



Feeling Political Through a Football Club: FC Schalke 04, 1904–2020

Julia Wambach

Bottrop, 21 December 2018: the last coal mine in Germany, *Prosper Haniel*, in the heart of the Ruhr valley, closed, bringing 200 years of coalmining to an end.¹ A number of public and private ceremonies farewelled the coal industry in Germany. The official ceremony saw the German president, the president of the European Commission, and the Federal Minister of North Rhine-Westphalia unite to witness the extraction of the last piece of coal at *Prosper Haniel*.² The night before, a mass held in Essen's cathedral brought Protestants and Catholics together to worship a statue of St Barbara, the saint of the miners, was brought from *Prosper Haniel's* seventh seam to Essen for the occasion.³ In addition to these traditional institutions, the state and the church, a somewhat unexpected group took part in the commemorations: the local Bundesliga football club Schalke 04 from Gelsenkirchen. The club portrayed itself as an institution that gave the inhabitants of the region the chance to honour

¹The article is based on Schalke 04's archives and uses as a source its membership magazine *Schalcker Kreisler* from 1966 and parts of Schalke's newspaper article collection. I would like to thank Schalke archivist Dr Christine Walther for access to the archives. For the earlier history of the club, I primarily used Stefan Goch and Norbert Silberbach's study *Zwischen Blau und Weiß liegt Grau*. It is the first and one of the few studies that exist on the involvement of German football teams with National Socialism.

²'Das Ende des Steinkohlebergbaus'.

³Rünker, 'Bewegender Gottesdienst'.

and mourn the end of coal mining. Two days before the last mine closed, FC Schalke 04 orchestrated a sophisticated show to send off the mining tradition that had left its mark on the region and the club. Before the match started, a miners' choir sang the *Steigerlied* (overman's song) in a stadium lit only by candles and fireworks in shape of the miner's symbols hammer and pick; a banner spanning over half of a stand showed a miner with a lorry. Two thousand miners from *Prosper Haniel* attended the ceremony and the game that followed. During the match, Schalke's eleven players wore jerseys that bore the name of one of the closed neighbouring mines, including *Prosper Haniel*. The jerseys were later auctioned by the club for *Schalke Hilft* (Schalke Helps), a private foundation started in 2008 to help alleviate the social effects of deindustrialization in the region.⁴

This chapter demonstrates how Schalke became an institution that made the inhabitants of the Ruhr region (with a population of more than five million, the biggest urban area in Germany) feel that they mattered, and that they had a role to play in the region's destiny, from the period of industrialization to the era of deindustrialization. Schalke enabled factory owners and proletarians, notable politicians and ultra-fans, high-paid football players, and unemployed miners to join forces for a common cause. This unity underpinned the emotional template the club provided to its players and spectators. It is hardly surprising that the mining tradition and nostalgia for it brought people together. The emotional farewell to the region's mining industry in 2018 appears to be part of a long tradition, one that was at the core of Schalke's identity for almost 120 years. However, this chapter argues that Schalke's marketing of collective and participatory emotions around the area's mining heritage happened both earlier and later than one might expect. The template emerged on a national level in the 1930s when the National Socialists incorporated and politicized the club in the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* (I). It lingered on in the post-war period because Social Democratic forces in Gelsenkirchen held on to the club as a means of uniting the city during early deindustrialization. The emotional template with the mining tradition at its centre then vanished in the 1970s when the club and the city unsuccessfully tried to position themselves as modern and future-oriented (II). This aspect of the template finally re-emerged in the mid-1990s (III). At this point, the club assumed the role over the marketing of emotions and fell back on the templates of the 1930s—minus the latter's *völkisch* connotations—positioning

⁴For the mission statement, see FC Schalke 04, 'Mission'.

itself as the paternalistic institution of the Ruhr valley. In doing so, it aimed to provide an emotional home and a site for participation to the inhabitants of a fractured post-industrial society, through the communal celebration of the area's mining roots.

Schalke differs in many ways from other clubs, especially because it has until now maintained its participatory nature. Unlike other clubs, Germany's second biggest football club proudly insists on its status as a non-profit (*eingetragener Verein*) beneficial to society.⁵ That makes it a perfect vehicle for the formation of a participatory emotional community based on mining heritage, as the magazine *Der Spiegel* noted in 2004, on the occasion of Schalke's 100th anniversary:

The games of the team have been and still are a universal outlet for emotion, fear, and sorrow. Those who, in the past, worked in the mines screamed themselves hoarse during the games of the blue and whites. Today, many of the former miners are unemployed but the sense of community prevails. Schalke welds together.⁶

This chapter explores the origins of this historical narrative, an emotional template that served to hold together an imagined emotional community in times of crisis.⁷

THE EMOTIONAL TEMPLATING OF SCHALKE'S *VOLKSGEMEINSCHAFT* DURING THE THIRD REICH

Few people would have heard of Gelsenkirchen, a city with 260,000 inhabitants in Germany's former industrial heartland, the northern Ruhr valley, were it not for its football club. Named after one of the city's boroughs, Schalke 04 was founded as *Westfalia Schalke* in 1904 by a number of teens, some of whom were apprentices at the local mine *Consolidation*. The club can thus claim strong ties to the city's mining

⁵In Germany, many sports clubs have non-profit status, but in the Bundesliga's first division, only Schalke 04, FSV Mainz 05, Union Berlin, and SC Freiburg's professional football teams have remained *eingetragener Verein* (e.V.). Other sports clubs, such as FC Bayern Munich, are e.V. as a whole but their professional football teams are classed as joint stock or limited companies.

⁶'100 Jahre Schalke 04'.

⁷For the concept, see Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*.

activity dating back to its very beginning.⁸ Up to this day, its players are called *Knappen* (pitmen). In fact, football was a bourgeois sport in its early days and only became more widespread during the First World War when it was included in military training.⁹ Prior to 1914, *Westfalia Schalke* was mainly composed of the sons of craftsmen and not of members of the proletariat, as has often been claimed.¹⁰ However, already in the 1920s, the club and its players had come to represent the industrial era and the processes that typically accompanied it: urbanization, migration, proletarianization, and patronage by industrialists. For instance, Schalke's Ernst Kuzorra and Fritz Szepan, the main pillars for the club's success from the mid-1920s on, were sons of East-Prussian immigrants who had come to the Ruhr valley to work in the mines.¹¹ Although a number of the players were themselves officially miners (twelve out of twenty players in the team of 1920–1924), it is questionable whether they actually worked the tough shifts underground in addition to their football training.¹² Ernst Kuzorra was famously recalled to have said that with the coal he broke, he could not have afforded a kettle to boil.¹³

However, the image of Schalke 04 as an underdog working-class club tied to the local mining community emerged early on. This image allegedly formed in opposition to the bourgeois official football association *Westdeutscher Spielverband* (WSV) which, before the First World War, initially refused to admit the club because of the juniority of its members. In 1930, after the club had become successful, the association banned fourteen players in the first of the many scandals involving Schalke 04. Although a common practice at the time, the association decided to charge the team for receiving regular 'salaries' of ten marks per game (when only five marks were permitted). Emotions ran high when, following the accusation, Willi Nier, Schalke's treasurer, drowned himself in one of the city's canals. At Nier's funeral, thousands of supporters lined the streets leading up to the stadium, where he was laid in state on the pitch. The

⁸ For a history of the club, see Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, Voss, Spiegel, and Seveineck, *100 Schalker Jahre*.

⁹ Eisenberg, *English Sports*, 178–93.

¹⁰ Goch, 'Fußball im Ruhrgebiet'.

¹¹ Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, 36–37.

¹² *Ibid.*, 46. The work at the mine involved numerous tasks above and below ground. It was often very technical work, beyond just the physical hewing of coal. See, for instance, 'Interview Willi Koslowski'.

