & Meier 2008, pg. 184). Referring back to the image, regional solidarity means that “inhabitants are proud to be part of a region and have a strong territorial connection”
Furthermore, the authors emphasized the dimensions of regional identity by providing three different terms: identity of a place, identification with a place, and social spatial identification. Identity of a place is defined as individual identity focused on the emotional connection and knowledge to a place (Sedlacek, Kurka & Meier 2008, pg. 184). Identification with a place is defined as the result of self-reflection and is revealed through the relationship an individual has with a particular region (Sedlacek, Kurka & Meier 2008, pg. 184). Lastly, social spatial identification is defined as social systems like groups, organizations and classes that each individual in that group all share a belief or support similar things. This is reinforced via organizations with a concrete spatial connection, for example a region of city (Sedlacek, Kurka & Meier 2008, pg. 184). The definition of social spatial identification is helpful in this paper in that it refers to groups and organizations like soccer teams and the fans of those teams which relates to the purpose of my paper which is to prove that soccer is more than just a game and possesses regional and political identities, whether that be through the fans or the soccer club itself.

**Research**

In the broader scholarships on sports, the problem of German national and cultural identity figures prominently. Scholars have examined national and cultural identity along with global relations in the context of sports ever since the 1970s. This recognition of the relationship between sports, politics, and identity have only spurred more research on the topic. Scholars determined that sports do impact the way countries identify themselves in addition to the way they govern. This was further examined in relation to how countries view other cultures as well.
Both of sociologist Andrei Markovits’ books, *Gaming the World* and *Offside: Soccer and American Exceptionalism*, reveal the close relationship between sports and globalization along with tension between national identity and culture. Markovits argued that sports “conjure up forces that reaffirm emotions and identities akin to Putnam’s ‘bonding capital,’ a hardening of boundaries among different constituencies and their cultures” (2014, pg. 3). He furthers his argument by asserting that “sports shape and stabilize social and even political identities around the globe” (Markovits 2014, pg. 3). Furthermore, his literature revealed how sports still remain local which results in local allegiances and new forms of cultural conflict and prejudice (Markovits 2014, pg. 322). Markovits states, “Sports, in this cosmopolitan context, fulfill what Robert Putnam so aptly called ‘bridging capital,’ an integrative force among different groups in their cultural boundaries” (2014, pg. 3). Markovits concludes that the “power of global attractiveness” of teams “speak to emotions that create a bevy of ‘bridging’ and ‘bonding’ capital” that are both important “in the creation and maintenance of key collective identities” (2014, pg. 322). He further concludes that “real fans follow the best of the best regardless of time and space” but this does not eliminate the affection for and identification with local teams (Markovits 2014, pg. 324). My argument differs from that of Markovits’s in that it provides and elaborates types of identities in relation to soccer and confirms that soccer is more than just a game and provides insight into political and cultural identities. Markovits’s concludes that identities with sports teams do exist but does not go beyond that in his research and mostly focuses on the relationship between sports and globalization while my research emphasizes cultural and political identities.

Political scientist Udo Merkel argues in *The Politics of Physical Culture and German Nationalism* that “physical culture from 1871 to the outbreak of World War I became an
integral and prominent part of the battle for hegemony both within German society as well as in Europe” (2003, pg. 70). Merkel’s analysis of empirical research of other scholars demonstrates “the complex nature of sports as an object of struggle, control, and resistance at both the domestic and the international level” (2003, pg. 71). Additionally, his analysis of the relationship between physical culture and international politics and German nationalism led him to conclude that sports have the powerful potential to unite and divide, which became a key feature in the twentieth-century history of sport, in Germany and elsewhere (Merkel 2003, pg. 91).

While Merkel reveals the impact of sports, he does it on a broader level and not specifically about soccer. Merkel also does not contend with identity.

Political scientist Norbert Kersting compared the 2006 and 2010 FIFA World Cups in his article, Sport and National Identity: A Comparison of the 2006 and 2010 FIFA World Cups. Kersting argued that the 2006 FIFA World Cup enabled Germans to express certain types of identities. His article examines how large-scale sporting events like the FIFA World Cup influences the construction of national identity (Kersting 2008, pg. 277). His results, based on empirical data revealed “the 2006 tournament did not contribute to sustainable patriotism but did have small effects of reducing xenophobia” (Kersting 2008, pg. 277). Kersting concluded by stating that, “major sports events can be used to promote values such as team spirit and discipline, but also at a wider level, tolerance, multiculturalism, and solidarity” (2008, pg. 277). Kersting’s conclusion is what inspired the opening paragraph of this paper which led me to narrow in on regions in Germany.

The existing scholarship has contributed to the field of German sports studies by revealing that there is a relationship between sports, politics, and culture. This research
provides support for further research on what those relationships reveal about the identities within Germany. Based on existing scholarship it can be concluded that Udo Merkel argues that sports have the power to united and divide. He did this by exploring the relationship between physical culture, international politics and German nationalism which in turn helps me support my argument that soccer has the power to assert political opinions and associations because he supported that it has the power to unite and divide which is beyond playing the physical game. Andre Markovits is interested in the tensions between sports as an expression of global connectedness and sports as an expression of national identity, and Kersting is interested in social cleavages and national cohesion. In contrast to the existing scholarship, I am interested in talking about soccer in Germany and regional identities which is building on this literature because the existing literature did not research on a smaller regional scale and maintained a broader globalized perspective.

**Methodology:**

In order to support my assertion that soccer is more than just a game and possesses regional and political identities, whether that be through the fans or the soccer club itself, I chose to conduct a qualitative media analysis. In order to show two different sides of the relationship between soccer and German regional and political identities, I will compare FC Bayern Munich and BVB Borussia Dortmund. I used two different newspapers of different biases and beliefs from each region for the media analysis, *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Rheinische Post*. *Süddeutsche Zeitung* tends to support the center-left agenda of the SPD and *Rheinische Post* has an editorial policy more in line with the CDU. Newspapers are used for data collection, because they are a good primary source that provides multiple points of view and examines issues in the context of their
time. In order to discover raw trends within the cities, I searched for pre-existing hashtags on Twitter and Facebook in addition to the news sources.

