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MASTER THESIS

The Socialization of the management of SK Slavia Praha after
playing UEFA Champions League

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Declaration

The author hereby declares that he compiled this thesis independently, using only the listed resources and literature. The author states that he did not submit this thesis for obtaining any other degree.

(Gerbrand Henricus Andreas van den Eeckhout)

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Abstract

This MA thesis starts to explore a new exciting part of socialization theory, by applying the research into socialization in the management of the Czech football club SK Slavia Praha. This is done through the evaluation of the end of the year 2007, when SK Slavia Praha for the first and last time played the group stage of UEFA Champions League. This MA thesis tries to prove that there was indeed a transfer of norms and values from UEFA to SK Slavia Praha. Next to this, this MA thesis also tries to prove that the previous socialization is not anymore apparent in the club, since the contacts with UEFA (and ECA) have since then lost because of the lack of international matches played by SK Slavia Praha. This research is done through interviews with the employees of the club, both the ones working in the club in 2007, and the ones who are employed in 2014.

Keywords: SK Slavia Praha; UEFA; ECA; Socialization; Europeanization; football; management

Tato diplomová práce začíná výzkumem nové vzrušující části teorie socializace, jejím aplikováním na socializaci managementu fotbalového klubu SK Slavia Praha prostřednictvím vyhodnocení konce roku 2007, kdy SK Slavia Praha poprvé a naposledy hrála základní skupinu Ligy mistrů UEFA. Tato diplomová práce se pokouší dokázat, že skutečně došlo k přenesení norem a hodnot z UEFA k SK Slavii Praha. Vedle toho se také pokouší dokázat, že socializace z předchozích let již není v klubu patrná, jelikož kontakty s UEFA (a ECA) byly již v důsledku absence mezinárodních zápasů ztraceny. Tento výzkum je prováděn skrze rozhovory se zaměstnanci klubu, jak s těmi, kteří v něm pracovali v roce 2007, tak i těmi současnými.

Klíčová slova: SK Slavia Praha, UEFA, ECA, Socializace, Europeizace, fotbal, management

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1. Introduction

Football is one of the most watched sports in the whole world. In fact, in the last years it seems the World Cup even surpassed the Super Bowl as the most watched event in the world. Next to this the finals of the UEFA Champions League are on yearly basis one of the most watched broadcasts all over the world, not only in Europe. Different than for example American Football, Ice Hockey, Cricket or Rugby, football is known and celebrated all over the world. If not as first sports of the country, than at least as second sports (the only major exception here being the USA). European Clubs like Manchester United FC , Real Madrid CF, AFC Ajax and Galatasary SK, but also American Clubs like CA Boca Juniors, CA River Plate and Santos FC are well known and supported all over the world. Football is the only game played almost all over the world on a professional level. It is the game which is also known as “the beautiful game”, as once said by Edson Arantes do Nascimento, better known by his football name of Pelé. Football is thus a truly global sport.

However, in scientific sense, the research is still in its infancy. Even though there has been written a lot about football, most of it is in the form of biographies of players, or the histories of clubs and the matches. Research about football as a social phenomenon, or as a proxy for regional, national or global development, is far less known. There is however one English language academic journals which is dedicated completely to football, *Soccer & Society*. Next to this, there is extensive research being done on the social phenomenon of hooliganism in football. Globalization in football does seem to become more and more important, but further than research into Europeanization (Billing

et al 2006, Niemann *et al*, 2011) and marketing (Anderson & Carlsson 2011, Uden 2005) this has not gone yet.

Unfortunately, very little research has been done on Czech football, but there has been some research done on football in the Central European region, for example on Hungarian and Polish football (see for example Elliot 2012, Molnar 2007, Molnar and Maguire 2007, Wozniak 2009). The English language research on Czech football has been even less, limited to the study of Czech hooligans (Smolík 2006, 2012) and Czech football fandom in combination with civil society (Čarnogurská 2012). Next to this, research has been done on both the interwar and the post-war Mitropacup (Marschik 2001) but in this research Czechoslovakia is more of a background image instead of being the topic of research.

This is not completely 'fair': the Czech Republic was the runner-up in the European Championship of 1996, a lot of Czech players have played or are playing in famous clubs in England and Germany, for example former Manchester United FC player Poborský, former Liverpool FC player Šmicer, former Juventus FC player Nedvěd, Arsenal FC player Rosický and ofcourse Chelsea FC goalkeeper Čech.

Next to this, Prague is one of the big football capitals of Europe, and definitely Central Europe. Prague is the home to four of the most well-known football sides of Europe: AC Sparta Praha, SK Slavia Praha, FK Dukla Praha and FC Bohemians 1905, all four playing in the nation's first league, the Gambrinus Liga. In addition to this Prague also houses the second league clubs FK Viktoria Žižkov, which used to be a top-flight first

league club before 2004¹ and FK Bohemians Praha (Střížkov), next to many other third league non professional clubs. The Czech Republic is the only one of the Visegrad-4 countries which will, from 2015 onward, be allowed to send 5 clubs to the two European Leagues every year: 2 to the Champions League, and 3 to the Europe League² (Kassies 2014). In the last UEFA Country coefficient of 2013, Czech Republic ranks first among its Visegrad-4 brethren on place 17, with Hungary one place behind on number 18, but Slovakia on place 25 and Poland on 28 (Kassies 2014).

During the interwar period Prague was one of the big three cities of the Danubian School of soccer. AC Sparta Praha and SK Slavia Praha won the Mitropa Cup together three times, AC Sparta the first tournament in 1927 and again in 1935, SK Slavia Praha in 1938. The Mitropa Cup was the most important European tournament during the *interbellum*, where clubs out of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria, Italy and sometimes Yugoslavia played each other on yearly basis (Marschik 2001). Internationalization has thus always been at the heart of Czech football.

In fact, the English language research on Central European football becomes even smaller when one looks at the amount of research done on the clubs themselves. It can

¹ FK Viktoria Žižkov played in Gambrinus Liga from its founding until 2004, from 2007-2009 and in the 2011-2012 season

² The Czech Republic has risen two places compared to the previous Country Coefficient, in the last four years they were just allowed to send one club to Champions League, which is allowed from place 15. Hungary did indeed move one place up in the new ranking, but on 28th place they don't seem to have a chance to get another team into Champions League anytime soon. Poland has stagnated on the 21st place, and Slovakia has even dropped four places to the 30th place.

be said that until now, no proper research has been done on any of the clubs in Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, or Slovakia. This is at the very least intriguing due to the amount of transformation these clubs have gone through since 1989. However: The entire society in Central Europe has changed since 1989, and football is just small part of society in this respect.

To better understand football as an academic phenomenon, it is important to do more research on these fields. This paper tries to cover one of these gaps, namely the socialization of football clubs on an international level, more specifically the socialization of SK Slavia Praha.

