



FREE

Football Research in
an Enlarged Europe

NEWSLETTER

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Public spheres & apolitical spaces

There are numerous definitions and interpretations of what makes up a public sphere. Each of them is inevitably based on normative expectations. The higher these expectations, especially in terms of informed political deliberation, the greater the disenchantment with the quality of the communication that actually takes place.

The public sphere – whether local, national or transnational – exists when the same topics are discussed at the same time with the same intensity among a significant part of the community in question. Such collective ‘attention cycles’ can only emerge with the help of mass media. Even at the age of increasing fragmentation of information and communication channels, they ensure the symbolic integration of the oft-quoted ‘imagined’ community by setting the agenda of what the community talks about or, in more academic terms, ‘exchanges meaning’ about.

To the great disappointment of political scientists and sociologists, the public is generally poorly informed about and only intermittently interested in political structures and issues. It prefers to exchange about perfectly secondary topics. When President Hollande meets President Obama on a state visit, the issues of political relevance (such as the looming Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) seem to be completely overshadowed by the gossip about the absence of a French ‘First Lady’ due to the President’s recent private turmoils.

This tendency has been nicely summed up by the philosopher Peter Sloterdijk under the term of ‘stress community’. According to him, the public sphere really only exists when the community undergoes strong collective excitement. In other words: when it becomes angry or humiliat-

ed, hysterical or euphoric about issues disseminated by the mass media (and generally taken up and amplified by the choir of the widely fragmented new communication channels).

The FREE project, one of whose basic assumptions is precisely that football is one of the most prolific providers of reasons to become collectively excited and hysterical, is trying to extend the concept of ‘public sphere’ to the seemingly apolitical space of European football. This attempt will necessarily raise the question whether are we about to stretch a concept to the point of making it meaningless or whether we are simply exploring new territories.

One way or another: in order to constitute a public ‘sphere’, one needs to identify a ‘space’ within which individuals understand themselves as participants of a debate. Whether this space is a political one, like the European Union, or a cultural one based on fluctuating perceptions, like the Europe of football, is almost secondary. What is essential in the first place is the recognition of the others as members of the same space and equal participants in the same debate.

The recently closed Europe-wide FREE surveys will no doubt provide some indications concerning the scope and depth of the public sphere of European football. In the meantime the topic will be discussed at the forthcoming conference in Ankara, the programme of which can be discovered in this newsletter.

Albrecht Sonntag
ESSCA School of Management



Picture courtesy of L'Equipe www.lequipe.fr

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The Anthropology of football

FREE conference: 'Kick it! The Anthropology of European Football', Vienna, 25-6 October 2013

On 25 and 26 October 2013 the FREE conference: 'Kick it! The Anthropology of European Football' took place at the University of Vienna's European Ethnology department. After two historical conferences in Besancon and Stuttgart, and one on women and football in Copenhagen, Vienna was host to the FREE project's anthropological conference. This was organised in close collaboration between the local organisers from the Universität Wien's department of European Ethnology, Alexandra Schwell and Nina Szogs, and their colleagues from the department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Michał Buchowski and Małgorzata Kowalska.

Background

The European Ethnology department is located in Vienna's imperial 1st District, directly between the State Opera, the Imperial Castle, and overlooks one of Austria's leading art museums, the Albertina. This provided an excellent site for the participants to present and discuss their papers, and to get an impression of the city and its rich history. The conference's central location made it easy for the participants to orient themselves and explore Vienna. The conference dinner venue, where speakers and participants could continue discussing, was within walking distance.

After the organisers published a call for papers on several forums, and both national and international mailing lists, they received more than 70 proposals from South Africa to Portugal and from Canada to Israel. Due to time and space constraints, it was only possible to accept 25 papers. The conference was organised in parallel sessions including three to four papers each. The organisers invited six renowned scholars to participate in a roundtable discussion, which focused on the relevance of ethnography and anthropological approaches for the study of football, drawing upon the contributors' own work and experiences. Two keynote speakers were also invited. The conference's innovative character attracted around 90 participants, including participants whose paper had not been accepted, but who nevertheless did not want to miss the event.

The Copenhagen conference 'Women's Football – Played, Watched, Talked About' in June 2013 inaugurated the second phase of the events cycle, which focuses on sociological

and anthropological research within the FREE project. The Vienna conference continued this specific approach to football.