There are a variety of factors that influenced determining which teams and cities to use for the comparison and research. Familiarity was one factor. Both Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund are well-known teams as opposed to other teams in Germany. Both clubs are brand names and their jerseys are recognizable globally and the same could be said about both cities. Furthermore, the differences between Munich and Dortmund were another factor in determining which cities and soccer clubs to use for comparison. Munich is located in south west Germany while Dortmund is in the north west region of Germany. The significant aspect of each cities’ location is the industry that each is known for. Dortmund is located in Germany’s Ruhr Valley region. This is where the heart of most coal mines and steel and iron industry was in Germany. The Ruhr region is the urban center. On the other hand, Munich is not as industrial as Dortmund. Munich is one of the hubs for the automobile industry in addition to tourism, art, technology and finance. Lastly, political leanings were a factor when determining the cities and teams used for research. The two main political parties in Bavaria are the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and the Christian Social Union (CSU). The CSU is a right-leaning party while the SPD is left leaning party in Germany. Dortmund and North-Rhein Westphalia tend to be swing regions. This information is relevant, because the newspaper articles revealed significant political ethical values for both teams. The data may affirm or disprove the political stereotypes for both teams and cities, which reveals the impact that soccer has in constructing identities based on political values and associations in addition to the platform that these clubs may serve for these political parties.
There was a system in place for determining which newspaper articles were viable for data collection. The archives were narrowed down to include a ten-year period from 2008 to 2018. I searched the archives using keywords such as soccer, politics, as well as terms involving news outside of the game. This would include news about clubs’ finances, fan events, and international interactions. If the article titles and preliminary reading of the articles revealed any hints about themes regarding the research including, politics, business, and regions then the article was read in full. After the collection of the articles they were split up and organized by theme. The themes were assigned a color in order to organize and fully interpret the data.

**Structure:**

My research has been divided into two sections. The first section includes the introduction and provides information on existing scholarship in addition the methodology employed for research. The first section includes chapter one which dives into the history of FC Bayern Munich and BVB Borussia Dortmund. In chapter one, I examine the historical perspectives of both teams in hopes of providing a clear picture of what identities in the past may have contributed to the present identities found in the research and data. In addition, I discuss the history and relationship between both teams and the rivalry between them. Chapter one argues against the political explanations as to why the rivalry spans beyond the result of the game.

Section two of my thesis provides my findings and analysis of my findings. This is the bulk of my paper and reveals the main fan, political, and regional identities that surfaced through the data collection. The political ethical values found for FC Bayern Munich were more concrete than in comparison to BVB Borussia Dortmund. However, the identities found for each team to fan identity in relation to the fans’ political values.
This is useful, because Borussia Dortmund can act as a more neutral variable when analyzing the political ideologies within the FC Bayern Munich data. Each of the identities are split up by chapter. In each of the identity chapters, the aim is to take the comparison and media analysis of both teams to another level by using social media. I used Facebook and Twitter to further support the fan identities that I found. The social media provides interesting perspective into how the fans of each team view their teams and view themselves in relation to the team. It also has the potential to reveal more interaction between Borussia Dortmund and FC Bayern Munich in relation to their ongoing rivalry.

This paper also seeks to answer questions such as the following: is soccer used as a platform to approach cultural and/or political issues in Dortmund and Bayern? To what degree do politics play a role in the formation of a political identity of each club if at all? If so, do the soccer clubs influence politics at all? Politics can play a decent role in the formation of political identity of a soccer club but that does not mean that it influences all soccer clubs, which is seen with Borussia Dortmund. No, soccer clubs do not influence politics, but fans influence the political leanings of the soccer clubs.
Chapter One: History of the Bundesliga’s Top Teams: FC Bayern Munich and BVB Borussia Dortmund

1.1 Introduction

Regionally, soccer has proven to reveal a connection and identity that people share with their respective city in addition to their national identity. The soccer teams in both Munich and Dortmund challenge the larger German identity. These two cities along with the teams have their own historic relationship with soccer and with their fans. It can be argued that there is a more personal history with soccer on a regional level. The history of both of these teams simultaneously established the base for the present political and regional identities of the teams and their followers. Included in the history of these regional clubs and their identities is the impact of a rivalry. Rivalries magnify the passion that fans and teams have when playing or competing against their rival. The competition is that much greater and the loyalty and commitment to one side is multiplied in comparison to just an ordinary competitor. Rivalries emphasize the differences between two competitors and what they stand for which in turn can reveal more about each side’s identity. The rivalry between Ohio State and Michigan, the rivalry between the Boston Red Sox and the New York Yankees and as far as European rivalries the one between FC Barcelona and Real Madrid are some of the greatest rivalries in sports. That Spanish rivalry is not the only significant rivalry in European soccer. FC Bayern Munich and BVB Borussia Dortmund not only have their own individual histories but have a shared history and rivalry as well. This shared history is a rivalry between the two clubs dubbed
“Der Klassiker.” This historic rivalry is deeper than soccer which are revealed in the next section.

1.2 Der Klassiker: History between Bayern Munich FC and BVB Borussia Dortmund

Two soccer clubs from two different cities with two different fan followings come together for a rivalry that emphasizes the strength of German soccer in addition to emphasizing two different political leanings. The fact that this rivalry has a name emphasizes the history between FC Bayern Munich and BVB Borussia Dortmund. Der Klassiker is the name of the rivalry game every time FC Bayern Munich and BVB Borussia Dortmund meet up on the soccer field. The first Der Klassiker game was played on October 19, 1965 with a win from BVB (Bundesliga 2013). There is no question about the dominance of each club within the rivalry, Bayern and BVB claimed 19 of the past 23 Bundesliga titles. The success of both teams is one of the reasons as to why this rivalry grew. Since the 1990s both clubs dominated German soccer and it did not sit well with Bayern Munich that Dortmund was beginning to emerge as a powerhouse club. This only intensified the rivalry between the two clubs. Success in Der Klassiker went back and forth between the teams, but Bayern Munich has 45 wins to Dortmund’s lesser 24 wins (Bundesliga 2013).