For this, this the main research question of this paper is *Was there any socialization in the management of SK Slavia Praha after the club played the group stage of Champions League?* This main research question has three follow-up questions: *Was this socialization Type I (Logic of Consequence) or Type II (Logic of Appropriateness)?, Was there any persuasion involved by UEFA to get the management of SK Slavia Praha socialized?, and Did socialization prevail after not playing in the Champions League anymore?* Together these questions want to give a new insight in Czech football, in the theory of socialization and in the way how UEFA works when dealing with individual clubs.

This paper will start with showing a overview of the present debate and the theories of Europeanization on football and socialization. Afterwards the reasons for selecting this case study will be explained, together with the used methods of research. Then, the theories will be applied in real life in the case study and finished by a conclusion including remarks for possible extra research.

2. The Debate

2.1 Tracing Europeanization: EU and UEFA

European football has been heavily influenced by pressure from transnational cooperation in the last twenty years, which has created a sort of *Post-Bosman*³ environment. At the moment, football is unthinkable without any form of Europeanization involved, at least on the level of the Football Associations and the First League organizations. García *et al* notes that “the cases analysed indicate that Top-Down Europeanization pressures have played a substantial role in the transformation of European Football” (2011: 246). This Europeanization does not stop at the borders of the EU, but involves Europe completely: It is interesting to note that countries like Poland, who joined the EU in 2004, but adopted the rulings of *Bosman* in 2001, or Switzerland, which started implementing *Bosman* already in 1996, eight years before the common law on free movements of persons and goods with the EU would come into place. Next to *Bosman* and the national leagues, García *et al* also research the influence of the UEFA, the primary Europeanizer in European football, and their influence on the

³ The Bosman-arrest is a ruling by the European Court of Justice from 1995, which had two main points: The first being that clubs were no longer allowed to give preference to national players over foreign players, which meant that any caps on the amount of foreign players in the squad was deemed illegal. The second ruling stated that football players have the same rights as other European labour markets and thus should be able to leave a club if their contract expires. Before *Bosman*, it was normal that a club still “owned” the player after their contract expired. Because of this, *Bosman* has both Europeanized the national leagues, but has also brought in the extensive transfer fee’s which has (nearly) bankrupted many less stable clubs after 1995.

Europeanization of the national game. However, contrary to what might be expected, UEFA has been bypassed on different times by the clubs, or was just in time to react, so not to lose all its influence. The best example being the Champions League, which was organised as a reaction to the possible break away of the top-15 biggest European clubs, instead the other way around (Hill 2011). On the other hand, some of UEFA's newer schemes, for example its licensing system which states that clubs should have certain standards of professionalization before they can enter European competitions, and the "home grown"-rule, which states that only a certain amount of players of a club in the European competition are allowed to be bought instead of 'raised', have indeed been adopted as well by the national leagues and their Football Associations (FA). UEFA is also seen by the EU as an official partner and thus represents the clubs in Europe. As the researchers conclude:

"The Bosman ruling (in both its aspects) has been a case of top-down Europeanization that FAs and clubs were unable to defy. All country cases indicate that the Bosman ruling was implemented without much resistance, sometimes even beyond what was strictly required" (García et al 2011: 244).

and

"the cases analysed indicate that top-down Europeanization pressures have played a substantial role in the transformation of European football, albeit constituting one out of several important variables, alongside transnational, domestic and global pressures" (246).

Thus, the research argues that the main socialiser of European football, in the sense of transferring common values of Europe, be it the rulings of the European Court of Justice or changes in the organizational structure of football, are both the UEFA and the EU,

with both of them also reacting to each other. However, the contact towards the clubs, through their respective FA's, is mostly done by the rulings of the UEFA.

2.1.1 Tracing the influence of UEFA on the club level

National FA's are seen as the most important national actors, with the UEFA and the EU being the European actors. For Europeanization theories this is definitely a good research strategy, since it can aggregate big amounts of data and even can compare different countries side by side. Europeanization theory is in itself a theory which comes from groups as actors, instead of individuals (Niemann *et al* 2011). It is a way of research which mainly focuses on the codified parts of society, as is for example the case with the above mentioned book, where the researchers have focused on abstract cases as transfer regimes, TV rights policies and the amount of foreign players in a league. The research done until now misses the important fact that clubs themselves have been shaping their own identities, both through intra- and interaction.

Since the FA's and the League organizations are the leading associations in every European country, and their decisions in turn must be adopted by the clubs, the clubs are being Europeanized as well. Next to this, because of the reforms in the Champions League and the Europe League and the associated licensing system, more clubs than ever fall under direct contact with UEFA. In fact, thanks to *Financial Fair Play*, the UEFA now has a direct say in clubs all over Europe, with Manchester City FC and Paris Saint-Germain FC being the first two clubs who might face severe penalties over their financial wrongdoings (Wilson 2014). Since the reform of the Europe League, more clubs than ever are eligible to play European football. This has become even more widespread

thanks to the rules of some of the National Leagues, for example the Dutch *Eredivisie*, where nowadays playoffs can send a team as low as eight in the ranks of the League to the Europa League⁴. This means that more clubs than ever will have direct contact with the UEFA policy makers, which means that the chance of socialization is getting higher as well. Because of the higher number of European matches, more clubs now have to communicate with each other to arrange European matches, for example about the amount of Away Fans and training facilities for the squad. Lastly, because of the establishment of the European Club Association (ECA), the clubs *themselves* now directly contact each other, without the UEFA even having to come in as a broker.

Furthermore, previous research has shown that if there has been any research on clubs, they have been mainly seen as a single entity (see for example Houška 1992 and Kok 2013), neglecting the fact clubs are run by a management, which in the end is the group which has to make the decisions. If one wants to research the change of clubs in a Europeanized world, one should start with the clubs most basic actor: Their personnel.

2.1.2 Moving into new fields

If one wants to do any research on personnel, the theory of Europeanization is not useful anymore since it normally works as a highly abstract theory, which is more concerned with outcomes than processes and more interested in documents than creators. For research on individual actors, this is not very useful; it would be far more interesting to see how persons behave under (perceived) Europeanization, whether it changes their

⁴ EXPLANATION IN FOOTNOTE NEEDED

behaviour and/or their internal set of norms and values. For this kind of research, this paper proposes the theory of socialization.

2.2 Socialization⁵

2.2.1 Definition of socialization

Socialization is the theory which states that a person, because of interaction with other persons, changes his previous values into new ones, which are more accepted within the group he is part of. However, one has to remind oneself that “it is clear that socialization is still in its early stages” (Johnston 2007: 225) and thus the working definitions are still being amended. In the field of psychology and sociology, where the theory originated, socialization means “the process, which the individual goes through, and through which the individual develops, forms and is formed as part of society. (...) The aim of the process of socialization is to create an integrated individual able to understand his/ her culture, use that culture as a source of support and contribute to the culture’s development” (Šulová 2008: 5). In the field of international relations, mainly in the theoretical fields of Social Constructivism and Rationalism, the definition has been slightly altered. Johnston defines Socialization as “the internalization of new group norms through persuasion and/or communicative action” (2007: 211). Gheciu calls

⁵ This chapter draws heavily on work of Jeffrey T. Checkel, one of the main scholars on International Socialization, a social constructivist and the editor of the book *International Institutions and Socialization in Europe* (2007) and Alexandra Gheciu, the author of *NATO in the ‘New Europe’: The Politics of International Socialization after the Cold War* (2005)

socialization “(...) the process of inducting newcomers into the norms and rules governing a given community or social group” (2005: 10). Checkel elaborates further on this in a social constructivist way and states that “In adopting community rules, socialization implies that an agent switches from following a logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness; this adoption is sustained over time and is quite independent from a particular structure of material incentives or sanctions.” (2005: 6). Zürn and Checkel as well state that internalization is the endpoint of socialization (2007: 248). The best definition of socialization might come from one of Checkel’s early articles on socialization theory, where he states:

“Socialization refers to the process of inducting new actors into the rules, norms and ways of behavior of a given community. It’s endpoint is internalization, when the common norms and rules become taken for granted” (2006: 364).