Football is one of the best-loved and most widely shared expressions of popular culture, but why does football have a social role that stretches beyond the stadium? The conference sought to understand football's impact on everyday lives & identity dynamics in Europe. The aim was to analyse the football phenomenon as perceived and related to



class relations and subculture, & as a symbolic domain that produces social identities at various levels. The conference organisers specifically looked for research based on ethnographic fieldwork or from an anthropological perspective.

The key questions of the conference were:

- 🕒 How are supporter and fan identities created in the everyday practices of football fan culture?
How do globalisation, commercialisation, and migration exert an influence on football fan culture?
What impact do Europeanisation and the increasing mobility of both supporters and players have on the self-perception of football fans?
- 🕒 How is the 'Other' created among fans? How are exclusion and inclusion practices enacted, narrated and reproduced?
- 🕒 What fault lines and loyalties cross-cut European football, such as East vs West and North vs South, class, gender or politics?

Keynotes

On the first morning, before an introduction and welcome words by Dr Alexandra Schwell, a short film, produced by



Dr Borja García García, the leader of Work Package 8 from Loughborough University, introduced the FREE project to the audience.

The two keynote lectures served as introductory and thought provoking opportunities for all participants on both conference days.

Hani Zubida (from The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College, Israel) gave the introductory keynote lecture on the Friday. His lecture was an excellent illustration of the fact that football is much more than a game – it was entitled: ‘The Manifestations of Politics, Identity and Nationality in Football – The Israeli Case and then some more...’

Hani Zubida is not a football researcher, but rather a political scientist with a strong interest, even love, for the game. His keynote lecture focused on phenomena that are currently at the centre of attention for anthropologists and many political scientists, namely questions of belonging,

explored the interplay between structure and agency in globalisation processes by scrutinising the micro and macro forces at play in contemporary football consumption. By examining the psychological and social premises and motivations of football support and identifying the concepts and theories of fan studies, Sandvoss analysed to which degree these entities are facilitated through modernisation, consumerism, post-Fordism and globalisation. He introduced the audience to conceptual and methodological tools for the analysis of football fandom across different social and cultural settings that allow for an assessment of the impact of football fandom on identity and citizenship. More importantly, he traced the transformations of cultural practices *vis-à-vis* macro cultural, economic, technological, political and social change, thereby, triggered an inspiring discussion on the concept of identity and football fandom in a globalised world.



nationalities and ethnicities, the negotiation of symbols, and the drawing and redrawing of borders and boundaries, both symbolic and objective, through the looking glass of football. His rich and insightful keynote provided an excellent introduction to the conference. Its many examples illustrated vividly how football exerts a real impact in many different respects on people’s lives all around the world and can serve as a ‘site’ where social scientists can research the larger fields of identity and alterity, as well as affection and rejection.

On the second day (26 October), Cornel Sandvoss (University of Surrey) welcomed the participants with his keynote lecture: ‘Liquid Life and Solid Support: Football Fandom and Identity in the Age of Globalisation’. In his paper he discussed how watching and playing football – arguably the world’s most universal cultural practice – are linked to modernity and globalisation forces. Enthusiastically, he

Parallel Sessions

During the first day of the conference, the presentations began in thematically organised clusters. The panels took place in parallel sessions, due to the enthusiastic response to the call for papers and the high quality of proposals.

The panel *Embodiment* focused on the importance of material culture and objects in football fan culture and discussed their contribution to a fan’s bodily experience and emotions. Children’s emotional and seemingly natural and playful experience of supporting, cheering, and devotion were taken into account as part of the analysis of how they are socialised into becoming fans.

Football fans that support their local club are often as mobile as the players themselves. The *Migration* and *Mobility* panels asked the question: when and how fans wish to or have to be mobile, digitally or in person, and further discussed the theme’s issues and improvements. Mobility can be for the purposes of leisure and tourism, as well as for migration. This leads to the need for fans to participate in a new setting. By analysing the impact of migration on fan culture, the significance of an immigrant’s ‘fan identity’ in his or her everyday life was scrutinised. In addition, the presenters discussed the existence of such things as a ‘travelling fandom’ and to what extent it changes during the voyage. When fans travel and use modern communication methods to follow their teams to new places and join new networks, space is appropriated and new trans-local fan communities are formed.