A major turning point for this rivalry occurred in 2013 when, for the very first time, Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund played for the UEFA Champions League final (Markovits 2013). This was not just a soccer game, this game created underlying symbolism of the superiority of “other features in the German political economy and culture” (Markovits 2013). The interconnectedness of sports and nationalism was emphasized by the German media with the upcoming final. This rivalry goes beyond
soccer and this game further emphasized this. Contradictory to the political leanings of the newspapers and the cities, Bayern is considered “the darling of Germany’s conservative elites among whose fans Chancellor Angela Merkel and the Bavarian prime minister Horst Seehofer” (Markovits 2013). Borussia Dortmund “has become the preferred club of social democracy’s male modernizers” including former Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder (Markovits 2013). Based on FC Bayern Munich’s history it is important to call into question Markovits’ interpretation of each clubs’ political leanings. Culturally speaking, both clubs are headquartered in rival regions. Bayern in Germany’s south, “which does not even call itself a federal state but proudly sports the name “Freistaat” (free state)” and Borussia coming from North Rhine Westfalen, former home of Germany’s industrial center known as the Ruhr region (Krauss & Markovits 2013).

The history of the rivalry between Bayern Munich FC and BVB Borussia Dortmund supports the reasoning as to why they were chosen for this research. The history that goes much deeper than soccer between the two clubs further emphasizes the potential that soccer has to reveal identities beyond the game. Furthermore, the political and cultural rivalry between both clubs in itself reveals the separate identities that those supporting the teams share with their regions.

1.3 Pre-1945

The 1900s were a transformative period for soccer in Germany. At that time, soccer was in the process of coming to Germany from the United Kingdom. Soccer grew to become the most popular sport in Germany and clubs arose throughout the entire country. These clubs had to start somewhere. Two of Germany’s most well-known clubs share similarities in their rise to popularity but share many differences as well. Just like their
standing in Der Klassiker, number one, FC Bayern Munich was created before BVB Borussia Dortmund.

Created on April 4, 1900, Bayern Munich entered the soccer world in Bayern Germany at a time where only one other soccer team existed in the region (Gillmeister 2000, pg. 86). The other soccer team was run in conjunction with the German’s men gymnastics club (Männer-Turnverein), MTV. The birth of Bayern Munich started with a Jewish doctor, Gustave Mannheimer, who later changed his last name to Manning. After playing with many other German teams in the North and after his appointment to secretary of the “newly founded Southern German Soccer Clubs” Dr. Manning found himself in Bavaria, the future home of FC Bayern Munich. It is important to note that the creation of the club occurred during the time of the German Games Movement, this was a movement aimed “to guide people back to playing outdoor games wherever and whenever this was possible” (Gillmeister 2000, pg. 86). If it was not for the help of the administration body of the game’s movement Dr. Manning may not have had as much success with forming FC Bayern Munich.

MTV, the gymnastics club, interpreted putting athletes “back into the opens” as “channeling its soccer players into Manning’s Association of Southern Football Clubs” (Gillmeister 2000, pg. 86). The first two players to join from the gymnastics club were Josef Pollock and Franz John. The players’ attempt to join the Association’s soccer club proved to be unsuccessful. This catalyzed John and Josef’s decision to break free from the gymnastics club all together. Joined by two “foreigners” Paul Francke and Willhelm Focke, John and Josef officially came together to form FC Bayern Munich.
Nine years after the founding of FC Bayern Munich, BVB Borussia Dortmund came into the soccer scene. Similar to the formation of FC Bayern Munich, Borussia Dortmund’s creation was initiated due to conflict. The forty men of the Catholic church-sponsored Trinity Youth, who founded Ballspiel-Verein Borussia (BVB), were inspired to find a new soccer club fueled by their combined anger at chaplain Hubert Dewald. Chaplain Hubert Dewald was the man responsible for youth affairs in the Trinity (BVB Website). The players were unhappy with the “local chaplain’s treatment of their church-sponsored football team” (BVB Website). Since 1906, the players felt “attacked and defamed by the church” and thus decided they had enough and took matters into their own hands. It was not without trying that chaplain Dewald attempted to stop the meeting to create the new club, but he was not allowed access into the restaurant where the meeting took place. His presence did influence some of the forty men to back down, so there were only eighteen “true Borussian” who took part in the foundation of BVB (BVB Website). On December 19, 1909 Borussia Dortmund was founded with a name inspired by “Borussia Brewery” (BVB Website). Borussia is a Latin translation for Prussia (BVB Website).

Once the Second World War broke out both clubs were impacted but not to the same extent. The rise of the Third Reich in the 1930s impacted FC Bayern more significantly than Borussia Dortmund. FC Bayern Munich lost its prominence and crowd attendance. A significant number of key figures in the club’s history were Jewish, such as a leading player in 1911 Kurt Landauer, who contributed to their Jewish identity. “Due to the club’s Jewish background, Bayern were discriminated” against (Gillmeister 2000, pg. 90). The club lost 56 members and “seven members were also murdered by the Nazis for racial, political, and religious reasons” (FCB Website). Similarly, Borussia Dortmund
were anti-Nazi. The president of Borussia Dortmund refused to join the Nazi party and was replaced. In addition, a few club members utilized the club’s offices to produce anti-Nazi pamphlets and were executed. This revealed that the club did not fall in line with the views of the Nazi Party and actively fought against them.

The Second World War emphasizes a difference in the culmination of FC Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund. FCB has a deeper history in regard to German politics, race and identity. This is supported by the amount of literature available on FCB in comparison to the lack of literature on BVB’s history. One of the most significant aspects of FC Bayern Munich’s deep German history is the club’s Jewish identity.