¹³ Meingast, 'Auf einer Stufe'.

perceived injustice done to the worker's club by the WSV's verdict (one local newspaper called it a 'stab in the back') attracted more spectators than ever—70,000 people attended Schalke's first match after the ban in 1931 taking part in the collective enthusiasm for Schalke. Photos of the game show the stadium full to bursting point with supporters all around the pitch and even sitting on the goalposts.¹⁴

By the early 1930s, Schalke had become an institution in Gelsenkirchen. As a club affiliated with the working class, it was able to unite crowds of enthusiastic fans each week. Because of its sporting success, the average number of spectators rose from 5000 in the early 1920s to 15,000 in 1926. A year later, Schalke 04 laid the foundations for its first stadium, which would open as the *Kampfbahn Glückauf* (Good Luck Arena) in late summer, 1928, and could accommodate up to 34,000 fans.¹⁵ The name of the stadium recalled the club's mining heritage, an association that was already being criticized as disingenuous because of Schalke's financial means and the players' distance from the mining industry.¹⁶ The name was a nod to the miner's greeting *Glück Auf* and thus to Schalke's home mine *Consolidation*, which leased the grounds for the stadium and whose building department helped with the construction. The term (fighting track) takes up the idea of sports, and outdoor sports such as football in particular, as a means to physically educate and strengthen the citizens (specifically, men) of the Weimar Republic, after military conscription in Germany was abolished in the Treaty of Versailles. References to sports as a way to 'lift up the health of the people' were frequent in the 1920s and foreshadowed the National Socialist obsession with physical education, preparing a template the Nazis would return to later.¹⁷

By the late 1920s, the attraction of the club to the masses had caught the eye of Gelsenkirchen's administration, the first political institution to show an interest in the club. The city granted the club a low-priced loan for the new stadium and sent workers from its re-employment programme (initiated after the financial crises of the mid-1920s) to the construction site. This partnership between the club and a political body itself emerged in a time of crisis: in the unstable Weimar Republic, the industrial Ruhr valley was particularly hard hit by the economic situation; between 1922

¹⁴ Grüne, *Glaube*, 54–56.

¹⁵ Goch, 'Stadt, Fußball und Stadion', 35–36.

¹⁶ Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, 63.

¹⁷ Oswald, *Fußball-Volksgemeinschaft*, 52–55.

and 1928, 25 per cent of mining jobs were lost. Around the same time, Schalke 04's matches were attracting more and more spectators.¹⁸ The city understood the socio-political potential the club, as a successful underdog with a working-class image, held as a home and emotional support to the unemployed and destitute. In 1928 when the stadium opened, Gelsenkirchen's mayor, Carl von Wedelstedt, underlined the political importance of the new Schalke stadium for the city: 'The field is a gift that the club gave to itself ... but in reality ... to the whole city of Gelsenkirchen.'¹⁹ The club and its stadium thus became a 'home port', a source of pride for Gelsenkirchener.²⁰

In subsequent years, this potential developed into an emotional template. More than merely an image, the template involved an active appropriation of that image in ritualized practices, responsibilities, and emotions. It was composed of feelings such as comradeship and community and values like hard work and athletic excellence. The adoption on a national scale of Schalke 04's template as a workers' club emerged under National Socialism. The Nazi state, then, was the second political institution to appropriate the emotional template Schalke provided to promote and bolster its own ideology. The years between 1934 and 1942 (i.e. for most of National Socialist rule) were the club's most successful: every single year, Schalke 04 was a finalist in either the Cup (*Pokal*) or the League's championship and won the League six times and the Cup once. The club from Germany's biggest coal mining district was too attractive for the National Socialist propaganda machine to ignore. It provided a template which matched the Nazi vision of a closely tied community that valued hard work, teamwork, comradeship, and family, as well as athleticism in preparation for the upcoming war.²¹ The collective enthusiasm for this club that everyone could join and its alleged apolitical nature was thus politicized for the new regime's aims.

This was true in particular for the players and brothers-in-law Ernst Kuzorra and Fritz Szepan, who developed the famous *Schalcker Kreisell* tactic, a sophisticated short passing game that relied on the coordinated effort of a group of people who knew each other very well. The sports

¹⁸ Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, 47–48.

¹⁹ Quoted in Goch, 'Stadt, Fußball und Stadion', 37–38.

²⁰ Krein, *Fußballknappen*, 41.

²¹ See Oswald, *Fußball-Volksgemeinschaft*; Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, 131.

magazine *Der Kicker* reflected in the *Schalken Kreisler* the dictum ‘common public interest precedes self-interest’ and therefore considered the *Kreisler* an exemplar for Nazi society.²² Kuzorra and Szepan played on the Third Reich’s national team, yet at the same time, they apparently remained down-to-earth locals and were part of Gelsenkirchen’s daily life. Kuzorra opened a tobacco shop in 1927 and in 1934 Gelsenkirchen created a job in the city’s youth department for Szepan. Szepan’s job was announced thus: ‘As a football player on the German national team, Szepan has been very successful ... and therefore looked after the interests of the Third Reich and of the city of Gelsenkirchen.’²³

After 1933, Kuzorra and Szepan publicly endorsed National Socialism, calling for people to vote for Adolf Hitler in the coming ‘elections’, promoted the NS charity *Winterhilfswerk* (Winter Relief), and toured Germany in a *KdF-Wagen* to advertise the Nazi leisure organization *Kraft durch Freude* (Strength through Joy).²⁴ Ernst Kuzorra reiterated Nazi ideology about the German worker in the famous *Das Buch vom Deutschen Fußballmeister* (‘Book of the German football champion’), which was dedicated to the Schalke team:

Sometimes, people have asked why of all teams a workers’ team in the industrial neighbourhood of Schalke could win the highest trophies [*Ruhmestitel*] at the German football awards. ... Worker, I think, is a proud word. Especially in this region and, thank God, all over Germany these days! ... Each German who does his duty, be it on the highest or the lowest level, is in this new, broad, true sense a ‘worker’.²⁵

Nazi officials attempted to leverage the collective enthusiasm for Schalke in aid of the regime’s political goals. Strength through Joy, known for arranging subsidized leisure activities and holidays for Germans, also organized trips to Schalke’s away games so that more people could attend and experience the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* through a victorious match.²⁶

²² Oswald, *Fußball-Volksgemeinschaft*, 84.

²³ Quoted in Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, 167. Szepan quit his position with the municipal administration in 1937.

²⁴ Oswald, *Fußball-Volksgemeinschaft*, 173–75; Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, 128–43.

²⁵ Quoted in Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, 142. The interview was probably fictitious.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 79.

Schalke was also portrayed in the 1942 wartime movie *Das große Spiel* (The Big Game). In this feel-good film, a fictional team called Gloria 03 from the mining town of Wupperbrück—immediately recognizable as Schalke 04—wins the German championship in an emotionally charged battle for victory. The film's central protagonist, Werner Fehling, was in his professional life a pit foreman from Silesia, depicting the template of a hard-working miner and football player that would become so dear to the club. Despite the absence of an obvious display of Nazi iconography, the apolitical values depicted in the film went hand in hand with the political goals of Nazi ideology and morality, such as the comradeship of the *Volksgemeinschaft* community and a fierce struggle for success which turns an impending defeat into victory. This message was all the more important in 1942 when Germany was suffering its first defeats in the Second World War. The filmmaker Robert Adolf Stemmle used the original footage of the 1941 championship final between Schalke and Rapid Wien at the Berlin Olympic Stadium. The film premiered in Gelsenkirchen's *Apollo* movie theatre with Schalke officials and players present and concluded with a reception with Nazi mayor Carl Engelbert Böhmer. In fact, all over Germany people were watching the movie: it was a box-office hit and brought in 3.28 million *Reichsmark*.²⁷

Local Nazi officials in Gelsenkirchen appropriated the feelings and rituals the club generated and which produced a feeling of belonging that bound citizens to the political regime. They organized lavish celebrations and official receptions for players after each title the club won. The support from the fans was immense: when the players arrived back home in Gelsenkirchen, thousands of excited Gelsenkirchenerers filled the streets to cheer for their idols. During the years of Nazi rule, the streets were paved with big and small swastikas, and torchlight accompanied the processions of Schalke players who were ringed by NSDAP representatives, along with members of the Nazi paramilitary organizations SA and SS. Shouts of *Sieg Heil* and the singing of Nazi songs further strengthened the connection between the regime and the club.²⁸ In 1935, no less than six Nazi officials spoke at a reception in honour of the team, among them delegates from the Ministry of Propaganda and the Regional Sports Office

²⁷ Wick, 'Spielfilm'; Oswald, *Fußball-Volksgemeinschaft*, 84–91.