It is worth pointing out that not only persons can be the actors of socialization, it can also be any other agency like states, groups or organizations (Koenig and Schneider 2010: 299). This means that the group norms not necessarily have to come directly from the other actors, but also can get internalized through the group dynamics itself. It is even possible that groups socialize other groups, or for example international organizations socialize states. Even though in the end it might only be the elites who have been socialized, but they in turn go on to create new norms (norm groups). (Gheciu 2005 and 2007).

2.2.2 Types of Socialization

There are two types of socialization: Type I and Type II. Type I socialization says that conscious instrumental calculations get replaced by conscious role playing, which

means that the actor does not changing its behaviour, but simply out of rational behaviour decides to change his values just as much as necessary to stay in the game. Type II on the other hand accepts the move to a logic of appropriateness as “the right thing to do”: The agent thus adopts interests and identities of the community of which the agent is part (Checkel 2005).

There is an interesting dichotomy regarding Type I and Type II socialization, since it is possible to go from Type I to Type II, but both come from very different streams of International Relations Theory. Type I socialization is a more pure Rational Choice way of looking at socialization, whereas Type II socialization is bound to the theories of Social Constructivism. Research into the European Union and NATO has shown that Type I and Type II socialization can co-exist, and that in some institutions the former, and in other institutions the latter, is dominant (Johnston 2007, Zürn & Checkel 2007). In this sense, Socialization is one of the main theories in Constructivism that is able to bridge the *and/or* gap and move to a *both/and* theorem (Checkel 2003:227).

Even in Type II socialization there might be chances for Rational Choice Theory. As Lewis notes: there can be an “expanded conception of the self that includes non-instrumental, pro-norm behaviour *without the threat of external sanctioning*; it is based on the internalization of standards of appropriateness” (2007: 140).

2.2.3 One-sided versus Two-sided socialization

With respect to the organizations researched within the field of socialization, it seems like a dichotomy has emerged. Research has shown that it is possible to have one or two way socialization, for example the research which is done into the European Council

tends to show that both sides seem to be able to socialize from each other, even though the novice is always at a disadvantage (Lewis 2007: 151). However, one could argue that both sides are theoretically able to socialize each other, because none of them seems to have a real moral prevalence. Contrarily, research on the relations of NATO to new member states shows that it is also possible to have one-way socialization, where the one party, seemingly standing on the 'moral high grounds', socializes the 'less advantageous' actor to become more like the former (Gheciu 2007: 179). Next to this the (perceived) weaker of the two actors will be more willing to adopt the norms of the (perceived) stronger of the two actors, since they look up to this actor. This in fact means that in the two-sided socialization, a certain form of open debate regarding new norms and values is possible, whereas in one-sided socialization it is more probable that some form of persuasion will be involved.

2.2.4 Persuasion

Socialization is not always a process which 'just happens' because of interaction. Sometimes, mainly in one-sided socialization, a certain amount of persuasion is needed to convince the socializee that taking up the new norms and values is the right thing to do. Persuasion can be defined by "the social process of communication that involves changing beliefs, attitudes, or behaviour in the absence of overt coercion" (Checkel 2006 : 364). Or to put it more thoroughly: "Persuasion is a cognitive process that involves changing attitudes about cause and effect with the absence of overt coercion; (...) a mechanism through which social learning may occur, thus leading to interest redefinition and identity change" (Checkel 1999: 549). Very briefly one can summarise that persuasion is a way to socialize 'the other side of the table' through rational arguments

and debate. There are three types of persuasion which normally can be used by the socializer: Consistency, authority and social proof. Consistency in this sense references linking changes to norms that are accepted by socializees as being unproblematic. Authority is the use of the expertise of the socializer to show that he knows what he is doing, and thus the socializee should adopt those norms as well. Social proof is the notion of showing that 'everybody is already doing this', thus showing examples of other places where these norms are already working and being a success (Gheciu 2007: 188). Sometimes, it can be possible to go even further, by trying not only to persuade the socializee into a certain group of norms, but also into a certain interpretation of these norms, or "how those norms were to be translated into practice in particular situations" (Gheciu 2007: 189). An example would be not just to learn about democracy, but also to learn the "Western" way how to implement this democracy.

A different way how to look at persuasion is through the norm creation process. This process has three conditions. First of all it needs moral entrepreneurs, or put differently persuasion agents, ie. actors that are willing to persuade others. Second, it needs a have a open policy window. This means that there must be some kind of problem without an answer, because at those times, norms are often easier to get changed. Third, the group needs to believe that the new norms which are introduced by the norm entrepreneur, are the 'right' ones, be it Type I or Type II socialization. If this is not the case, the new norms will obviously disappear again (Checkel 1999: 552).

2.2.5 Being the Novice vs. being the youngster

Scholars of Pedagogy have a long history of explaining the socialization patterns between teachers and students. Through this it has been shown that if actors take up such roles, socializing the student works better and is more prone to Type II socialization. The novice – teacher relation works even better “when socializees recognize a given international socializer as representative of a certain group, or community, with which they identify” (Gheciu 2007: 179). If the actor is a novice, it is thus to be expected that a socialization will work better. However, for this to work there needs to be an unbalanced relation between the socializer and the socializee. This is for example the case when NATO was teaching the Czech Republic and Romania how to behave as a proper liberal democracy, and the Representatives of the Czech Republic themselves admitted “ we still have a lot to learn” (Gheciu 2007: 183), or the late president Havel who said that “we are going to need a lot of help and advice from Western experts” if they would let the inexperienced dissidents, and not the experienced but unreliable communists, run the country (Gheciu 2005: 1). If both of them are on the same level, or at least feel this way, then a novice – teacher relation is not going to come into play.

In addition, it is argued that if the education is carried out over a longer time, and if the education is consistent, the socialization will be better and of bigger impact. Also, the teachers need to be trusted by the socializees and if they are no longer trusted (for example because of a hidden agenda, or a lack of knowledge in general), the socialization education will almost definitely fail (Gheciu 2005 and 2007).