Heiner Gillmeister claims in his article “The Tale of Little Franz and Big Franz: The Foundation of Bayern Munich FC” that “The club officials tends to lack a sense of tradition and a responsibility to acknowledge the past, and the men who once paved the way are forgotten completely” (2000, pg. 80). This was not the only article written with this sentiment about the forgotten beginning of who created Bayern Munich FC. The founding members of the club were, “Saxons, Hanseatics, Jews and Prussians” but none of them were Bavarian (Gillmeister 2000, pg. 86). The authors assumption that a “Jew” cannot be a “Bavarian” is an interesting sentiment and begs the question of what defines a “Bavarian.” The assumption only further emphasizes the importance of the Jewish identity in that they started a Bavarian club and were not considered Bavarian. This Jewish history is important to the history of FCB because a significant number of key figures in the club’s history were Jewish which contributes to their identity. Before the second world war FCB was “very much a Jewish Club…with a Jewish president and a Jewish manager” (Honigstein 2012).
In recent times the attitude towards the club’s Jewish roots have become more positive. The Ultras of Bayern Munich FC recognize Landauer as the “the father of the modern FC Bayern.” The ups and downs of the club’s Jewish history contribute greatly to how the club looks at themselves as well as their identity to the outside looking in. The history further emphasizes the ever-changing identities of the club as well as the identities that the sport reveals which may be revealed in the data and research.

1.4 The Golden Years

Germany as a whole needed a break and time to recover following the war. After nine years soccer fever came back to Germany in 1954. Both teams had periods of growth and success dubbed their “golden years.” The 60s were the golden years for FC Bayern Munich and the 90s were the golden years for Borussia Dortmund. Even though the golden years started for FCB in the 60s the success continued into the 70s.

Sepp Maier and Franz Beckenbauer led FC Bayern Munich during the 1960s. The 1960s were considered the golden years for Bayern Munich FC. Now a part of the Bundesliga in 1972, Bayern Munich FC won their third German championship “and announced record takings of 1.2 million Deutschmarks” (Website of FC Bayern Munich). Franz Beckenbauer left for the North American Soccer League in the United States in 1975 and shortly after in 1979 Uli Hoeneß, now known for his legal woes, became the general manager. Thirty years later Hoeneß became president of the club. In the 1990s there were various different managers which impacted the club’s “sporting fortunes” (Website of FC Bayern Munich). At this time with commercial media on the rise a “not always sports-related angle, towards football and its stars” (Website of FC Bayern Munich). As a result, the club received two nicknames, “‘dream team’ and ‘FC Hollywood.’” This press caused Bayern Munich FC’s popularity to significantly increase. The 2000s brought
many ups and downs on the field for the club, however, Bayern Munich FC maintained its popularity and fan base.

Borussia’s Dortmund had success in 1956 by winning the club’s first national title and a year later won its second. BVB joined the newly founded Bundesliga in 1962 and was one of the first sixteen clubs to play in this league. The 1990s are considered the “golden ages” for the club due to its success on the soccer field and as a result financial success. Furthermore, in October 2000 “Borussia Dortmund became the first and so far, the only publicly traded club on the German Stock market” (DW 2011). For a second time in 2005, the club’s financial situations declined, and poor financial management caused major debt and as a result bankruptcy. Bayern Munich loaned the Borussia Munich money in order to keep its payroll going. This financial situation coincided with poor results on the field for about five years. The club returned to prominence in 2010 with a new coach and new purpose. Borussia Dortmund in 2013 were the first German team “on the cover of the biggest football magazine in the world” which proves their popularity and continues rising success (Hesse). Presently, the club “is the second-best-supported sports team on the entire planet (Only the NFL’s Dallas Cowboys draw more people per home game)” (Hesse).

In the last ten years both FC Bayern and BVB Dortmund have been dominant in the Bundesliga. In eight out of the last ten years, FC Bayern has held the number one spot. BVB Borussia Dortmund has held either the first or second spot in the Bundesliga six out of the last ten years. These statistics alone represent the significance of both teams and their dominance of German soccer. Both of these soccer clubs are significant, because they are the two best teams in the Bundesliga right now tied for first place and both have the largest fan bases. Based on this year’s statistics both Borussia Dortmund and FC
Bayern have played 26 games, and both have 60 points in the Bundesliga. FC Bayern Munich was the most popular club in Germany in 2018 with 24.2 percent of respondents agreeing (Statista). Borussia Dortmund ranked second with 22.3 percent of participants who were interested. This is further supported by the average fan attendance of both teams in the 2017-18 season. Borussia Dortmund averaged the highest with an average attendance of 79,653 and FC Bayern with the second highest average attendance of 75,000 people. This data supports that these two teams have the largest fan bases in Germany. Lastly, FC Bayern has historically been caught up in other social and political identity questions in regard to the acceptance of their Jewish past.

Section Two: Crises and Identity

Introduction:

Through an analysis of the regional newspapers, I attempt to hash out and organize the news articles while also drawing conclusions from the news articles. I argue that soccer clubs represent political ethical values and reflect those values through their actions which in turn influences the reaction of the fans and reaffirms the fans’ own individual political ethical values. In these chapters I discuss the quotes and themes collected from the newspapers and their respective articles while further analyzing what the quotes and articles reveal comparatively about each team’s identity. I entered the search terms politics, fans, and culture simultaneously with each club’s name. I then followed up on all articles that did not conform to traditional sports reporting; in other words, I examined the articles where clubs or their fans made news beyond the direct context of the games themselves. This was accomplished by reading Süddeutsche Zeitung and Rheinische Post’s articles about FC Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund. By going through the articles, the goal is to deduce whether or not these soccer clubs reflect
regional and political identities and how these soccer clubs reflect regional and political identities through their political leanings. The media analysis is a search for identities of these soccer clubs. I am using political ethical values as a way to illustrate how soccer clubs from these two cities represent more than the result they get on the field (MW 2019). Additionally, the data found gives insight into how much these teams influence the political identities of their fans and political parties. It is a circle of the clubs’ identities representing the fans and the fans’ identities representing the clubs’ identities. As abstract and ambiguous as identity can be, it also is a great tool to use in interpreting the news sources and narrowing down a systematic way of sorting through the articles by looking for specific types of identities like political, cultural and business.

Two newspapers of different biases and beliefs were selected for the media analysis, one newspaper from a more center-left perspective, based out of Munich, Süddeutsche Zeitung and a regional, North Rhine-Westphalia, newspaper from a center-right perspective, Rheinische Post. Newspapers are the source of choice for data collection, because they examine issues and events in the context of their time and provides multiple viewpoints.