There is a strong link between playing and watching football and power structures. The session *Participation and Resistance* and the session *Politics* focused, among other things, on the 'dark side of football'. The presentations challenged the issue that football, in the public imagination, is often perceived as a predominantly male, heterosexual and white sport. They focused on the ways new actors enter the field and reclaim it and on the obstacles which they have to overcome in the process. Furthermore, there have been vast controversies in football fan culture surrounding the increasing importance and influence of commercialisation in football. Consequently, the panels also focused on the question of whether it is legitimate to host a huge and highly costly football event when social spending and welfare are cut back in exchange.

One of the most popular research fields in football is the correlation of fan culture and politics, specifically in the Balkans during and after the conflicts in the region from the 1990s until today. Several proposals were submitted on this topic, which resulted in the organisation of a regional Balkans panel. The presenters discussed the political importance of football, which is particularly apparent in the Balkans, where football and nationalism are deeply entangled. They also analysed how differences and disagreements are performed and reproduced both on the pitch and in the stands.

Fans are part and parcel of the world's most prominent sport. No football match is complete without fans and their multiple ways of supporting the team, from simple clapping and chanting to complicated choreographies. In a globalised world of football, Ultra cultures spread to further places like Japan and fuse with local supporters' culture. Differences and disagreements are performed and reproduced both on the pitch and in the stands. A question arose: how does the category of being a football fanatic create a particular set of commitments and solidarities, and how do these intersect with the stated political commitments of the various fan groups' members? The papers presented in the panel on Supporters' Groups illustrated how this specific form of collective identity is created, as well as how inclusion and exclusion are practised and reinforced in encounters with other ultras groups.

In the Histories panel, the conference took a look back at historical anthropological research on football, and explored the various ways the past is narrated, perceived and instrumentalised. The conference discussed past football

research and events, and linked them to the present. Everything from Max Gluckman's pioneering role in what later became known as the Anthropology of Sport, and the manifold implications of the process of modernising Greek football in the 1980s to the negotiation of symbolic boundaries in Israel's first fan-owned football club, Hapoel Jerusalem was critically considered.

Roundtable discussion

The conference concluded with a roundtable discussion, chaired by FREE coordinator Albrecht Sonntag, where five renowned scholars (Dominik Antonowicz, Niko Besnier, Jochen Bonz, Michał Buchowski, Shlomit Guy) discussed anthropology's specific contribution to the study of sports and supporters and formulated prospects for future research. Drawing upon their own work and experiences, the contributors engaged in a vivid discussion with each other and the audience, debating the relevance of anthropological theories and ethnographic methodology. What is the specific of the anthropological gaze? What is it that we see that other disciplines fail to notice? Even though anthropology is not synonymous with ethnography, this happens to be its



most widely used method. Use of ethnographic methods is not limited to anthropologists, and additionally when used, these methods do not always yield the results and handling that would be expected by anthropologists. The discussion revolved around issues such as the general applicability of ethnographic methodology, limitations of the scope of ethnography, the pitfalls of immersion during fieldwork, and the question of representation.

Alexandra Schwell & Nina Szogs
Universität Wien



Interview with the CIES (International Centre for Sports Studies)

Raffaele Poli, Head of the CIES Observatory

At the forthcoming FREE conference in Ankara, the International Centre for Sports Studies, based in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, will contribute a keynote speech on the geography of the European space of football. A good opportunity to present this original and dynamic organization through an interview with its director, Raffaele Poli.

The CIES was created in 1995, the year of the Bosman ruling. How did it come into being and what were its aims in the beginning?

The International Centre for Sports Study was set up by the University of Neuchâtel, together with the town of Neuchâtel and FIFA to promote the academic research in the field of sport, not only football. Our areas of research until now are in the fields of law, economy and sociology. Moreover, since 2000, the CIES has developed educational programmes in sport management, also with an interdisciplinary approach. Every year, up to 30 students originating on average from 20 different countries attend the FIFA Master, which is run in collaboration with the University of Leicester (humanities), the Bocconi School in Milan (economics) and the University of Neuchâtel (law). The CIES also coordinates an international university network. This allows partner institutions located in 15 countries in all continents (except Oceania) to run sports management programs.

What role does the CIES Football Observatory have within the structure of your institute?

I set up the CIES Football Observatory in 2005 with another geographer, Loïc Ravenel. We have now a permanent staff of four researchers. We spend most of our time in undertaking applied research for football governing bodies such as FIFA, UEFA, the European Professional Football Leagues (EPFL), the European Club Association (ECA), etc. We have also regularly mandates outside the world of football (IOC, FIBA, IIHF, etc.). However, our main activities are still related to football.