2.2.6 Predictions of Socialization

Even though socialization can be highly fluid and sometimes very much unpredictable (Hooghe 2007, Lewis 2007), there are several conditions for which it can be stated that they do help socialization and thus make it easier to predict. The first set of four predictions are: A common background within the group, a feeling within the group of crisis or the failure of the policy, repeated meetings and/or a high density of participation within those meetings, and no direct political pressure from outside, or exposure by the media (Checkel 1999: 549⁶) Next to this, other indicators are a high degree of Agent Autonomy and the already existing norm of consensus in any group. Lastly, there are three organizational characteristics that can help to positively predict socialization. The first is the primacy of the organization: if the to be socialized group has a priority for the actor above any other secondary (national) organization, then one can predict higher chances for socialization. Second, if the organization sees their preferences as in line with any other organizations of the actor, then chances are also higher. Even if this might look like 'stating the obvious', it is important, since it can be overlooked very easily. Third and lastly, the more coherent the identity of the organization and the more clearly linked the set of norms are, the higher the chances for socialization are as well (Johnston 2007: 215).

⁶ Checkel himself states that his four conditions arose from a number of authors, for the whole list see endnote no 10 (1999: 559)

2.2.7 Looking ahead by looking behind

However, after these explanations of socialization, one has to remind oneself of the words of Johnston:

“Like in the early stage of contractual institutionalist research, the goal is more or less to show that it happens, that it has ontological validity, in a sense, and, somewhat more vaguely, that it ‘matters’ because one is seeing changes in preferences and interests that could not be explained otherwise. (...) The next step is how much it matters, and why” (2007: 225)

And

“(...) (S)ocialization research needs to focus more on comparison with other regions, other periods of time, and other socialization environments” (2007: 236)

Socialization in International Relations is still a very young field, and as well very much a *niche* within Social Constructivism. The amount of scholars who study this type of socialization and who publicise about it, are almost to be counted on one hand. Next to this, the empirical theory testing of socialization demands a huge amount of data, and a long term observation of one group. This is made even more difficult since the questions that need to be asked of individuals, so that we can better understand socialization, are often not asked in the questionnaires, which means that scholars just can ‘tap in’ into already existing research, but have to create their own (Hooghe 2007: 74). The theory testing thus takes a long time. Lastly, scholars tend to ‘move on’ to another field of research after a couple of years, thus in this case depriving socialization again of their main researchers, which means the is in constant danger of ‘dying out’.

3. The Research

3.1 Case study selection

3.1.1 Socializers in Europe: UEFA (and ECA)

As already shown above, football clubs are almost never in direct contact with EU. Europeanization seems to have happened almost only through the level of the spokespersons of the clubs: the UEFA, the ECA and the national FA's. Because of this lack of interaction with the EU, it will be as well highly improbable to find any direct socialization between management of clubs and fans on the one side, and the EU on the other side. Accordingly, the national FA's are also no valuable option for socialization: On the international level they are nothing more than the intermediate between the clubs and any international organizations. Next to this, the FA's themselves never organize the international leagues: This is the domain of the UEFA. Any socialization going through the FA's would thus be a two-step process, in which one first would have to prove socialization in the FA's, which then is transferred again to the clubs. This is almost impossible to prove, because of the indirect contact.

This leaves two European organizations out of which any form of socialization would be possible: UEFA and ECA. Within ECA, all member clubs are officially on the same level, meaning that a form of two-sided socialization would be possible. However, the ECA meets very irregularly, only maximum four of times a year (ECA 2014a). Also, the ECA normally has no direct interaction with the whole management structure: Clubs normally send one representative to ECA meetings, and the ECA very seldom comes itself to

clubs (ECA 2014b). Lastly, ECA is a very young organization: It was established in January 2008, when the G14, a pressure organization of the 14 big clubs in Europe at that time, decided to disband itself because UEFA was willing to listen to their grievances (BCC 2008). The UEFA is in a certain sense the exact opposite of the ECA. First of all, the UEFA does directly engage with clubs, because they manage the European club leagues. This means that on the international level, the UEFA behaves as if it is the national FA, meaning a direct interaction. This also means that most probably direct contact between the club management, and the UEFA is possible. UEFA has been established in June 1954, making it as well over 50 years older than ECA.

Next to this, UEFA itself seems to see itself on the 'moral high grounds' (for example because of the Financial Fair Play rules or the banning of clubs from European football because of corruption scandals). Thus if there would be any socialization, it would be most probable that this happens one-sidedly, from the UEFA towards the management of the clubs. The UEFA is thus seen as a bulwark with which one cannot negotiate, or, at the very least, which is itself immune to bottom-up socialization. It has been shown that the UEFA itself can socialize, or at the very least is willing to listen to the terms of the clubs, but this only happens through the combined effort of an organization such as the ECA, or through the European Union (Hill 2011). *Bosman* is of course the case where it is shown that it is possible to socialize the UEFA, in the sense that nowadays the UEFA completely believes in its judgement, however, this was done through the ECJ and the EU's common market, not through any individual club. This means that socialization regarding clubs means an unbalanced relationship, where the clubs can download morals and values, but where it is impossible to upload them towards the UEFA. This is

in fact congruent to Gheciu's research on the socialization of Czech Republic and Romania's political elites by NATO in the mid-90's, where there was as well an unbalanced relationship - with both countries downloading from NATO without any proper chance of uploading ways of socialization (Gheciu 2005 and 2007). Accepting this logic means that the research can be slimmed down to just the management and the fans of the club, making the UEFA the passive actor⁷.

3.1.2 Selecting the reason for interaction: The UEFA Champions League

Since 1992, when it replaced the European Champion Clubs' Cup (better known as the European Cup), the UEFA Champions League has been the top-flight international European tournament. Different than its little sister, the UEFA Cup Winners' Cup (the UEFA Cup), the Champions League has since its invention had a group stage and a knock out phase, whereas in the UEFA Cup a group stage was only invented after the change into the UEFA Europa League in 2009. This means that clubs which qualify for the Champions League have guaranteed three home and three away matches in the Autumn season against international opponents. One can thus expect a very intense cooperation with the UEFA, since very high standards for stadia and clubs are asked for

⁷ This premises is also accepted for three organizational reasons: One, this being a MA Thesis, any research into UEFA would have made this thesis far too elaborate and lengthy. Second, UEFA is highly difficult to penetrate organization, which means that without the right contacts, it is very difficult to find the persons who were at that time handling the contacts with Czech football clubs. Third, UEFA being a international organization, this would most probably have meant a lot of travelling, if the right people were found in the first place, making the research very costly. Without any research grants in place, this is impossible to achieve for a MA thesis.

by the UEFA (UEFA 2007, 2011), without which a club is not allowed to play Champions League or is forced to move to another stadium to play their matches. The Champions League is also the most lucrative international tournament in European football. Just by reaching the group stage, a club can already earn more than eight million euros (UEFA 2012a). Compared to the retooled Europa League, where it is only a bit over 1 million euro's (UEFA 2012b), it is understandable why clubs want to play rather in the Champions League, but also that the stakes in Champions League are far higher than in Europa League. Thus, if one wants to find any socialization in Czech football, it is most interesting to look at clubs who qualified for the group stage of Champions League.