²⁸ For a description of the celebrations, see Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, 192–204.

(*Reichssportführung*), as well as a SA representative.²⁹ Reporting on Schalke's reception (*Kameradschaftsabend*) for the German Cup victory in 1937, which featured several politicians, the local newspaper noted that the evening was 'again proof of the deep connection between the club, the party leadership, the city administration, and other authorities'.³⁰ While the club itself did not approach the regime, Nazi officials viewed Schalke 04 an ideal institution.³¹ The significant emotional template of the club that still exists today reached their full potential in the Nazi era: the idea of being hard-working 'simple people', close to the fans, with a sense of community and mutual aid, represented a participatory Third Reich that both players and fans could help to build and maintain. Nazi officials tapped into the football club's experience of celebrating not only the players but also these values. By loyally supporting the club, fans could feel and enact the Nazi political agenda.

THE INEFFECTIVENESS OF EMOTIONAL TEMPLATING IN TIMES OF EARLY DEINDUSTRIALIZATION

The club could not replicate the successes of the Nazi years, but it unintentionally continued to mobilize emotional support for reconstruction and cushioned early deindustrialization. Despite its relative lack of success in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Schalke charm still seemed to work and home games attracted those who sought refuge from the city's strenuous reconstruction efforts, from industrial labour, and from the other physical and mental hardships of the post-war period.³² A last glimpse of Schalke's former standing was the championship the club secured in 1958. The subsequent parade resembled the ones from the Nazi years—with the exception of Nazi uniforms and flags, which were replaced by smaller flags in blue and white, Schalke's club colours. One hundred fifty thousand excited supporters lined the streets to greet the team at the train station: 'In their home town, [the players] were literally smothered with joy', the newsreel *UEFA-Wochenschau* reported, and

²⁹ Oswald, *Fußball-Volksgemeinschaft*, 158.

³⁰ Goch and Silberbach, *Zwischen Blau und Weiß*, 197–98.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 248.

³² Grüne, *Glaube*, 114–31.

adding: ‘And even our cameramen, used to such celebrations over the decades, stated unanimously: This has never happened before.’³³

It had happened before, but the club, its supporters, and the political institutions in Gelsenkirchen had attempted to forget Schalke’s role as a model club for the National Socialist agenda. Only a few chose to remember that Fritz Szepan had bought a department store at the *Schalcker Markt* in 1937, which had previously belonged to a Jewish family expropriated by the Nazis.³⁴ Some of the *Volk* rhetoric survived the fall of the regime, however: the *Vereinsnachrichten*, Schalke’s members’ magazine,³⁵ stressed the importance of health for ‘securing national and social work’ and stated that health remains ‘for the people [Volk] and the state the first and foremost premise’.³⁶ This attests to the potency of emotional templates that united hard work and the emotional community of the *Volksgemeinschaft* beyond National Socialism and within the club even in the post-war era, and which forged the myth that Germans rebuilt the country in a collective grassroots effort. Schalke’s ability to reactivate the emotional template of the hard-working *Gemeinschaft* (community) made it the ideal institution to propagate the myth of participatory reconstruction. In short, Schalke made its supporters feel that they were part of a renascent Germany.

Curiously, the club itself stopped evoking its carefully constructed image as an emotional community oriented around the mining industry, yet fans, politicians, and media still saw in it an institution that made people feel part of a bigger political and participatory project to overcome the post-war crisis and early deindustrialization. One reason for the club’s withdrawal from the template was its lack of success on the field, as well as several political and financial scandals. After the 1958 victory, the curtain fell on Schalke 04 and so too on the Ruhr valley. Schalke has still not won another Bundesliga championship, and the coal crisis, which began around the same time as Schalke’s last championship, plunged Gelsenkirchen and the whole region into severe crisis. In 1957, 496,000 people worked in the mines in the Ruhr valley. By 1968, this number had halved.³⁷ As in the

³³ ‘UFA Wochenschau’.

³⁴ Goch, ‘Vorzeigefußballer’, 413.

³⁵ The magazine was renamed *Schalcker Kreisler* in 1966, the year in which the first of Gelsenkirchen’s mines closed.

³⁶ Quoted in Havemann, *Samstags um halb 4*, 444.

³⁷ ‘Abends duster’. For the history of the coal crisis, see, for instance, Nonn, *Ruhrbergbaukrise*.

last economic crisis in the 1920s, Schalke 04 should have attracted the desperate and destitute and inspired positive feelings of comradeship, community, perseverance, and mastery when the mines closed. In 1966, when Gelsenkirchen's most modern and prestigious mine, *Graf Bismarck*, shut, an article in the weekly *Der Spiegel* underlined Schalke's role as the keeper of the area's mining heritage:

Preserver of such rites [of the mining era] are the miner's associations, of which there is one in each municipality of the Ruhr, except for Gelsenkirchen, where the football club FC Schalke 04, called the miners [*Knappen*], is the sole preserver of this tradition.³⁸

In the 1960s, Schalke was increasingly ascribed the ability to meet the socio-political task of maintaining collective spirits in a crumbling city. This role reflected the Federal Republic's ideal of a social market economy and attracted the attention of local Social Democratic politicians—the third institution drawn to the club. Gelsenkirchen, one commentator in the 1960s expressed, 'consists of the triad work, work, and Schalke'.³⁹ When work disappeared in the early phase of deindustrialization, Schalke needed to survive. This is how local political institutions, most of them controlled by Social Democrats, saw the club. Therefore, despite the uneasy involvement in Nazi politics, the relationship between the club and local municipal institutions remained strong. 'Schalke is the goodwill of our city', Gelsenkirchen's treasurer, Hans-Georg König, stated.⁴⁰ City leadership was particularly interested in keeping the club alive and took up official roles to support it. König became president of FC Schalke 04 in 1959—at the express request of local councillors. In his dual role, he established a system of secret accounts to buy players for the club. The funds were acquired using money from deferred local entertainment taxes, among other things. König implemented this system with the support of both Gelsenkirchen's town manager and the head of the local revenue department. The case went to court, but all the defendants escaped with minor fines for tax avoidance because of the community support for the club.⁴¹ Endorsing the club was thus not merely an example of an emotional attachment to long-past traditions and victories, but was tied to an

³⁸ 'Klar zum Gefecht'.

³⁹ Harenberg, 'Schalke'.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Schreiber, 'Tausend Freunde'.

institutional raison: ‘The city stands unconditionally behind Schalke’, the court ruled in 1964.⁴² After the verdict, Gelsenkirchen’s mayor greeted König with red roses. He was only briefly suspended from his position as Gelsenkirchen’s treasurer during which time he accepted a position as a supervisory board member of a coal mine. In 1968, he became chief municipal director. Gelsenkirchen was the only major city in West Germany, the editor-in-chief of a local newspaper noted, whose chief municipal director had previously been convicted for tax fraud.⁴³

In the 1960s and 1970s, the city received few monetary benefits from the club, but it continued to think of it as an institution that could quell social unrest. Between 1963 and 1968, the city of Gelsenkirchen only levied 2.1 million *Deutsche Mark* from taxes and charges related to Schalke 04. This enabled the city to cover two-thirds of the costs of its public library, for a year.⁴⁴ Yet Gelsenkirchen’s municipal institutions held on to the political importance of the club for the emotional well-being of the city and its socio-political role as a space where people could feel part of a community, based on the emotional templates the club provided.