To what extent do you think you deliver on your initial promise of interdisciplinary research on European football?

The CIES employs researchers from different disciplines (geography, law, sociology, history). They all promote research projects with different approaches. Moreover, the field where the CIES Football Observatory is specialized, the labor market of professional footballers, is in essence very interdisciplinary. We do not only focus on migration trends, but also on players' demography and market value from an economic perspective. We also develop research in the emerging area of sports analytics by studying the pitch performance of players and clubs.

How innovative do you think the FREE project innovative?

The simple fact that the FREE project brings together researchers from many countries and different disciplines is already innovative! I am sure that the dialogue between the researchers involved in the project will be a key output of the initiative. From this perspective, the FREE project will contribute to creation of a transnational field of researchers who will be in the best position to understand not only the history and the present of football, but also its future.

What is at the top of the CIES agenda for 2014/2015?

Both the CIES and the CIES Football Observatory are now well established among the academic institutions working on sport. This gives us greater responsibilities every year. We want to maintain a leading role for both education programmes and research. To do so, quality will be always at the top of our priorities. With regard to the CIES Football Observatory, the goal is to constantly improve and enlarge our database of players' career paths, which is for the time being restricted to Europe.

<http://www.cies.ch>

<http://www.football-observatory.com>



From Habermas to Fanblogs: Exploring the Public Sphere of European Football – Conference Programme

Thursday 24 April 2014

Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence Seminar

- James Dorsey (Nanyang Technological University / University of Würzburg)
The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer

Round table in Turkish

- Discussing Football: Public Sphere & Alternative Media*
Participants: Daghan Irak, Bagis Erten, Tanil Bora, Ilker Yilmaz, Ugur Karacullukcu, Salih Demirci (Noat Samisa)

Friday 25 April 2014

Introductory Lecture

- Albrecht Sonntag (ESSCA School of Management)
Public Spheres and Public Spaces – *Undue Concept Stretching or Exploring New Territories?*

Supporters' perception of their public sphere

- John McManus (University of Oxford)
The Unanticipated Cosmopolitanism of the European Football Fan
- Emir Guney (Kadir Has University)
Football Supporters Europe: From Local Fan Groups to a Pan-European Network
- Özgür Dirim Özkan (Virtua Research and Consultancy)
Who Cares About Bosnia in Brazil in 2014? Lack of Constructing a Collective Identity through Football in Bosnia

Solidarity and its limits

- Nazım Sinan Odabaşı (Istanbul Bilgi University) – *Can solidarity among football fans form a public sphere?*
- Daniel Ziesche (German Sport University)
'... And You're Destroying Our Game': RB Leipzig in Public Football Discourse
- Sébastien Louis (University of Luxembourg)
Mentalita Ultras: The Perspective of the Ultras Domination on European Football Fans

Keynote Lecture 1

- Arne Niemann and Alexander Brand (Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz)
ECJ rulings or Wayne Ronney's hair: Issues, non-issues and hidden issues in online football fan discourse

New Media, New Rules

- Okan Yılmaz (École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne)
Ekin Can Göksoy (Istanbul Bilgi Univ.) *New Media, New Supporters: an Example of Transnationalism on Twitter*

- Fabien Wille (University of Lille North of France) – *Sport & European Public Sphere, A New Media Responsibility*

Keynote Lecture 2

- Roger Besson (CIES Football Observatory, Neuchâtel)
The geography of the Europe of football

Closing Lecture, Day 1

- Özgehan Şenyuva (Middle East Technical University)
Ramon Llopis-Goig (University of Valencia)
How European is the Public Sphere of Football? Preliminary Findings from the FREE surveys