3.1.3 Selecting the people: The management

Out of the research on socialization, it follows that the main agency that would be most prone to socialization is the one which interacts the most closely with the socializer, which is the management of a football club. The management of a club is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the club and is composed of the people who will have the organizational contacts. The players and the coaches on the other hand are responsible for the sportive side of the club, but they rely on the management to get all the procedures sorted out. It is thus not to be expected that any UEFA official would approach the coach or the players, and thus any chance of socialization would be slim. Next to this, both coaches and trainers tend to stay only for a short period of time with the club, whereas people working in management are expected to stay in the club for longer. Another reason to select the management is that no previous research seems to have been done in this field.

Initially this paper also had the intention to research the management of the stadium of SK Slavia Praha, the Eden Aréna (also known by its sponsored name of Synot Tip Aréna) and the planning and building of this stadium between 2002 and 2008. Research was done in the companies involved in the building (Lopatová 2009, VINET Invest 2013) and it was planned to find out if the UEFA regulations, both when building the stadium and when the Eden Aréna hosted the UEFA Supercup between Chelsea FC and FC Bayern München in the autumn of 2013, had socialized the management or the builders and architects. However, the management and holding company of the Eden Aréna, E-Side Property Ltd., were not willing to cooperate. Next to this, the companies involved in building the stadium were either in the process of liquidation (Arcadis Project Management s.r.o.) or did not respond at all even after multiple requests, which was the case for Hochtief CZ a.s. and the architects of *Architektonický ateliér* OMICRON-K. For this reason it was thus unfortunately deemed impossible to do any further research on the Eden Aréna and its case selection was therefore decided against.

3.1.4 Selecting the club: SK Slavia Praha

For Czech sides it has always been notably difficult to qualify for the group stage of the Champions League. Because of the low UEFA Country Coefficient of the Czech Republic, only one club, being the League Champion, was allowed to go through a qualifying knock-out match, before reaching the group stage. In this last knock-out round, most of the Czech teams have since then found their Waterloo during this phase.

Still, in a total of 10 times, three clubs were able to qualify: AC Sparta Praha (7 times) , SK Slavia Praha (1 time) and FC Viktoria Plzeň (2 times).⁸

Since AC Sparta Prague has been in the group stage since 1997, it would be very difficult to find out any form of socialization, or at least it would be difficult to point to what exactly were the effects of qualifying for the group stage, since it has been part of direct UEFA interactions already for more than 15 years. The second argument not to select AC Sparta Praha is the fact that the club has not been able to qualify anymore since 2005, almost ten years ago. This means the research would have to be based on the period around the millennium, which makes it difficult to find the right sources and the persons who were then part of the management of the club and the fan groups⁹.

This leaves SK Slavia Praha and FC Viktoria Plzeň as possible cases. When comparing FC Viktoria Plzeň and SK Slavia Praha, the latter is the club with the history and the legacy, whereas FC Viktoria Plzeň has only started to be well known in the last ten

⁸ The first Czech club to qualify was AC Sparta Praha in the 1997-1998 season, where they ended third in their group. From 1999 until 2001, the champion of the National League made it directly in the group stage (all three times AC Sparta Praha) with a second team playing the last knock-out qualifiers. In 2003, 2004, 2005 AC Sparta Praha made it again into the groupstage. In 2007 after defeating AFC Ajax in the qualifiers, for the first time the second of the two big clubs in Prague, SK Slavia Praha, qualified for the groupstage. In 2011, FK Viktoria Plzen were able to qualify, after defeating FC Copenhagen, repeating this in 2013.

⁹ It has to be said that the author is himself a supporter of SK Slavia Praha and because of the century long rivalry between AC Sparta Praha and SK Slavia Praha, it would have been almost impossible for the author to arrange any contacts with supporters of AC Sparta Praha. Being a supporter of SK Slavia Praha also made it easier to get the contacts of the club, both through the supporters organization and through other fans.

years. From 1993 onwards, when Czechoslovakia was split into Czech Republic and Slovakia, SK Slavia Praha has been the second most successful club in the Gambrinus Liga, the National League of Czech Republic. SK Slavia Praha has won the League title three times and were runners-up for another nine times. This even led to SK Slavia Praha's derisive nickname *Věčný Druhý*, meaning "Eternal Second". This in itself is a pun towards one of SK Slavia Praha's official nicknames, *Věčná Slavia*, meaning "Eternal Slavia". FC Viktoria Plzeň on the other hand only ended twice as first in the Gambrinus Liga, in 2011 and 2013. Next to this, they never ended as second until the 2013-2014 season and only once were even third, in 2012, behind AC Sparta Praha and Slovan Liberec. In fact until 2006 FC Viktoria Plzeň was mainly battling relegation on a yearly basis. *Věčná Slavia* itself is another reason why to choose SK Slavia Praha over FC Viktoria Plzeň: the former has already played internationally since 1899 (Houska 1992: 14-16), even winning the Mitropa Cup in 1938. It is as well the oldest club of Czech Republic and one of the oldest in Central Europe, being founded in 1892. SK Slavia Praha's official fanclub, Odbor Pratel, has over 60 clubs throughout the Czech Republic. SK Slavia Praha is a very popular club of the Czech Republic (Houška 1992), even spanning to a fangroup in Brazil (Fanklub SK Slavia Praha Brasil: 2014). Next to this, SK Slavia Praha has a very active hardcore supporters scene, with a group of approximately Ultras organized within *Tribuna Sever*, the Northern Tribune (Slaviultras.cz 2014). FC Viktoria Plzeň was not established until 1911, and prior to 2010 had only once played internationally, in 1971 against German side FC Bayern München in the European Cup Winners' Cup. In this regard SK Slavia Praha can be considered as highly relevant for this study, mainly because the pressure in SK Slavia

Praha to adopt new values would possibly be far higher than with FC Viktoria Plzeň because of their legacy, history and being more “cosmopolitan”.¹⁰ Next to this, due to the of the well known name of SK Slavia Praha, one might expect more interest from the side of the UEFA in getting the club socialized, since it was expected to stay in the top flights of the Gambrinus Liga due to its track record.

Another argument is that since 2009, SK Slavia Praha has not played international anymore. This might sound contradictory, but considering Checkel (1999: 552, see above), where he talks about norm entrepreneurs, it is interesting to find out if the people within SK Slavia Praha stayed socialized after the UEFA left the club again, ie. if there was socialization and if it was of a long term effect or not.