A 1972 *Spiegel* article, however, suggested that the club itself had not yet made the link between its industrial heritage and emotions part of its marketing strategy:

Football is what the people in the Ruhr valley [*Revier*] have instead of traditions. ... The tradition [however] consists of survivors. Do not try to prove everything, to quote, to provide facts. Because that would not work. It is about feelings, and those are real, for sure, but they do not match reality. ... And the tradition? In reality, it consists of a few survivors of Schalke’s golden age, ... whose favourite words are ‘at the time’ and ‘do you still remember?’ ... The tradition, Schalke’s long-term vice president Gustav Fahrmeyer once said, ‘originates in the old Szepan-Kuzorra team. We administer it, but, how shall I put it, as a sort of publicity.’⁴⁵

The traditions were not forgotten, but club officials had not yet connected them to the experience of deindustrialization.

Despite the continued socio-political importance the city attached to Schalke, part of the template that branded the club a workers’ and miners’

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Grüne, *Glaube*, 172; Schreiber, ‘Tausend Freunde’.

⁴⁴ Schreiber, ‘Tausend Freunde’.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

club was not employed in the 1960s and 1970s. While miners and steelworkers from the Ruhr region were fighting intently to save their jobs, waving black flags at strikes and demonstrations, FC Schalke 04 was getting caught up in its next scandal: in 1972, the club won the Cup but was preoccupied with saving face in a Bundesliga scandal in which almost the entire team was given a one-year ban from playing in Germany because they had accepted money in exchange for throwing a game.⁴⁶

Curiously, even non-Social Democratic politicians in the region stuck by the club. At a subsequent court trial, an MP and leading member of the Free Democratic Party (FDP), Jürgen Möllemann, mobilized national politics to help the club. He distributed flyers among attendees of the FDP's federal congress in Mainz in 1975, hoping to push through a proposal under urgency. The leaflets read: 'The federal party convent must decide that the legal proceedings against Schalke 04 should be immediately suspended. Liberal Germany needs Schalke—in particular today.'⁴⁷ Although fellow party members on the federal level could not agree to this proposition, it shows that even liberal politicians attached a crucial social and political significance to the club in the aftermath of the oil crisis.

In the 1960s, politicians apparently had more faith in the club than its fans base. The number of spectators at Schalke home games stagnated at around 20,000 per match.⁴⁸ However, the local administration, which had already taken over the lease for the stadium and then bought it from the club in 1963, continued to assist the club.⁴⁹ They decided to build a bigger new stadium in the geographical centre of Gelsenkirchen, outside the traditional Schalke neighbourhood. Breaking with the old mining and working-class tradition, the city advertised the stadium as a 'modern sports park' and paid 25 million *Deutsche Mark* for it.⁵⁰ The North Rhine-Westphalian parliament contributed a further ten million, wanting to compete with multi-purpose stadiums in economically flourishing regions of Germany, like Munich's Olympic Stadium or Neckar Stadium in Stuttgart. The stadium was supposed to become one of the state's main sporting and entertainment venues and Gelsenkirchen's chief attraction.

⁴⁶ Grüne, *Glaube*, 217–20.

⁴⁷ 'Hohlspiegel'.

⁴⁸ For an overview of the spectators for each game and year since 1963, see 'Bundesliga-Zuschauer'.

⁴⁹ For a history of the construction of the *Park-Stadion*, see Goch, 'Stadt, Fußball und Stadion', 39–42.

⁵⁰ Quoted in *ibid.*, 40.

The shift away from the club's roots became apparent in the naming of the new stadium. Initially, city planners suggested *Ruhr-Stadion*, a name which the club considered 'most suitable'.⁵¹ After a contest among residents, the local administration chose *Park-Stadion* instead, thereby reflecting the impact of deindustrialization. In contrast to *Ruhr-Stadion*, which recalled the emotional template of 'the city of a thousand fires', as Gelsenkirchen was termed in Schalke's anthem, the *Park-Stadion*, which opened in 1973, conjured the image of a green, pleasant, and modern city. This marked a complete change in the local PR strategy, which now advertised the city with the slogan 'Gelsenkirchen is completely different from what you would expect'.⁵²

Even when deindustrialization processes accelerated in the 1970s and 1980s, mining as an industrial tradition was still not included as part of the emotional template the club was willing to promote. When the tabloid *Bild Zeitung* planned to stage a photoshoot on the grounds of the *Hugo* mine in 1975, the only player on the team who had actually worked in a mine before becoming a professional football player, Klaus Fichtel, refused to be in the photo and waited in his car for the shoot to finish. 'I don't have any nice memories of the mine. Should I place myself in front of the pit and make a happy face?' he asked.⁵³ Further, President Hans-Joachim Fenne was trying to implement a more professional managerial style at Schalke 04 and keep emotions and traditions—the 'heart of Schalke'—to a minimum.⁵⁴

Since the club had always relied on the political and financial backing of the city, it was slow to accept professionalization tendencies in football marketing and financing.⁵⁵ When other clubs began selling advertising space on their shirts in the mid-1970s, for example, Schalke at first refused to follow suit, simply printing 'Schalke' on their jerseys. 'Schalke is de facto a company We prefer to advertise ourselves', declared Fenne's predecessor President Günter Siebert.⁵⁶ At that time, other clubs were discovering the advantages of identity-building and monetizing emotional

⁵¹ *Ibid.*; *Schalcker Kreisler*, 5 February 1972, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁵² *Schalcker Kreisler*, 13 March 1971, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁵³ *Schalcker Kreisler*, 6 December 1975, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁵⁴ *Schalcker Kreisler*, 24 January 1981, Schalke 04 Archiv. See also Havemann, *Samstags um halb 4*, 338–42.

⁵⁵ Havemann, *Samstags um halb 4*, 171.

⁵⁶ *Schalcker Kreisler*, 11 September 1974, Schalke 04 Archiv; Havemann, *Samstags um halb 4*, 342.

attachment but Schalke refrained, relying instead on the continuous support it had enjoyed from state institutions at least since the Nazi era.⁵⁷ While the club had provided the early exemplar for marketing ploys as a miners' and working-class club in the 1920s and 1930s, it neglected its own example in later years.

Searching for a response to ongoing deindustrialization in the 1970s and 1980s, politicians tried to redirect the feelings and practices attached to Schalke in order to portray it as a dynamic institution that anticipated an imagined post-industrial future. The image of a dirty, smoke-filled city was unlikely to be that future. Ultimately, however, this future-oriented redefinition was unsuccessful, partly because of the sporting failures of the 1970s and 1980s. While the club won the Cup in 1972, Schalke dropped to the second division three times in subsequent years: 1981, 1983, and 1988.

THE SLOW RE-EMERGENCE OF EMOTIONAL TEMPLATING AND NOSTALGIA MARKETING FROM THE 1980s AND THE LEGACY OF THE 1930s

While this new marketing strategy from above failed, the club returned to the traditional components of its emotional template and established its political and social role by incorporating the participatory element of the club, its fans. *Treue* (loyalty) and solidarity emerged as the most-cited feelings that would weld the club and its fans together once more.⁵⁸ The waves of economic and athletic loss Schalke 04 experienced led them to restate their allegiance to their supporters. Instead of celebrating the victories of the 1920s and 1930s, the community defiantly united around the shared experience of defeat—both in terms of the economic fate of a rapidly deindustrializing town and in terms of the misfortunes of its team. The emotional template of rallying round the club, of everyone participating not only in the highs but also in the lows, was accompanied by a more active involvement of the fans. For instance, in 1981, the club almost missed out on a licence for the first division because of its financial

⁵⁷For more on attempts to professionalize the Bundesliga clubs in these years, see Havemann, *Samstags um halb 4*; Jonas, *Fußball*.