The analysis and comparative discussion of findings are organized based off of the crises that illustrate two important themes and go into further detail discussing the subset of the themes. The themes pertaining to both cities and soccer clubs are discussed simultaneously. Two major themes arose in my analysis. The first, is the tension between fan desire for a soccer club that prioritizes them and the realities of global soccer, which is big business. The second theme is, the political identity of the fans and how the teams attempt to influence that. Throughout the research and data collection process, one major identity arose, political identity. Political identity is defined as association with a political
party and political ideology. There are various types of political identities. Three different political ideologies and political ethical values were revealed. These political ideologies are associated with three different German political parties, Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), association with the far right and the association the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU). These identifiers are used as references to analyze the political ethical values that FC Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund reflect. In addition to the possibilities of political identities, the news sources elicited three different crises that challenged the political ethical values of FC Bayern Munich. Borussia Dortmund is viewed as a control during this research, because the newspaper reports did not reveal any explicit political values. The crises include international identity, mass marketing and far right extremism. This section will be split up based on the discussion of these three crises.
Chapter Two: International Identity of these Teams

Becoming involved globally can have a positive effect for soccer clubs and evoke a positive view of globalization and creating relationships internationally through friendly scrimmages and exhibitions. Soccer clubs traveling internationally can spur negative reactions from their fans as well. Bayern Munich received a negative reaction in their attempt to create international relationships. A *Süddeutsche Zeitung* article reported about Bayern Munich’s training camp in Qatar which included a controversial stop in Saudi Arabia for a “friendly match against the club Al-Hilal” (2015). This brought a lot of criticism from the fans and German politicians about the team stopping in a location “repeatedly criticized [for] human rights violations” (2015). This match against the Saudi Arabian team was apparently lucrative for both teams thanks to a donation from Volkswagen. The CEO of FC Bayern Munich did send out a statement clarifying the beliefs of the soccer club and “the admission of a mistake” (2015). Even though FC Bayern Munich sent out an apology and admitted their mistake does not absolve the soccer club from creating a value of profit over morals.

Due to the support from German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her friendly relationship with FCB’s president Uli Hoeneß FC Bayern may lean towards Christian democratic values. The CDU asserts that, “Human rights are an expression of a man’s inviolable dignity – universal, indivisible and inalienable” and believe that “human rights permeate all areas of politics” (CDU Website). Fans expect their teams to reflect their political ethical values and the trip to Saudi Arabia in the eyes of the fans did no illustrate
those values. This is supported by the expressed disappointment on twitter. One user tweeted, “After reactions from politics, has #FCBayern not understood that SaudiArabian is not a free state? #katar #FCB” (Schmidt 2015). This sentiment is further echoed by another twitter user who emphasizes the amount of disapproval of the fans by stating, “rarely has there been as much discussion material in my [timeline] at there #katar is today regarding/#SaudiArabien! #FCBayern” (Kelani 2015). An additional tweet, added another dimension to perceived political identity echoing Christian democratic values of FC Bayern by stating, “Ahem…Does that surprise anyone?[link to Süddeutsche Zeitung article} #fcbayern #kommerz #katar #riad #saudiarabien #menschenrechte (human rights)” (Rensch 2015). Saudi Arabia is known for repeatedly violating human rights and more specifically the rights of women in addition to the absence of religious freedom (Human Rights Watch 2018). The team made the trip to Qatar and Saudi Arabia because it was good business, which is supported by the donation from Volkswagen but from the fans’ perspective this trip was politically insensitive. The President of FCB played out his values by looking at the business interest of the club while the fans question the club’s view on human rights and the historical history of the team which is confronting dictatorship. Whether or not the fans choose to vote for a political party, they are displaying values that are more associated with social liberalism. This clash between the fans and the club represent the two themes in that the fans did not feel as if they were prioritized in addition to emphasizing the reality that soccer is continuing to globalize and continuing to grow into becoming a big business. Furthermore, this crisis supports my assertion that soccer is more than a game and elicits political ethical values in that the fans were not concerned about the game or the result, but they were more concerned about how insensitive the trip was and how it reflected on them and the team.
On the other hand, Borussia Dortmund’s international interactions have a positive tone in contrast to FC Bayern’s. Rheinische Post reported on Borussia Dortmund’s desired relationship with China and vice versa. One article discussed how Borussia Dortmund wanted to take one of their most popular players over there along with the team. A second article included how China’s soccer team “was striving for success” and that the president of China wanted to improve the soccer conditions in his country and how both teams were trying to profit (Peters 2017). The article further discussed that other teams in addition to BVB were putting roots in the soccer industry in China. There was an additional article regarding support for Borussia Dortmund in Tel-Aviv and a “Israelische Borussia” exists, which is a BVB-Fan club (2017).

Borussia Dortmund and FC Bayern Munich’s international relations can appear to be negative. FC Bayern Munich’s game in Saudi Arabia gave the impression that they supported Saudi Arabia’s political views and the violations of human and civil rights in that country. This opposes CDU opinions about human rights, which is resistance to team fraternizing with the Saudi leagues and respect for human rights and social justice. It implies that the fans are opposed to connections with countries that do not align with their values of human rights. The same can be said for Borussia Dortmund’s relationship with China, however, the articles have a more positive tone. In addition, Borussia Dortmund was not the only team expanding their markets to China. The fact that multiple clubs were bringing their team markets over to China emphasizes that they do not seem to have an issue with the harsh conditions of China’s laws and lack of freedoms.

Furthermore, there was not much discussion on social media about BVB’s relationship with China and desire to do business with the Chinese. The lack of response to Borussia’s international dealings in China further emphasizes the stronger political
identity based off of the values of the Christian democratic values reflected through FC Bayern and weaker political association of BVB. The fans’ personal reactions illustrate a stronger tie to the club and the political identity the club portrays. Borussia Dortmund has a positive following in Israel. People gather in order to support and watch the team which is an additional positive tone to international associations. In comparison to FC Bayern Munich, Borussia Dortmund’s international interactions did not reveal as strong of a connection to a political opinion or outburst by the fans. This reinforces the connection to FC Bayern Munich even more clearly when we see it not present in Borussia Dortmund.