The last and more practical argument for SK Slavia Praha was the fact that the author of this research studies in Prague. Next to this, he lives only 20 minutes walking distance away from SK Slavia Praha’s stadium, the Eden Aréna. The third argument why SK Slavia Praha prevails in this research over FC Viktoria Plzeň was the ease of getting contacts within both the fans and the management of SK Slavia Praha compared to FC Viktoria Plzeň.¹¹

¹⁰ A often heard saying in Prague is “Prague is not Czech Republic”, because of the average income, political opinion and overall feeling of the inhabitants of Prague compared to the rest of Czech Republic. This, pooled together with the amount of expats living in Prague, makes Prague both more western and more cosmopolitan than the rest of Czech Republic (R3 2014, authors own experiences in Prague)

¹¹ The author has to mainly thank Mr. Raiman and Mr. Van Baarle, who were able to arrange contacts within the club for this research. Next to this, SK Slavia Praha has appointed a Dutch

3.2 Research Questions and Hypotheses

3.2.1 Main Research Question

This research wants to answer several questions: The main question for the management is *Was there any socialization in the management of SK Slavia Praha after the club played the group stage of Champions League?*

3.2.2 Main hypotheses for the employees

As stated in the paragraph "Predictions of Socialization", there are a couple of indicators to predict socialization, at least on the level of the employees. One would expect that some of those could be applied to the employees of the club: Even though it is difficult to check whether there is a common background in SK Slavia Praha, one can argue that most of the employees do support the club to a certain level, and have a history with the club. Next to this, because of the Champions League matches and the amount of effort UEFA puts in those matches (UEFA 2007), it is to be expected that meetings will be repeated and of high participation. One would as well expect a form of common norms in the club, because one can expect the whole club to work for the same reason: To make their club the most successful. This means that the chances for a common norm of consensus are also high. Since SK Slavia Praha is an autonomous entity, there are no secondary organizations where the allegiances of any of the employees lay, which is

advisor and a Dutch coach in the the beginning of 2014, which made it for the author, himself a Dutch national, easier to approach these persons and to interview them.

also a positive factor for socialization. Both UEFA and SK Slavia Praha had a common goal: To play Champions League football, which means their preferences would also be in line with each other.

The level of Agent Autonomy it is more difficult to estimate, because this is not known before the research and can only be found out *during* the research, since there has not been any research on the employees of SK Slavia Praha before. Also, in the case of Champions League matches one would not expect any feeling of crisis, rather euphoria, when having contact with UEFA. Third, there is a little chance for not having any exposure of the media: Because of the low amount of times a Czech club was able to qualify for the group stage of Champions League, the media would have been most probably all over it.

Thus, it can be stated that there is a plausible chance for socialization in the club, but this paper at this point cannot completely rule out that there was no socialization happening in the first place.

3.2.3 Follow-up Research Questions

Next to this main research question, this paper poses another three questions as follow-up questions. The first of these follow-up questions, presuming that socialization did indeed happen, is *Was this socialization Type I (Logic of Consequence) or Type II (Logic of Appropriateness)?* The hypothesis here is more unclear. One would expect Type II socialization because of the 'intellectual history' of the club, However, since without acknowledging the rulings of the UEFA, a club cannot acquire the international license (Niemann *et al* 2011), it can be also expected that the management of the club only did

so because they were to a certain degree forced to do so, which means Type I socialization could be as well expected.

The second follow-up question is *Was there any persuasion involved by UEFA to get the management of SK Slavia Praha socialized?* It can be expected that UEFA used some form of consistency, authority and/or social proof. This is due to the fact that it has already been shown that the UEFA can put pressure on clubs because of the financial rewards and because of the high prestige of playing in the Champions League. Both Financial Fair Play and its rulings (Wilson 2014) as well as the 2013 banning of the Turkish side Fenerbahçe S.K. over a corruption scandal (Yorke 2013) has shown that the UEFA has leverage over the clubs and is willing to use it if necessary.

The third and last follow-up question is *Did socialization prevail after not playing in the Champions League anymore?* The hypotheses for this question depends on the previous research questions: If there was indeed Type II socialization going on in the management of SK Slavia Praha, then one would expect that the new norms and values which were adopted would stay with the management of the club. On the other side, if there would be only Type I socialization going on, it would make more sense that the club afterwards would revert back to their old norms and values.

3.3 Operationalization

3.3.1 Previous research

For this research to add as much value to the field as possible, the author has tried to replicate the operationalization used in previous socialization research as well as

possible. According to authors like Checkel (1999), Zürn and Checkel (2005), Gheciu (2005) and Hooghe (2007) socialization research should be based around three areas: Firstly, testimonies through interviews with the actual people involved in the socialization, to find out whether or not they themselves were socialized. Secondly, previous research has used the minutes of actual meetings of the researched organizations. Both are primary sources, whereby both are meant to check each other. With regard to the testimonies of the people involved, previous research states that these should be conducted repeatedly in a timeframe of around three to five years, to find out whether any actual socialization happened in these years. Thirdly, a group of secondary sources, being for example newspaper articles or TV interviews with the actual participants should be used to check their opinions with the ones they gave in the interviews. This together, these authors argue, should create an as objective and as close to the truth as possible research.

3.3.2 Interviews

It has to be noted that arranging interviews is not always part of the standard rules of procedure of a MA thesis. However, without any such interviews socialization would be very difficult to prove. Therefore, an extra step was made to conduct these interviews. Because of the limited time available for this research, it was decided from the beginning that multiple interviews with the same respondents would not be possible¹². Instead, as

¹² For completeness, this was as well done because this research is 'just' a MA thesis and did not receive any funding, making it very difficult to replicate previous research designs in the first place.

shown beneath, it was tried in the interviews to let the respondents evaluate the previous years themselves. However, this did create problems with objectivity, since some of these recollections can be very much coloured by personal experience of the discussed times. The only possible way to check for this was to conduct more than one interview per research group. It has to be noted that this is a weak point of this research. However, the outcomes of the interviews seem to overall draw the same conclusions when compared. Table 1 shows the persons interviewed, their functions, the timeframe when they were active within the club and their anonymous names.

Table 1: Interviewed Respondents

<i>Anonymous Name</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Years active</i>
Respondent 1 (R1)	Advisor to the board of directors	2013-now
Respondent 2 (R2)	Member Department of Communications	2011-now (on a half year hiatus at the moment)
Respondent 3 (R3)	Member of Department of Communications	2003-2013
Respondent 4 (R4)	Assistant of General Director	2005-2012

In total, 4 interviews were held: Two with persons who were working in the club during the Champions League group stage and two with persons currently employed in the club, but not yet in 2007. Two of these interviews were conducted face-to-face, all of them in pubs and restaurants scattered around Prague. These interviews took between one and one and a half hours to conduct. Two were questionnaires which were sent by e-mail to the respondents. This was the case for one post-2007 employee, and for one

employee of the Champions League times. Getting the interviews actually taking place also took a lot of time, since the time frame for conducting the interviews corresponded with the busiest months in football, both for the Czech League and for international football, fields in which some of the respondents were now employed.

3.3.3 Interviews with Press

Because of the language barrier, the time frame, and the fact that the chances of obtaining any documents in the first place were very slim, it was decided against obtaining any minutes from meetings. To check for this, the plan was to conduct interviews with journalists specialized in SK Slavia Praha. Journalists of iSport.cz (Czech Republic's biggest sports-website, part of the publishing house of the newspaper *Blesk*), Aktualne.cz (Part of the publishing house of the newspaper *Hospodarske Noviny* and the weekly *Respekt*), the newspapers *Lidové Noviny* and *Mladá Fronta DNES*, and of Hatrick, one of the Czech weeklies on football, were approached through e-mail and through personal contacts and asked for an interview. However, the approached journalists didn't answer in the first place, or unfortunately were not able to conduct any interviews within the given timeframe.