⁵⁸'Treue' regularly appeared in the *Kreisel* when the writer was describing or appealing to the behaviour of the fans, from the mid-1960s onwards, and in particular in the 1970s and 1980s. See, for instance, *Schalcker Kreisel*, 22 October 1982, Schalke 04 Archiv.

difficulties. The fans rallied to help Schalke 04, ‘the holy cow of the Ruhr valley’ as the club magazine put it, making over a hundred donations, from children’s pocket money to a gold barrel.⁵⁹ Others bought commemorative medals the club was selling in order to generate income.⁶⁰ The bulk of its financial backing, however, came once more from political institutions who were willing to intercede ‘out of self-interest’, as chief municipal director Heinrich Meya put it.⁶¹ He argued that as the owner of the stadium, the city would lose money if the club was relegated to the second division. This pattern of institutional support and mutual dependence between Gelsenkirchen’s institutions and Schalke, the city’s most precious figurehead since the 1920s, continued up until the 1990s.

The club itself reacted to deindustrialization only reluctantly, by highlighting the participatory and solidary role of a post-mining community linked by emotional practices of unity and resilience, which collectively tried to remedy the social and political ills caused by deindustrialization. Schalke took up the mining and working-class aspect of its emotional template from the 1920s and 1930s and enriched it by positioning itself as Gelsenkirchen’s main caring institution, where lost traditions and former miners themselves could find a home.

Initially, the club helped fans simply by keeping ticket prices and membership fees low, in acknowledgement of the difficult situation many supporters who had lost their jobs faced—a policy the club continues still today.⁶² The first signs that the club itself was beginning to resume its role as a socio-political institution emerged in the early 1980s, yet they were far from being formed into a fully fledged agenda. In December 1981, the club magazine published a short note titled: ‘Schalke 04 cares about the unemployed too’ and explained:

The unemployment rate is rising. Nowhere else is this so painfully felt than in the Ruhr valley, where the unemployment rate of over 8 per cent lies way above the German average. The Bundesliga clubs are affected as well, Schalke 04 among others. In Gelsenkirchen, the unemployment rate is 8.7 per cent. Manager Rudi Assauer reflects: ‘We already have the lowest

⁵⁹ *Schalker Kreisler*, 24 January 1981, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁶⁰ This was an initiative already in the late 1960s; see *Schalker Kreisler* 5 (1969), Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁶¹ *Schalker Kreisler*, 24 May 1980, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁶² See, for instance, *Schalker Kreisler*, 11 December 1971, Schalke 04 Archiv.

entrance fees of both divisions. But if the numbers continue to rise, we need to do more.’⁶³

The magazine concluded: ‘Looking back: after the Great Depression, the entrance fee for the unemployed was 20 and after the Second World War 50 Pfennigs. Ernst Kuzorra recalls: “We always had a lot of spectators, but, in times of great unemployment, they were particularly numerous.”’⁶⁴ There was indeed more to be done as unemployment rates continued to rise. In 1983, *Schalcker Kreisler* published a short note offering help for unemployed youth ‘who are members of Schalke 04 or have close relations to the club’ to find a job or an apprenticeship while appealing to other club members to offer them available opportunities: ‘As a big family association, we bear responsibility also for those who belong to our family. The teenagers, who faithfully and worthily come to the home games of our club, need our solidarity.’⁶⁵

It was not until 1984 that the last mining accident in Gelsenkirchen provided an opportunity for Schalke to revive the emotions and practices of workers’ club that had been lost in the previous decades. When on 16 February 1984 five miners died in a cave-in, a charity match was organized for Easter Monday to benefit the dependents of the dead men. It was not the club itself though that suggested the initiative, but a former Schalke 04 player, Rolf Rüssmann, who at the time was playing for local rivals Borussia Dortmund.⁶⁶ The charitable aspect was negligible, as the surviving dependents were already being cared for, explained the city’s mayor, Werner Kuhlmann. Still, ‘[e]specially in this region, which is marked by mines, a sign of solidarity [*Verbundenheit*] does people good. The game is a unique opportunity for a big Schalke family reunion.’⁶⁷ Again, representatives from the state institutions did not miss a chance to demonstrate their ties with the club and reiterate their historical closeness. Next to mayor Kuhlmann and Schalke manager Assauer, the state’s federal minister and minister of labour attended the match along with 20,000

⁶³ *Schalcker Kreisler*, 11 December 1981, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Schalcker Kreisler*, 23 August 1983, Schalke 04 Archiv. In the 1980s, the aim to help youth was also due to the fact that the club—like others—had a massive problem with hooliganism. The risk of punishment from the football federation also led the club to act. For an introduction to hooliganism, see, for example, Frosdick and Marsh, *Football Hooliganism*.

⁶⁶ *Schalcker Kreisler*, 9 March 1984, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁶⁷ *Schalcker Kreisler*, 19 April 1984, Schalke 04 Archiv.

spectators.⁶⁸ The match took place in the historic *Glückauf Kampfbahn*, further emphasizing the ‘nostalgia party’.⁶⁹ The marching band from *Consolidation* played and newspapers printed an iconic picture of Ernst Kuzorra sitting next to youngster Olaf Thon, a Gelsenkirchen native (who was ‘born on coal’, as *Schalkers Kreisel* reiterated).⁷⁰ The transmission from generation to generation of local patriotism around football and the mining heritage as well as the language of family in the context of a remembrance of the deceased miners aimed to recall past successes and to restore the glory of the club in the present by harking back to better days gone by.

Celebrating the mining tradition was part of a veritable wave of nostalgia in the 1970s and 1980s and came in response to the economic hardships felt in particular in Germany’s coal districts.⁷¹ Schalke 04’s ‘tradition’ of visiting local mines emerged in the aftermath of the 1984 charity match. Rolf Rüssmann was accompanied by city manager Gerd Rehberg and former players to ‘form an opinion about the work of the miners and to document the unity of the professional football players of the Revier [*Ruhr coalfields*] with the miners [*Kumpel und Knappen*]’.⁷² This visit reiterated the practice of the 1930s, showing that the players remained connected to the common people. It physically linked the miners’ and the players’ bodies: both performed hard work for a greater good. It also projected the image of a caring club, taking up the template of mutual support that had repeatedly appeared in the club’s history. The club ritualized these visits to the mines in the 1990s with Rehberg, and an increasing media presence, in tow.

In the process of its professionalization and sporting success after its return to the first division, Schalke 04 assumed the role of a political institution in its own right.⁷³ While in previous times, the club was merely used by political institutions seeking to bolster their own standing, it now became actively involved in local and regional politics. Rehberg epitomized

⁶⁸ ‘Nostalgie in Schalke: 20.000—und 150.000 DM’, Zeitungsarchiv 7–30 April 1984, Schalke 04 Archiv; *Schalkers Kreisel*, 7 April 1984, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁶⁹ *Schalkers Kreisel*, 2 May 1984, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁷⁰ ‘Vier Generationen Schalke am Ball’, Zeitungsarchiv 7–30 April 1984, Schalke 04 Archiv; *Schalkers Kreisel*, 2 May 1984, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁷¹ For the nostalgia boom in the 1970s and 1980s, see Becker, ‘Rückkehr’. For nostalgia and deindustrialization, see, for example, Clarke, ‘Closing Time’.

⁷² The term ‘Kumpel’ also refers to ‘buddy’.