Both clubs’ international presence is not limited to the Middle East and Asia. Borussia Dortmund and Bayern Munich both have a presence in the United States. There were a few articles that referenced the president of the United States, Donald Trump. In Süddeutsche Zeitung the controversial president of FC Bayern Munich, Uli Hoeneß did not miss the opportunity to make a joke referencing Donald Trump in the context of an issue revolving around the building of a new soccer stadium. Hoeneß joked by stating that, “Maybe the new U.S. president and real estate entrepreneur will build a new stadium for the club” (Rivva 2016). On the other hand, Rheinische Post, reported on a tweet from the Borussia Dortmund soccer team in response to Donald Trump’s “plans of constructing a wall on the Mexican Border” (2017). The tweet read, “The only wall we believe in” accompanied by a picture of “the south stand of the Signal Iduna Park, the proverbial “yellow wall” of the Dortmund stadium” (2017). Borussia Dortmund took a stance on their views about Trump with that tweet which in turn reveals a portion of where the teams stands politically when referencing the United States in terms of supporting immigration. Additionally, this reinforces how the soccer club speaks out generically against extremism when it comes to German politics. This individual tweet
had about 45,000 retweets and about 60,000 likes in addition to about 800 comments. The comments were from all over the globe but the responses from specifically German BVB supporters was mixed. Most reflected the sentiment of this tweet, “Real Love!!!!! I love my Borussia!!!! Light up my star Borussia!” (Baesel 2017).

There was a positive reaction to BVB’s tweet against the wall Trump wants to build, however, there were some fans who were unhappy that BVB made a political statement and used politics to gain attention for the club. “You are seriously using this politically disgusting issue to draw attention to BVB?! #fail” (Orange 2017). There were about two tweets for every twenty that claimed that BVB should stick to soccer and stay out of politics. This in turn supports that some fans do not support BVB for establishing a little political identity by supporting immigration and would rather the club stick to playing and focusing on the game. Furthermore, FC Bayern’s interaction with the United States was more superficial than Borussia Dortmund speaking out against the wall on the Mexican Border and revealed their stance and opinion towards Donald Trump’s policies. The tweet ultimately reflects, Borussia Dortmund’s potential view on immigration and their support towards it.

Overall, the reaction of the fans to Bayern Munich’s international endeavors supports my assertion that soccer is more than a game and elicits political identities based off of the values of the political ethical values of Christian democracy. Borussia Dortmund did not elicit as much as a reaction to their international dealings with China and proved to have a more positive experience with international relationships. Additionally, it supports one of the main two themes in that the Saudi Arabia incident gave insight into tension between the fans and the club while highlighting the business
dealings of Bayern Munich and the reality that soccer is now more than just a game and turning into a big business.
Chapter Three: Mass Marketing and Commerce

In present day, it is evident that sports teams represent a brand. There are people all over that wear the New York Yankees logo on a baseball hat but may not know that it is a baseball team. That being said, sports clubs and specific to Germany soccer clubs are becoming businesses in addition to a soccer team.

FC Bayern Munich is one of the most lucrative teams in relation to expanding their brand and becoming a business. Based on their approach to business, FC Bayern runs the risk of not aligning with the economic views of social democracy. In the past, economically social democracy values have a more socialistic dimension in that the social market economy should be strengthened, and its output should be distributed fairly. However, more recently the values shifted, and social democracy has “styled themselves as fundamentally in favor of the capitalist market economy system” while simultaneously protecting workers rights (Knight 2017). Based on various articles in Süddeutsche Zeitung Bayern Munich displayed values that are more associated with both social democracy and Christian democracy since both support a more capitalistic society.

Süddeutsche Zeitung reported a lot about the financial status, sponsorship status, and marketing status of FC Bayern Munich. The leadership of FC Bayern Munich are often celebrating their revenues each year making the soccer club sound more like a business. “At the annual general meeting of FC Bayern there is no grunts, but out loud good mood. The club proudly presents its record turnover of 332.3 million euros” (Beckenkamp 2015). Another article reported that “the triple winner has set another sales
record in the past record season, breaking the 400-million-euro mark for the first time” (SZ 2013). Additionally, “The insurer Allianz takes over for about 110 million euros more than eight percent of the shares in Bayern” (Fromme 2014). FC Bayern Munich is looking to expand its brand as much as possible, “Bayern are the first German club with its own TV station” (SZ 2017). The soccer club expanded its brand internationally to Shanghai following their office in New York because “for sponsors of the club the internationality is important” (Busse & Giesen 2017).

On the contrary, fans are not supportive of FC Bayern’s desire for market expansion. Süddeutsche Zeitung reported on a fan protest because the fans feel like consumers and thus feel like they then should have the right and opportunity to complain like customers (Schmieder 2010). This same article discusses the soccer club’s transition “no longer seeing themselves as clubs, but as modern companies” (Schmieder 2010). The fans are not able to access a “complaint hotline” or “surveys” so they protest as a result against the club when they disagree but feel as if they should have other outlets to place complaints (Schmieder 2010). Referencing google trends, there was a spike in google searches in Germany for FC Bayern München in May of 2010, which can be explained by the reaction of the fans towards the club. The articles were written during this time period reinforcing the sudden rise in interest of the soccer club. As a result, the transition from club to business commodifies the fans. A member of the German Football association also criticized the economic dominance of FC Bayern Munich and believes they need to be more careful when selecting their sponsorships (Busse 2018). FC Bayern Munich’s capitalistic approach and dominance of the German soccer markets reflects the values of Christian democracy in regard to doing business. The focus on big business upset the fans, because they are not treated as fans anymore. The club has embraced a
more bottom-line approach to success, while the fans embody more traditional left-wing values that are critical of such consumerist principles.

In comparison, *Rheinische Post* reported twice about Borussia Dortmund’s turnover for the year and did not report on fans disgruntles about treatment as consumers. Once again, the absence of explicit politically ethical values for Borussia Dortmund reinforces FC Bayern Munich’s political connection.