3.3.4 Interviews with supporters

Instead, two interviews were held with supporters. The first one was held with two founding members of *Odbor Pratel*, SK Slavia Praha's main fanclub, which was established in 1964. These two members were well acquainted with both the post-1989 and the Champions League period of SK Slavia Praha and were thus used as proxy for the journalists. However, because both persons were in some ways aligned to SK Slavia

Praha, they were not completely independent. Next to this, the interview was conducted in Czech, with a Czech-English interpreter. Even though the whole interview was translated afterwards, some parts could have been 'lost in translation' *during* the interview, which lead in regard to certain questions to different answers than expected. Both factors have been taken into account when using this source in the research. The other two interviews were held with leading members of the Ultras of *Tribuna Sever*, a loose organization of (mainly young) hardcore supporters, who are since last season as well aligned to *Odbor Pratel*. One of them was as well employed in the *ProSlavisty* fanshop of the club. All three interviews were held to get a broader perspective on the club itself and to get some insights in how they experienced the club and its norms and values. All persons however asked for anonymity after their interview, so their names can't be disclosed here. See table 2 below for the anonymous names of the interviewed persons.

Table 2: Interviewed supporters

<i>Anonymous Name</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Years active</i>
Interviewed supporter 1 (I1)	Members of <i>Odbor Pratel</i> since founding in 1964	1964-now
Interviewed supporter 2 (I2)	Top ranking member of <i>Tribuna Sever</i>	2003-now
Interviewed supporter 3 (I3)	Top ranking member of <i>Tribuna Sever</i> , employee of the <i>ProSlavisty</i> fanshop	2003-now

3.3.5 Newspaper articles

Where possible, newspaper articles were used as a secondary source to check the interviews, and to create an overview of the history of SK Slavia Praha from a club perspective. This because such a overview is deemed important for a club, where history is part of 'everyday life' because of its richness. This history was indispensable when interviewing the respondents because of the remarks they often made with regard to the history of SK Slavia Praha. Articles were as collected to get an overview of the ownership of the club, since the club was in a lot of different, and sometimes foreign, hands in after the Velvet Revolution. The sources of these articles were mainly Czech newspapers, mainly aktualne.cz, iSport.cz and the weekly magazine Respekt, but as well the official news articles of UEFA, and the official website of SK Slavia Praha, slavia.cz. Both the present and the previous website of SK Slavia Praha were being used, the latter trough the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine. Articles were sought on the history of the club, the Champions League time itself, but also on the aftermath of the non-qualification to the group stage the year afterwards, which triggered big financial problems for the club and which caused problems with the previous and then-present owners. The Czech articles being used had to be translated, which means that here as well some parts of the story might have been lost in translation.

3.3.6 Field Research

As an extra research method, it was decided to attend both home- and away matches of SK Slavia Praha. This was done for a twofold of reasons: Firstly to see in which state Czech football actually is, meaning mainly the communications and the stadiums. The

visit of home matches was done to find out how much the club itself behaved as a professional club, one that would be in line with UEFA standards. Going to away matches would in this way compare the experience of SK Slavia Praha with the other Czech clubs, seeing if the perceived professionalization was something ordinary, or something very much a *niche*. If the latter would be the case, that would be another indication that there was indeed some form of socialization going on in SK Slavia Praha. According to Waddington (2004), using Burgess' (1984) and Gold's (1958) ideal types for observational roles, there are four types of observers:

“1 the complete participant, who operates covertly, concealing any intention to observe the setting;

2 the participant-as-observer, who forms relationships and participates in activities but makes no secret of an intention to observe events;

3 the observer-as-participant, who maintains only superficial contacts with the people being studied (for example, by asking them occasional questions); and

4 the complete observer, who merely stands back and ‘eavesdrops’ on the proceedings.” (2004: 154)

In this research, the observer, being the author, most of the time was behaving as the complete participant. This was partly born out of necessity, because of the supporter background of the author. This also means the first reason to for example go on away

trips was not always the observations, but the personal experience. In fact, the author was sometimes more part of the group than an observer.¹³

However, as Burgess explains, being a complete participant can be very positive for observational research: it means the possibility to conduct complete covert observations, meaning that the group being observed trusts the observer one hundred percent and is most often completely honest (1984: 66). Next to this the author sometimes also used the second typology, the participant-as-observer. Some of the supporters for example knew the author was working on a research on SK Slavia Praha. From a scientific point of view, this typology is more honest, since the persons being observed *know* they are being observed, whereas on the other hand the observer is allowed to freely move around (Burgess 1984: 66 and Havelund, Joern and Rasmussen 2012). Both identities have their negative sides: the complete observer as being used in this research can himself have a –in this case positive - bias towards the club and a skewed relation with any respondents when afterwards being approached for an interview. The participant-as-observer can evoke a not completely honest response of people when talking with them, because they tend to give the answers the researcher wants to hear, or they censor it because they don't want to let the researcher know certain things.

¹³ During for example after the away match against SK Sigma Olomouc, where the author mainly behaved as a supporter, the author experienced the tense atmosphere of being escorted by Riot Police during the whole trip, except for the two hours in the stadium.

3.3.7 Obtaining the contacts

All of the interviews were arranged through informal contacts, both direct contacts of the author and indirect contacts. The former was the case with the interviews with and one of the post-Champions League employees of SK Slavia Praha. The latter was the case with the other post-Champions League employee and both of the employees who were in the club during the group stage of the Champions League. It was however very difficult to obtain any more than these four contacts: The snowballing effect for example did not work out at all, only one of the respondents was able to provide new contacts.

3.3.8 Creating the interviews

Where possible, all questionnaires used the same type of questions, just rephrased in different tense for the respondents who were still working in the club, and the ones who were not working there anymore. This standardization in questions was done to have an as unambiguously and standardized as possible questionnaire, to create the least amount of bias between the interviews. The questions were all open-ended, however, some were written in such a way to get a more general, and some a more specific answer. Additionally, the interview itself was semi-structured. Sometimes questions were skipped if the person had already answered them before, and sometimes new questions were asked if the interviewer didn't have the feeling the question was completely answered. All but one interview were conducted in English, the exception being one in the Dutch language. A result of this was that this sometimes led to questions being 'lost in translation', since English was just the *Lingua Franca*, not the native language of the

interviewer or the respondent. This then meant that some questions needed to be rephrased several times due to the language barrier.

3.3.9 The structure of the interviews

To check for socialization in the respondents themselves, and for their assessment of socialization within the management organization of SK Slavia Praha, the questionnaire was divided in four types of categories. The complete questionnaire is visible in Table 3. The first part of the interviews were questions about objective parts of the organization, namely the number of employees, the-perceived-average age of the employees and their experience.