⁷³ See Jonas, *Fußball*, 203–44.

this shift as a miner, deputy mayor, and Schalke official.⁷⁴ Between 1994 and 2007, Rehberg headed Schalke 04's steering committee. During his tenure, Schalke reinvented an emotional template around its mining history. In November 1995, for instance, the choir of the mining consortium *Ruhrkohle AG* sang techno versions of the old mining hymns in the stadium to familiarize the younger generation with the club's traditions.⁷⁵

At a time of mass protests against the closing of the mines in the Ruhr valley, Schalke 04 supported miners in need by providing them with a communal space in which they could share and shed their anger and mourn their losses. The club thus enabled political participation in its stadium and also took a political stand against the closures, in line with the governing Social Democratic party in North Rhine-Westphalia. In February 1995, Schalke 04 invited 2000 miners to march around the field in their mining gear with posters protesting the decision to shut down the area's mines at the local derby, Schalke 04 against MSV Duisburg.⁷⁶ Rehberg commented on the protests in the members' magazine of the mining association: 'It goes without saying that our club in particular fights for the survival of the mines.'⁷⁷ Rehberg himself had first-hand experience with the elimination of jobs in the mining industry, having voluntarily quit his position as pit foreman in 1992, at the age of fifty-six, as part of a measure to reduce jobs in the sector in a socially palatable way.⁷⁸ On 11 March 1997, Rehberg allegedly prevented a demonstration against the closure of mine *Hugo* from turning violent.⁷⁹ After months of debate, the Federal Parliament decided to drastically reduce the subsidies for German coal, a decision that would, it was claimed, put 36,000 jobs at risk. Fifteen thousand miners went to Bonn to rally for their cause. Those who had stayed in Gelsenkirchen assembled at *Hugo*. As the protests

⁷⁴ On Rehberg, see the popular science biography Cato, *Gerhard Rehberg* and FC Schalke 04, 'S04-Ehrenpräsident Gerhard Rehberg wird 80 Jahre'.

⁷⁵ *Schalcker Kreisel*, 11 November 1995, Schalke 04 Archiv. Nowadays, the *Steigerlied* is sung during halftime at home games but it does not seem to have been sung on a regular basis before the mid- to late 1990s.

⁷⁶ *Schalcker Kreisel*, 12 March 1995, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁷⁷ *Ruhrkohle* 3 (1995), quoted after 'Die Schalcker Knappen'.

⁷⁸ *Schalcker Kreisel*, 25 February 1995, Schalke 04 Archiv. The government used the term 'Anpassung' for this measure; see Bundesamt für Wirtschaft und Ausfuhrkontrolle, 'Anpassungsgeld Steinkohlenbergbau'.

⁷⁹ Biermann and Ulrich, 'Letzten Tage'.

gathered steam, the director of the mine called Rehberg, desperate, and pleaded with him to come to the mine. Rehberg drove there, climbed on a roof, and held a speech condemning the government but also calming the miners. He finished his speech by inviting the miners to the Schalke home game that night. Five thousand men in worker's uniform came to the match carrying miner's lamps. A delegation was invited to walk around the field with their banners as spectators enthusiastically shouted *Ruhrpott, Ruhrpott!* (a variant of *Ruhrgebiet*, or 'Ruhr valley', a reference to the area's mining heritage). One of the miners, Klaus Herzmanatus, the head of the workers' council at *Hugo* at the time, reportedly had tears in his eyes as he sat on the tribune, telling journalists: 'Football has always been there for the people of the coal region [*Revier*].'⁸⁰

Schalke thus reappropriated and altered its inherited emotional template to market itself as an institution that cared for the unemployed, the youth, and those in need—of which there were many in Gelsenkirchen and its immediate surroundings. With the arrival of Rehberg and Schalke's mythical manager Rudi Assauer, the club relaunched its initiative from the 1980s to help unemployed youth by finding or even providing them apprenticeships. Schalke 04 teamed up with the municipal employment office, which regularly placed adverts in the club magazine, and rewarded the unemployed who were willing to search for a job for themselves with a free ticket to a Schalke game.⁸¹ 'In the past three years', Assauer declared in 1996, 'the club has provided fifteen youth with apprenticeships'.⁸² Schalke 04's office thus turned into a 'place of refuge for people with smaller and bigger problems' and claimed its 'big social responsibility'.⁸³

The year 1997 marked a watershed moment for the club and for perceptions of the Ruhr valley. That year, football emerged as way to unite the people of the region around a positive experience and a reason to proudly identify with the Ruhr valley: Borussia Dortmund won the Champions League and Schalke won the UEFA Cup.⁸⁴ The surprising success of a team with no big stars helped the reinvented narrative of the miners' club take root. While neighbouring club Borussia Dortmund involved itself with big finance and went public in 2000, Schalke fully embraced the

⁸⁰ Quoted in *ibid.*

⁸¹ *Schalcker Kreisler*, 20 September 1997, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁸² *Schalcker Kreisler*, 27 August 1996, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁸³ *Schalcker Kreisler*, 16 March 1996 Schalke 04 Archiv; *Schalcker Kreisler*, 1 August 1997, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁸⁴ Kisters, *Ruhrpott*.

traditional component of its emotional template and simultaneously augmented it with a socio-political mission: to provide a home for the victims of deindustrialization.⁸⁵ It did this by marketing itself as a caring institution that cooperated with but was independent from the state entities that had supported the club since the 1920s. This somewhat reversed the template of the 1970s, when the people of the region had shown their support and care for the club. Since the mid-1990s, the influence of traditional institutions such as political parties—notably the Social Democrats—unions, and the church had faded, and even state organizations in the Ruhr valley suffered from a lack of income. But Schalke 04 emerged as a powerful entity that took on the compassionate elements traditionally provided by these institutions.

Schalke distinguishes itself from most other professional football clubs in Europe at present because it is a registered association and not a for-profit institution. Thus, it officially remains a participatory institution in the hands of its members. Despite its evolution into a professional business along with the other Bundesliga clubs, the club—and its fans in particular—insist on its socio-political mission as a non-profit (as an *eingetragener Verein*, German law requires the association to benefit the public). The club underlined this social mission with the establishment of the *Schalke Hilft* foundation in 2008 mentioned above, which aims to provide help for those affected by the demise of the regional coal sector.

The opening of Schalke's newest stadium showcases this development. It assumed the tradition of the legendary *Glückauf Kampfbahn* and branded itself with the symbols of an *Ersatz*-mine. The stadium, which combines an ultra-modern facility with over 62,000 seats with the area's mining heritage, is built on top of two seams of *Hugo* and *Consolidation*, the two mines with the strongest emotional ties to the club.⁸⁶ The stadium's name *Arena auf Schalke* (Arena on Schalke) refers to going to work at the mines, a phrase which, in the local dialect, would be expressed using the proposition *auf*, 'on'. Instead of going *auf* the mine, fans can go *auf* Schalke. Furthermore, the entrance to the stadium looks like a coal stratum. When it opened in 2001, the last Gelsenkirchen mine, *Hugo*, had just closed its doors. Miners from *Hugo* donated a coal lorry to the club

⁸⁵ For the marketing strategy of Borussia Dortmund, see Biermann, *Vom Fußball träumen*, 215–22.

⁸⁶ Goch, 'Stadt, Fußball und Stadion', 44.

upon its closure. It sits in front of Schalke's main office building on *Ernst-Kuzorra-Weg*, named after Schalke's famous player and miner.

In contrast to previous stadiums, the club built and owns the *Arena*, not the city of Gelsenkirchen (although it convinced the state of North Rhine-Westphalia to secure the credit, reiterating the importance of the stadium to the economically weak region). The club sought to display its social responsibility in the building process by awarding the construction constructs to local firms and thus creating jobs in a city struggling with structural change. The club itself proudly touted the economic benefits of the *Arena* for the region and the importance of the club as an essential provider of apprenticeships in the city.⁸⁷ In 2006, the club had 250 permanent employees (not including the actual football team) and 1200 employees during events at the stadium.⁸⁸

The stadium was constructed in light of the new era of fan participation using the old template of a miners' and workers' club. It was conceived as a place to unite supporters and accompany them in their journey from birth to death. Fans could purchase building stones to support the project, an idea taken from the *Glückauf Kampfbahn*, underscoring the participatory nature of the building process. Fans received a small metal tag on 'the wall of 1,000 friends'. The name of the wall refers to a line in the club's anthem: 'With a thousand friends who stand together, FC Schalke 04 will never disappear'.⁸⁹ A chapel where fans can be baptized or married and a Schalke cemetery where fans can be buried alongside some of the club's mythical players template the lifelong Schalke experience.