Ultimately, the fans’ reactions to Bayern Munich’s expansion into big business further supports my assertion that soccer is more than just the game and represents the political identities of the fans and the clubs. Based on the articles, Bayern Munich is more active in looking to globalize their brand and become a big business in comparison to Borussia Dortmund. Furthermore, the mass marketing issues emphasizes the tension between the fans and the club while highlighting Bayern’s quest for expanding their brand and business. This in turn emphasizes one of the two major themes in this paper, which is a fan desire for their club to prioritize them and the realities of soccer turning into big business.
Chapter Four: Extremism and Ultra Fans

In soccer and sports in general, the team’s identity is not just shaped on how well they perform or by the individual players’ personalities and off field antics. The perception of the fans and supporters shapes the identity of the team as well. The opposite can be true also. The way the team is viewed may reflect how outsiders view the team’s fans. It is a reciprocal relationship in the sports world. The three sub-topics included in the identities of the fans includes, ultra-fans and violence, topics regarding racism and homophobia, and fan celebration. Both Süddeutsche Zeitung and Rheinische Post wrote about the above-mentioned fan themes with similar amount of coverage for each identity section. The fans are just as vocal on social media as they are in the stadium.

The Ultras are typically left-wing fans and more recently the kind of spirit of the club comes out of the history which confirms that these Ultras tend to be left-wing. This is supported by the battles these Ultras organize against right-wing fans of other teams or even their own team. Ultras are a type of soccer fan renowned for fanatical support. The largest Ultras fan group for FC Bayern is called the Schikeria München. Overall, the Bayern Munich Ultras represent strong-left wing political ethical values. This political leaning comes from Bayern’s deep-rooted history. As the club grew internationally, it grew through the “ideas and energy of former youth player and FC Bayern President Kurt Landauer” (Redahl 2019). Landauer was born into a Jewish family and is “today known as the founding fathers of Bayern’s youth policy” (Redahl 2019). In honor and memory of Landauer, “many sections of Bayern’s fans maintain a strict stance against homophobia and racism” which in turn aligns with social democratic values which supports gay rights and the legalization of gay marriage (Redahl 2019)(Reuters 2017).
There is evidence for this fight against racism and homophobia on twitter, which is illustrated from a screenshot below.

The above picture illustrates the fans’ fight against racism by using this globalized team and their stadium as a platform to fight inequality and social issues. Furthermore, there is another tweet fighting sexism which is posted from a screenshot below.
Both of these tweets emphasize that these fans attend the soccer games for more reasons than just supporting their team and the result, but to fight against racism, homophobia, and other current social issues.

Multiple articles discussed the previously mentioned trip that the soccer team took to Saudi Arabia. In connection to this trip, a week after the team returned, FC Bayern opened a “special exhibition ‘Kicker, fighters and legends – Jews in German football and FC Bayern Munich” (Warmbrunn 2015). This exhibition illustrates and commemorates the “former members of the club who were victims of the National Socialists” (Warmbrunn 2015). This historical identity is challenged by the team’s scrimmage in Saudi Arabia where Jews are not allowed into the stadium. The fans illustrated their opposing view to the scrimmage in Saudi Arabia and support of their Jewish history at the next game in Bayern’s stadium by holding a “large banner in the air, on which the image of Kurt Landauer the former Jewish President of FC Bayern, was seen” (Emonts 2016).
This exhibition was further challenged when multiple articles in *Süddeutsche Zeitung* asserted the overall theme by quoting philosopher Marwart Herzog that Bayern “was more fascist than many other football clubs during the Nazi Era” (Fürst 2016). This is in response to the portrayal of club’s history during the Nazi Period in their museum. Herzog “evaluated previously unknown original minutes of member meetings of Bavaria” and concluded that the club adapted to the Nazi regime (Fürst 2016). The fans believed the exhibition would not have been properly made without them and calling Bavarian President Hopfner “an impulse generator” (Emonts 2016). The author of the article expressed the controversy revolving around FC Bayern’s Nazi past. “Bayern is considered a club that subordinated itself to the Nazi regime between 1933 and 1945, but not as complacent as other clubs did, but rather the opposite” (Fürst 2016). However, a *Spiegel* article came out challenging the sentiment that Bayern opposed the Nazis and that “FCB was not as good as they said” (Fürst 2016).

The fans are against the exhibit and began creating their own historical identity apart from the way the soccer club does while trying to hold FC Bayern Munich accountable for the way the history is portrayed. The fans are creating their own history by demonstrating with signs in the stands in addition to forming groups to go and visit former concentration camp sites for remembrance. This is emphasized by a tweet that included a picture of Bayern Ultras holding up banners that say “Werner Sigmund Hecht” as a tribute to Werner Sigmund Hecht, a former player, who died in Auschwitz in 1942 (Lovell 2018). The split between fans and their historical beliefs does not reveal an historical identity regarding the Nazi Era. FC Bayern Munich is resistant to the far-right fans in hopes of reflecting the values of social democracy, but it can be argued that they are doing this to appear more marketable for business reasons.
The history of the Dortmund Ultras does not politically align with FC Bayern’s Ultras. There was a time when extreme right-wing ideologies were considered normal for BVB Ultras. “In the 1980s and 1990s, the so-called Borussenfront became one of Germany's most notorious hooligan groups due to their links to the far-right” (Ford 2018). Since the 1990s, a left-wing Ultras movement has gradually forced out right-wing Ultras “at the start of the millennium and the work of state-financed Fan Projects (including the Fanprojekt Dortmund)” (Ford 2018). Eradicating the right-wing extremist has proven to be a significant challenge. In 2013 supporter liaison officers of the fan project were physically assaulted and received death threats (Ford 2018).

Borussia Dortmund soccer club explicitly aligned themselves against fascist ideologies when the Alternative for Germany (AfD) political party had success in the 2017 Bundestag election. BVB took this “as an opportunity to express its opposition to the right-wing populist” by releasing a video titled, “Football and Nazis do not fit together” (RP 2017). There has been large support for the anti-Nazi BVB Ultras on twitter. In response to a photo posted on twitter of BVB Ultras holding a banner that says, “Remove Nazis” and “United Against Racism” One tweet supported these banners by stating, “Unfortunately, there are far too many Racists in the BVB fan camp. Northside etc. I hope that BVB consistently issues stadium bans. There are many Ultras that support the Club, the BVB is not dependent on the Brown Brood Racism must be combated on a daily basis” (schwatzgelbde 2019)(senseless_money 2019).