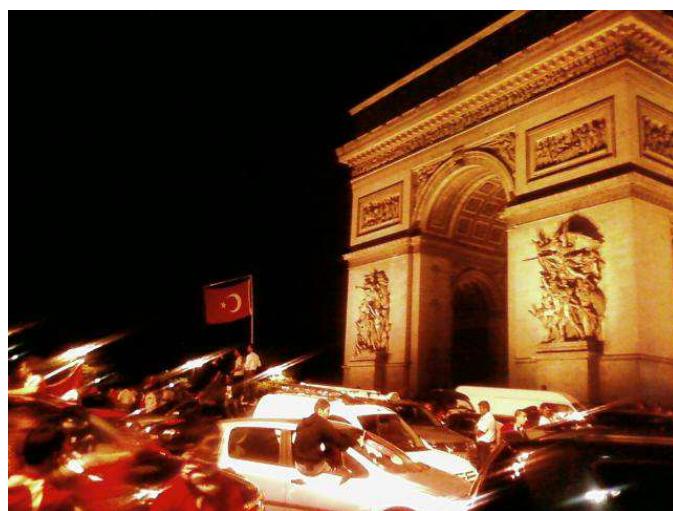
Saturday 26 April 2014

Politics in and around the stadium

- Timm Beichelt (European University Viadrina)
Linking Public and Political Spheres: The Field of Football Politics
- Ömer Turan (Istanbul Bilgi University)
Burak Özçetin (Akdeniz University)
Football Fans at Gezi: Counterpublic in the Making
- Bezen Balamir Coşkun (Zirve University) & Gülçin Balamir Coşkun (Kemerburgaz University) – *From the Stadium to the Streets: The Political Activism of Çarşı*

Gendered Spaces?

- Martine Prange (Leiden University)
Changing the Landscape of European Football: The Transformative Effect of Women's Football on Europe's Public Sphere



- 📍 Nathanja van den Heuvel (Leiden University)
*Heterotopia & Women's Football:
Public Space in BeneLeague Football Clubs*
- 📍 Gertrud Pfister, Svenja Mintert, Verena Lennis,
Marianne Brandt-Hansen (University of Copenhagen)
*The football stadium still a men's space?
Staging masculinity in the fan zone*

Economic Spaces?

- 📍 Bülent Anıl (Bahcesehir University)
The Economics of Space:
Are Football Stadia Commercial or Public Spaces?
- 📍 Chris Stone (Football Unites Racism Divides)
European Football and Everyday Consumption
- 📍 Mark Reeson: P5 in Action – I Modern Day Football a
Sustainable Sport?

Local Case Studies

- 📍 Sevecen Tunç (Boğaziçi University)
*Football, Space & the Social Construction of Istanbul
as a Modern City 1945-1960*

- 📍 Seweryn Dmowski (University of Warsaw)
*'We, the yobbas, will overthrow your government!':
Polish Football Stadiums as Spaces of Political
Expression 2011-2013*
 - 📍 Olga Chepurayeva (St. Petersburg State University)
*The Adventures of a Stadium in Wonderland.
A Case Study of the Project of a New Football Stadium in
St. Petersburg, Russia*
 - 📍 Yağmur Nuhurat (Sabancı University):
*Discourses of nostalgia in making spaces
of football in Istanbul*
- 'Our stadium, our space' – Fan Group Presentations**
- 📍 On Cebeci & Alsancak Stadium (Ankara & Izmir)
- Closing Lecture, Day 2**
- 📍 James Dorsey (Nanyang Technological University /
University of Würzburg): *Concluding Thoughts on the
Stadium as a Space of Political Expression*

Call for Papers – Whose Game is it?

Supporters and football governance Loughborough University, 24-25 October 2014

Loughborough University are hosting a conference to critically discuss the involvement of supporters in football governance. The programme will be balanced to appeal to policy makers, academics and supporters themselves, and will provide an excellent opportunity for networking and dialogue across these fields. We would welcome proposals for papers that address one or more of the following themes:

Models of club ownership: What does club ownership at football clubs look like across Europe? Specifically, which different forms of 'supporter ownership' can be found? What are the challenges?

Supporter action & networks: What do supporters do in relation to football governance? How and why do they get together, both in the physical and virtual spheres? Can fans go beyond traditional club rivalries and work together?

The future of football governance: What challenges are there for football governance and the supporter ownership movement? Is there a role for the EU or the European Model of Sport in the game's governance? Papers within this theme should have a policy dimension.

Methodological considerations: Given the dearth of research in the area, how should supporter involvement in football governance be researched?

We welcome paper proposals from both academics and practitioners and will value those that include a focus on one or more of the following:

- 📍 Supporters who belong to minority groups (be that racial minority, cultural minority, LGBT groups etc.)
 - 📍 Proposals that look beyond this level and at the wider football structures (for example governing bodies, international support networks)
 - 📍 Papers that include a focus on Eastern or Southern Europe, East-West or North-South football dialogues
- Please note that including a focus on the above is NOT a precondition to be accepted.