Whenever a mine in the region closed, the miners were invited to a home game and specially honoured. For instance, when in 2015 the *Auguste Victoria* mine closed in Marl, just north of Gelsenkirchen, Schalke president Clemens Tönnies addressed the miners who had been invited that night, appealing to emotions of solidarity, unity, and mutual aid between the club and the miners in mourning:

It is a black day for the Ruhr valley. It is a black day for the black gold. And it is a black day for FC Schalke 04. ... Dear miners of Auguste Victoria, be assured that we will not forget you. Many of you and many of the previous generations of miners were fans of FC Schalke 04 and remained always

⁸⁷ *Schalker Kreisel*, 11 November 2000, Schalke 04 Archiv.

⁸⁸ Goch, 'Stadt, Fußball und Stadion', 46.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 43–44.

faithful to FC Schalke 04, and stood by us in bad times. And now, we do the same for you ... We invited you today to the Arena, our shared living room, from miner to miner. We are thankful and also proud that you finish off this painful day together with us at Schalke.⁹⁰

The 2018 ceremony mentioned in the opening paragraph was thus simply the culmination of this process of emotional templating as ‘the miners’ and workers’ club’ (*Kumpel- und Malocherklub*), which became a trademark in the hard-fought marketing game of the Bundesliga.

Unwittingly, Schalke fell back on components of the emotional template that the Nazis had cherished so much. Increasingly, the club referred to the emotions of that time, evoking comradeship, community, family, perseverance, and its ability to unite and capture a large number of supporters. While Fritz Szepan’s contribution had become problematic because of his Nazi past, other members of the successful *Schalcker Kreisel* team were included in the club’s emotional templating, in particular, the element of communal mourning. This templating was also prompted and demanded by the fans. In 2013, after multiple unsuccessful appeals to the social responsibility of the club, a former *Wehrmacht* comrade’s plea to ‘bring home’ the remains of Adolf Urban reached Tönnies. Urban, a member of the *Schalcker Kreisel* team in the 1930s and 1940s, had been drafted into the *Wehrmacht* and died in Russia in May 1943. Tönnies flew with a delegation of Schalke officials to Korpowo, Russia, to exhume Urban and rebury him in the new Schalke cemetery next to the stadium. Schalke officials and members of the 2013 team attended the burial service, as a miners’ band played the *Steigerlied*.⁹¹ ‘We are obliged to cultivate our traditions’, said Schalke’s fan liaison officer Rolf Rojek at Urban’s grave, ‘Otherwise, we won’t have a future.’⁹²

CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated the force and attraction of the emotional template around the mining and working-class traditions at the heart of Schalke 04. It has shown how an allegedly apolitical sports club became an institution that served a socio-political role because of its prescribed ability

⁹⁰FC Schalke 04, ‘Rede von Clemens Tönnies an die Kumpel der Zeche Auguste Victoria’.

⁹¹‘Schalke holt Kreisel-Stürmer Urban nach Hause’.

⁹²Muras, ‘Schalke holt Adolf Urban aus Russland zurück’.

to unite people in a community of feeling throughout major crises in twentieth-century German history—whether under National Socialism or in the Federal Republic of Germany, during the Second World War and the post-war period and, most prominently, in its recent history in the era of deindustrialization. Both democratic and authoritarian regimes and administrations turned to the club and instrumentalized its emotional template in order to shape and maintain a community and to make people feel part of the political system—in short, to make them *feel* political. In the past twenty to thirty years, as traditional working-class institutions such as the unions and the Social Democrats have lost their power in a neoliberal and post-industrial society, the club marketed itself as an institution in its own right by taking on certain elements of political institutions: chiefly their participatory and caring dimensions. With the impending end of coal mining in the Ruhr valley, the club took an explicitly political stance against the ills of deindustrialization. It sought to align itself with its mining heritage by marketing itself as *the* socio-political institution in Gelsenkirchen and the surrounding Ruhr valley that could provide a community of feeling in modern post-industrial society.

The image of the club as a charitable institution for the disenfranchised shattered during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Schalke 04 was one of the clubs particularly hard-hit in the Bundesliga because of the sudden absence of its participatory element: the fans in the stadium. Once again, as has happened several times throughout its history, political institutions rescued the club from bankruptcy. The state of North Rhine-Westphalia acted as a guarantor for a thirty million euro loan to ensure the club's immediate survival. This recalls the darker times the club faced in the 1960s and 1970s, although all participants assured the media that rescuing Schalke was a business undertaking like any other—and not an emotional affair.⁹³

In need of money, the club abandoned its previously demonstrated socio-political responsibility. In a move much-criticized by fan organizations, who insisted, following the emotional template, on the commitment of the club to the working class and the poor, the club stipulated that the 44,000 season-ticket holders would only receive a reimbursement for their tickets if they explained their financial constraints in a written statement. The club appealed to the solidarity of its supporters

⁹³ 'Bürgen für die Knappen'.

during a challenging time.⁹⁴ But this language of solidarity no longer worked, as it seemed forced. It reminded too many of the obligations to produce financial documentation for the employment office, a well-known experience for many of the club's supporters, as Gelsenkirchen still ranks among the poorest cities in Germany with the highest rates of unemployment.

Which past will shape Schalke's emotional templates in the future? Perhaps it will stick to its old strategy of harking back to the comradeship and glorious past of 'the city of a thousand fires'. Or, an option that seems equally likely, the new financial crisis might trigger the end of the club's nostalgia marketing, as occurred in the 1970s. In the fall of 2020, the club made plans to dismiss the head of Schalke's 'tradition' department.⁹⁵ In times of acute crisis for the survival of FC Schalke 04, the long-worshipped parts of its emotional template, that of a workers' and miners' club, seem to be dispensable.

JULIA WAMBACH
(wambach@mpib-berlin.mpg.de)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- '100 Jahre Schalke 04: Fußball-Mythos in Blau-Weiß'. *Der Spiegel*, 4 May 2004. <https://www.spiegel.de/sptv/a-298135.html>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- 'Abends duster', *Der Spiegel*, 14 January 1968, 28–31. <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/abends-duster-a-1c04e5b0-0002-0001-0000-000045465370>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Becker, Tobias. 'Rückkehr der Geschichte? Die "Nostalgie-Welle" in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren'. In *Zeitenwandel: Transformationen geschichtlicher Zeitlichkeit nach dem Boom*, ed. Fernando Esposito, 93–117. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017.
- Berns, Heinz, and Hermann Wiersch. *Das Buch vom deutschen Fußballmeister: Fritz Szepan und Erich Kuzorra: Die Geschichte zweier Mannen und einer Mannschaft*. Wattenscheid: Busch, 1936.
- Biermann, Christoph. *Wenn wir vom Fußball träumen: Eine Heimreise*. Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2014.
- Biermann, Christoph, and Ron Ulrich. 'Die letzten Tage des Ruhrgebiets'. *11 Freunde*, 22 December 2018. <https://11freunde.de/artikel/die-letzten-tage-des-ruhrgebiets/550165>. Accessed 15 July 2021.

⁹⁴ Leszinski, 'Härtefall-Antrag'.

⁹⁵ 'Gerüchte über Umstrukturierung der Geschäftsstelle'.