These tweets highlighting the continued presence of racist people in the BVB fan camp reveals the bigger picture that even though a fair amount of soccer fans for both teams are trying to reconcile and fight against extremists. However, there are still groups
of right-wing ultras that continue to identify with fascism creating a battle of political ethical values for the soccer clubs based on reputation from their fans.

Although I only found a few articles in both newspapers, the fan identity regarding racism and homophobia appeared in both news sources regarding the two soccer team’s fan bases. Süddeutsche Zeitung’s articles were focused around homophobia issues while Rheinische Post’s articles were focused around the fan’s “showing signs against racism” (RP 2018). Gay and Lesbian FC Bayern Fan clubs exist; however, these fans have experienced insults and “occasional abuse inside the stadium” (SZ 2009). This fan club called, “Queerpass Bayern” are politically active in and out of the stadium. On a larger scale there is intolerance for homophobia, which comes from the European Football Association who had FC Bayern fine four youth fans who held a homophobic banner in their stadium. In addition, the club was punished by losing the opportunity to sell hundreds of tickets. FC Bayern was punished as well, because they seemingly allowed the banner to be brought into the stadium. Rather than feeling remorse about the illustration of homophobia, FC Bayern leadership was more concerned about the loss of revenue in addition to mocking about how to catch those with hurtful banners stating, “‘What should we do? Should we undress 50,000 people at the entrance checks except for their underpants?’” (Zips 2014). Teams are pushing against right-wing fans to give a more “family-friendly,” and more marketable image. The identity of acceptance within the fan culture of FC Bayern is mixed. Based on the Gay and Lesbian fan club it seems as if they support Bayern no matter what and use the soccer team as a platform to preach diversity and acceptance.

Borussia Dortmud’s article regarding racism has a positive spin as opposed to the negativity brought from the homophobic banners in Munich. In response to “events in
Chemnitz and Köthen” where “right-wing groups demonstrated on streets” and shouted “right-wing slogans” Borussia Dortmund fans and soccer club came together to take a stand against racism. “The slogan ‘Borussia-connects – together against racism adorned[ed] the chest of Dortmund players” and the “BVB fan department campaigned against racism” (RP 2018). The solidarity between the fans and the club reinforce the relationship between the two and the influence each has on each other. The comradery illustrates a sense of belonging and another way for fans to speak out against issues on a larger scale. The soccer stadium and being a part of the fandom allows for Borussia Dortmund fans to identify with each other on a common agreement and fight against racism.

Borussia Dortmund is actively fighting against right-wing Ultras strictly to reflect the political ethical values of their fans and support their accepting fans. On the other hand, based on FCB’s response to the homophobic banners brought in, they holding true to center-right political ethical values by illustrating more concern over losing revenue as opposed to sympathizing with their fans. This in turn reinforces the theme pertaining to the tension between the fans and the club and how the fans want the club to prioritize them and push back against the realities that soccer is turning into big business.
Chapter Five: Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

On the basis of the findings, I conclude that there is one main identity that is revealed through FC Bayern Munich but not as explicitly through BVB Borussia Dortmund. Borussia Dortmund could not be labeled based on the political ethical values, because it did not explicitly align or reflect the values of any of them. On the other hand, FC Bayern Munich reflected the values of Christian democracy in that FC Bayern prioritized big business over social issues. This is illustrated through the different crises FC Bayern Munich contended with and how the soccer club attempted to fall back on the values of the center-right. Not finding analogous reports and political alignment for Borussia Dortmund reinforces the connection to the FC Bayern Munich soccer team even more clearly, because we are able to see it is not present in Borussia Dortmund. Borussia Dortmund is perceived as a control during the analysis.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that it is clear how the soccer teams reflect political ideas and not national identity. This is reinforced by FC Bayern Munich’s reflection of Christian democratic values and how FC Bayern Munich handled the different crises presented. More specifically, the international crises with Saudi Arabia revealed that the soccer club prioritizes business over social issues which in turn revealed their association with Christian democracy. Each crisis reinforced the idea that FC Bayern Munich reflects the values of the center-right and because of that the fans reacted negatively because the fans reflect the social democratic values. The importance of this is
that the soccer clubs represent another political platform for political ethical values in addition to the citizens of the respective cities. This platform offers another space to speak out against political ethical values and issues while simultaneously showing support for the city and as well as identifying as being from Munich and Dortmund as opposed to being from Germany.

5.2 Conclusion

Sports are no longer just a spectator activity and form of entertainment. Sports transitioned to a platform and a culture housing values like political ethical values and in turn potential identities. The way people view sports organizations and how those organizations represent identities have changed significantly. With the significant increase in media and access to live news, identities and values are further emphasized through sports and for the purpose of this paper soccer. The soccer clubs Borussia Dortmund and FC Bayern Munich have their own identities and relationships with each other that have evolved through each meeting of teams with their rivalry Der Klassiker. Along with their mutual history, individually these clubs’ have forged their own identities apart from the results of their matches. Their differing identities were further revealed through local newspapers and media. This use of media is the future for research and finding trends and identities.

Soccer is used as a platform for political values in order to emphasize their identities which was revealed through the newspaper articles. Soccer and Germany have had a connection for a long time and this connection allowed Germans to divide and reunite again while feeling comfortable to express pride for their country. On a smaller scale, soccer in Munich and Dortmund provide a way for fans and the athletes to establish an identity and connect with others on a more personal level. Germans have always
seemed to have this relationship with soccer and this relationship will continued to be fueled by the establishment of more and more political ethical values and identities that people are able to connect with or even speak out against. If it were not for the newspaper articles it would be hard to identify what political leanings and what international connections these two clubs reflected. The newspapers not only revealed political ethical values but made them more concrete by expressing the news stories apart from the scores. Soccer is a mechanism for a political tool and can be used to influence and represent a population. It is likely that there will be more research on the impact of soccer on German identity and many other countries. As social media and media continues to grow there will be even more opportunity to for research.
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