Send your proposal (max 1.5 page, font size no smaller than 12pts, 2.5 cm margin) by 31 March 2014 to the conference organisers, **Dr Borja Garcia** and **Dr Jo Welford** (B.Garcia-Garcia@lboro.ac.uk).

Paper proposals should include: Title, Name, affiliation and contact details of the author(s); Abstract, containing your research question, methodology and brief discussion of results (if applicable); Keywords; Conference thematic area to which you submit your paper

Papers will ONLY be accepted and allowed to be presented if a working paper is submitted to the conference organisers by 3 October 2014 at the latest. All working papers will be published online on the FREE project website and a selection of the best papers will be considered for publication in an edited volume of the Football in an Enlarged Europe book series published by Palgrave Macmillan or a special issue of the International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics.



News from the Network



- ➊ **Gertrud Pfister** was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Malmö during their traditional *årshögtiden*. Gertrud also published ‘Women, football and European integration. Aims and questions, methodological and theoretical approaches’ in *Annales Kinesiologiae* 4(1)
- ➋ Both **surveys** that the FREE team has been conducting (the Europe-wide representative survey conducted by phone by BVA, and the web-based survey for an attentive audience) are now closed.
- ➌ The Viennese team (**Nina Szogs, Alexandra Schwell**) have appeared in a number of media around the time of the Kick It! conference, notably on 19 & 29 November 2013 in the radio programme OE1, ORF, *Dimensionen - die Welt der Wissenschaft*. Also, *Uni:view Magazin* made a report on their work, accessible [here](#). Additionally, Nina gave an interview on her research to the ORF, which is [accessible here](#) and presented a paper on Süper Lig supporters in Vienna: local strategies and transnational ties of football fans abroad at the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF) in Tartu, Estonia
- ➍ **Gertrud Pfister, Verena Lenneis & Svenja Mintert** published ‘Female fans of men’s football – a case study in Denmark’ in a special issue on Scandinavian women’s football in a global world: Migration, management and mixed identity of *Soccer & Society*, v14 n6 (November 2013).
- ➎ **Albrecht Sonntag** and **Gertrud Pfister** were appointed as members of the Scientific Committee of the 8th World Congress on Science and Football (**WCSF2015**), which takes place on the 20-23 May 2015 in Copenhagen, Denmark.
- ➏ The Loughborough team (**Drs Borja García- García & Jo Welford**) will present their first interim result at this year’s Football Supporters Congress, organised yearly by Supporters Direct and the Football Supporters Federations, members of FREE’s civil society network who worked closely with the Loughborough team, facilitating enormously their fieldwork.

- ➐ **Ramon Llopis-Goig** from Valencia published two articles in 2013: ‘Racism, xenophobia and intolerance in Spanish football. Evolution and responses from the government and the civil society’ in *Soccer and Society* 14 (2) as well as ‘Teams identification and football culture in Spain: A sociological approach.’ *Revista Internacional de Ciencias del Deporte*, 9 (33)
- ➑ **Paul Dietschy** from the Université de Franche Comté published ‘Making football global? FIFA, Europe, and the non-European football world, 1912-74’ in the *Journal of Global History* 8(2) and ‘Du champion au poilu sportif. Représentations et expériences du sport de guerre’ in *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains* N°251. A conference by Paul was reviewed in the country’s first daily *Ouest France* on 10 November 2013 and Paul also spoke extensively to the French media on the occasion of the surprising French qualification to WC2014 in Brazil : on 19 November 2013, interviews with him appeared in seven newspapers Le Dauphiné Libéré, L’Est Républicain, Le Bien Public, Le Républicain Lorrain, L’Alsace, Le Progrès & Vosges Matin.
- ➒ **Albrecht Sonntag** was interviewed by radio station France Inter about France not qualifying for WC2014, so his words were not broadcast. Instead, an interview with him was published in *Le Monde* on 21 November 2013
- ➓ **David Ranc & Albrecht Sonntag** from ESSCA published an article on Sócrates & the Corinthians democracy in *Humanisme & Entreprise* : ‘La « démocratie corinthienne », un exemple d’organisation créative dans le football au temps de la dictature brésilienne’
- ➔ Most importantly, at the invitation of Sport&EU, **Drs Özgehan Senyuva, David Ranc, Borja García-García & Albrecht Sonntag** presented FREE preliminary findings to an audience of Brussels policymakers, on the premises of **Burson-Marsteller**. The topic was ‘How does football contribute to the integration of the European Citizens?’

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