- ‘Bundesliga-Zuschauer’. Website. <https://www.kicker.de/bundesliga/zuschauer/>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- ‘Bürgen für die Knappen’. *Der Spiegel*, 28 July 2020. <https://www.spiegel.de/sport/fussball/fc-schalke-04-erhaelt-landesbuergerschaft-buergen-fuer-die-knappen-a-66e75dc0-38ec-4405-8a77-06dbcdf22c91>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Bundesamt für Wirtschaft und Ausfuhrkontrolle. ‘Anpassungsgeld Steinkohlenbergbau’. https://www.bafa.de/DE/Energie/Rohstoffe/Anpassungsgeld/anpassungsgeld_node.html. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Ćato, Ferhat. *Gerhard Rehberg: Bergmann, Bürgermeister, Schalker*. Koblenz: Fölbach, 2004.
- Clarke, Jackie. ‘Closing Time: Deindustrialization and Nostalgia in Contemporary France’. *History Workshop Journal*, no. 79 (2015): 107–25. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hwj/dbu041>.
- ‘Das Ende des Steinkohlebergbaus: Abschied vom Schwarzen Gold’. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 21 December 2018. <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/unternehmen/ende-des-steinkohlebergbaus-abschied-vom-schwarzen-gold-15953731.html>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Das große Spiel*. Directed by Robert Adolf Stemmler. Bavaria Film. Released on 10 July 1942.
- “Die Schalker Knappen” & “Fan-Club Zeche Hugo”, 2 February 2004. <http://www.zeche-hugo.com/1128.html>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Eisenberg, Christiane. *‘English Sports’ und deutsche Bürger: Eine Gesellschaftsgeschichte 1800–1939*. Paderborn: Schöningh, 1999.
- FC Schalke 04. ‘Die Mission’. Website. <https://schalke04.de/verein/schalke-hilft/die-mission/>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- FC Schalke 04. ‘S04-Ehrenpräsident Gerhard Rehberg wird 80 Jahre’, 17 December 2015. Website. <https://schalke04.de/mitglieder/s04-ehrenpraesident-gerhard-rehberg-wird-80-jahre/>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- FC Schalke 04. ‘Rede von Clemens Tönnies an die Kumpel der Zeche Auguste Victoria’, 18 December 2015. Youtube video, 3:43. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEuSHxIjir8>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Frosdick, Steve, and Peter Marsh. *Football Hooliganism*. Cullompton: Willan, 2005.
- ‘Gerüchte über Umstrukturierung der Geschäftsstelle: Medien: Personal-Beben in Schalkes Chefetage’. *Sport.de*, 14 November 2020. <https://www.sport.de/news/ne4240944/fc-schalke-04-personal-beben-in-der-chefetage/>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Goch, Stefan. ‘Stadt, Fußball und Stadion—Zusammenhänge am Beispiel Gelsenkirchen’. *Informationen zur modernen Stadtgeschichte*, no. 1 (2006): 34–47.
- Goch, Stefan. ‘Fußball im Ruhrgebiet: Der Mythos vom Arbeitersport’. In *Das Spiel mit dem Fußball: Interessen, Projektionen und Vereinnahmungen*, ed. Jürgen Mittag and Jörg-Uwe Nieland, 117–42. Essen: Klartext, 2007.

- Goch, Stefan. 'FC Schalke 04: Vorzeigefußballer im Mainstream'. In *Hakenkreuz und rundes Leder: Fußball im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Lorenz Peiffer and Dietrich Schulze-Marmeling, 404–14. Göttingen: Die Werkstatt, 2008.
- Goch, Stefan, and Norbert Silberbach. *Zwischen Blau und Weiß liegt Grau: Der FC Schalke 04 im Nationalsozialismus*. Essen: Klartext, 2005.
- Grüne, Hardy. *Glaube, Liebe, Schalke: Die komplette Geschichte des FC Schalke 04*. Göttingen: Die Werkstatt, 2010.
- Harenberg, Bodo. 'Schalke, Schalke über alles'. *Die Zeit*, 13 March 1964, 44.
- Havemann, Nils. *Samstags um halb 4: Die Geschichte der Fußballbundesliga*. Munich: Siedler, 2013.
- 'Hohlspiegel'. *Der Spiegel*, 3 November 1975, 218.
- 'Interview Willi Koslowski—"Wenn Du Dich nicht wehren kannst, dann darfst Du nicht nach vorne gehen"'. *Schalke Unser: Fan-Zeitung gegen Rassismus e.V.*, no. 68 (2010/2011). <http://schalke-unser.de/ausgaben/nummer-68-201011/interview-willi-koslowski-wenn-du-dich-nicht-wehren-kannst-dann-darfst-du-nicht-nach-vorne-gehen/>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Jonas, Hannah. *Fußball in England und Deutschland von 1961 bis 2000: Vom Verlierer der Wohlstandsgesellschaft zum Vorreiter der Globalisierung*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019.
- Kisters, Sebastian. 'Ruhrpott, Ruhrpott!' *Wie die Europapokaltriumphe von Schalke 04 und Borussia Dortmund Image und Identität des Ruhrgebietes veränderten*. Bochum: Geographisches Institut der Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 2000.
- 'Klar zum Gefecht'. *Der Spiegel*, 19 June 1966, 22–31. <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/klar-zum-gefecht-a-89f61c22-0002-0001-0000-000046407680>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Krein, Theodor. *Die blau-weißen Fußballknappen: Der Weg des FC Schalke 04*. 2nd ed. Bielefeld: Klasing, 1948.
- Leszinski, Frank. 'Härtefall-Antrag sorgt für Aufregung bei den Schalker Fans'. *Ruhr Nachrichten*, 3 June 2020. <https://www.ruhrnachrichten.de/schalke/haertefall-antrag-sorgt-fuer-aufregung-bei-den-schalker-fans-1526396.html>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Meingast, Tibor. 'Auf einer Stufe mit Beckenbauer'. *Der Westen*, 3 January 2015. <https://www.derwesten.de/sport/lokalsport/gelsenkirchen-und-buer/auf-einer-stufe-mit-beckenbauer-id10196997.html>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Muras, Udo. 'Schalke holt Adolf Urban aus Russland zurück'. *Die Welt*, 6 November 2013. <https://www.welt.de/sport/fussball/bundesliga/fc-schalke-04/article121570149/Schalke-holt-Adolf-Urban-aus-Russland-zurueck.html>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Nonn, Christoph. *Die Ruhrbergbaukrise: Entindustrialisierung und Politik 1958–1969*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001.
- Oswald, Rudolf. *'Fußball-Völksgemeinschaft': Ideologie, Politik und Fanatismus im deutschen Fußball 1919–1964*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2008.

- Rosenwein, Barbara H. *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006.
- Rünker, Thomas. ‘Bewegender Gottesdienst zum Abschied vom Bergbau’. Bistum Essen, 20 December 2018. <https://www.bistum-essen.de/pressemenue/artikel/bewegender-gottesdienst-zum-abschied-vom-bergbau>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- ‘Schalke holt Kreisel-Stürmer Urban nach Hause’. *Die Welt*, 20 November 2013. <https://www.welt.de/newsticker/sport-news/article122091585/Schalke-holt-Kreisel-Stuermer-Urban-nach-Hause.html>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Schreiber, Hermann. ‘Tausend Freunde, die zusammenstehn ...’, *Der Spiegel*, 23 April 1972, 135–48. <https://www.spiegel.de/politik/tausend-freunde-die-zusammenstehn-a-16fd9674-0002-0001-0000-000042953668>. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- ‘UFA Wochenschau 95/1958’, 21 May 1958. Film. 11:25.17 https://www.filmothek.bundesarchiv.de/video/584285?q=Speedway&set_lang=de. Accessed 15 July 2021.
- Voss, Gerd, Thomas Spiegel, and Jörg Seveneick. *100 Schalker Jahre, 100 Schalker Geschichten*. Essen: Klartext, 2004.
- Wick, Uwe. ‘Der Spielfilm “Das große Spiel”: Ein Beispiel für NS-Propaganda im Film?’. In *Fußball zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus: Alltag—Medien—Künste—Stars*, ed. Markwart Herzog, 283–96. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2008.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter’s Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter’s Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