The second part of the interview were questions about the management of SK Slavia Praha as a whole, which meant questions about the communication, hierarchy, the presence of any morally important figures and the comparison between the organization of SK Slavia Praha and '(west-) European clubs'. Both parts were included to find out if there are any incentives for socialization. As shown in the hypotheses, there is a bigger chance for socialization if the organization is coherent, but also if the employees have no previous experience, an already existing norm of consensus and the amount of Agent Autonomy. By asking the respondents these questions, it was tested if any of these predictions were true in SK Slavia Praha. Next to this, some of the respondents, mainly the ones in higher functions, were asked about the actual contacts between SK Slavia Praha and the UEFA. These were questions about the amount of times the UEFA was in contact with the club, how the relation between the club and UEFA was / is and questions whether or not there were any morally important figures in the UEFA. These

questions were meant to determine whether there was any persuasion happening from the side of UEFA and if there were any predictors for socialization to be found.

The third part of the interview was about the actual socialization, without naming the theory as such. Contrary to what Checkel (1999: 550 and 2006: 365) states, these questions were not about the respondents themselves, but about the organization as a whole. This was done because of the timeframe and the amount of respondents. In this way, a far broader picture of any possible socialization could be detected. The downside of these questions is that the respondent can be biased, which is difficult to check for except for generating a bigger *n*. In this case the respondents however showed remarkable consistency (see below) with each other and thus the bias is noted, but also controlled for. Questions in this part of the questionnaire were whether the employees would rather be characterised as pro-Czech or pro-European, if any interaction of the UEFA with Slavia would make a difference for the employees, and if the employees were willing to change themselves. All of these questions were proxies to the actual socialization and the impact of the UEFA in this socialization. To check for the fact that no repetitive interviews could be conducted, a question about whether or not the respondent saw changes in norms and values in the club during his time in SK Slavia Praha was asked as well. Next to this, it was also asked whether the employees wanted to change or if they were just forced to do so. This was meant as a way to check for Type I or Type II socialization, but most of the time such questions were already answered before by in way how the respondents spoke about the changes. This did give away part of the interview, but it was deemed important to include anyway because of the check for the missing of the repetitive interviews.

A fourth and last part of the interview was structured around the socialization of the employee themselves, following Checkel's design (2003: 225). These questions were again proxies, however since the previous part already introduced the respondent to the transfer of norms and values, these questions were a bit less veiled. The respondents were asked whether the work in Slavia 'changed' them, if yes who changed them, and a question about whether or not they had gotten a different standpoint on UEFA values like Fairplay and the fight against racism, and norms like UEFA-licensing and club ownership. However, these questions turned out to be less properly answered than the third part of the interview. The reason for this can be both the fact that perhaps the questions were put too openly, and also because of the behaviour of Czech people 'as such'. It seemed as though the 'retreat into the private' which happened during the period of Normalization after the Prague Spring (Holy 1996) might still be with the people.

As a last question, the respondents were asked if they themselves felt they had changed because it was necessary, or because they wanted to change. Since this was always asked as the last question of the interview, it was perceived as acceptable to play with open cards, since there was a chance that something useful could come out of it due to the fact that the respondents were not so eager to talk about themselves, and might need a little 'push in the right direction'.

Table 3: Questions for employees of SK Slavia Praha

Part	Question
-	<i>What is your name, age, and your function at Slavia? How long have you been in Slavia?</i>
-	<i>What is your experience in Czech Republic other than Slavia? Where and when?</i>
-	<i>What is your experience abroad? If yes, where and when?</i>
1	<i>What is roughly speaking the age of the employees?</i>
1	<i>How long do employees normally stay with the club?</i>
1	<i>How many employees (in the management, so excluding coaches) does Slavia have at the moment?</i>
1	<i>Do the employees already have experience, or are these their first jobs?</i>
2	<i>Do you think Slavia is a modern European club?</i>
2	<i>Do you think employees at Slavia could easily migrate to an (west-)European club?</i>
2	<i>How were the communication Lines in Slavia? Could we speak about a strong hierarchy, of was it very flexible? Was the structure of the management more Top-Down or Bottom-Up?</i>
2	<i>Is there a lot of room for own initiatives?</i>
2	<i>Is there lot of "preaching" in Slavia or is it more healthy discussions and own initiative?</i>
2	<i>Are there any morally important people (people a lot of the employees look up to as being the guy they want to follow) in the offices? If yes, how many and what are their functions?</i>
2	<i>Are rules often bended at Slavia just so to achieve something?</i>
2+	<i>Does Slavia have regular contact with UEFA/ECA? If yes, how often?</i>
2+	<i>Who are the people within Slavia and who were the people within EUFA/ECA?</i>
2+	<i>Were there any morally important figure involved from the side of EUFA/ECA?</i>
2+	<i>How is the relation between Slavia and UEFA/ECA? Balanced or unbalance? Was the communication from UEFA/ECA consistent, did they behave like authorities and did they</i>

	<i>give examples to let Slavia implement certain regimes?</i>
2+	<i>Did UEFA/ECA use any rewards to implement new rules in Slavia?</i>
2+	<i>Did the introduction of UEFA/ECA in the club make a difference with the people?</i>
3	<i>Do you think the employees are more pro-Czech or pro-European?</i>
3	<i>Do the employees want more involvement of EUFA/ECA, or less? Are UEFA/ECA trusted?</i>
3	<i>Do you think any interaction of UEFA with Slavia (would) make a difference for the behavior of the people working in Slavia?</i>
3	<i>Do you think employees themselves are willing to change? Are they eager to learn?</i>
3	<i>Did you while working in the club, see the norms and values of the people change?</i>
3	<i>Do you think they took these new norms and values because they had to, or because they believed in it?</i>
4	<i>Did the work in Slavia "change" you? If yes, in which way? / Did UEFA/ECA influence you? If yes, in which way?</i>
4	<i>If yes in the above question, do you know who changed you? (can be a person, a governmental body, etc)</i>
4	<i>Did you take a different view on Fairplay, racism, club ownership, UEFA-licensing, etc, since you came to work in Slavia?</i>
4	<i>Did you take those new norms and values because you had to, or because you believed in them?</i>

4. The History of SK Slavia Praha, socialization in perspective

4.1 Possible other socializers than UEFA

Even though SK Slavia Praha is a well known name in the Czech Republic and abroad, not a lot of people know the rich and tumultuous history of the club. However, to know what exactly went on with the people in the club in and after 2007, it is also important to know what exactly was playing in the background. Employees get reminded of the history of Slavia on a daily base, when they see the cups and titles that the club have won, which are on exhibition in the offices of the Eden Aréna (Gambrinus Liga 2014). A second reason for this historical oversight, is the fact that after 1989, the club has been owned by at least 5 different companies or persons. Some of these owners completely changed the club, and some of them kept everything as it was.

However, the change of employees can also trigger a form of intra-club socialization, mainly if those people were from the foreign investment firms. This was not the case with SK Slavia Praha in 2007, as this short history will show. Instead, it all went very smooth, with people who were already working in the club moving up slowly. Or, as the interviewed members of *Odbor Pratel* said, about any possible upheaval regarding the changes in management, “The only big change was the new trainer” (I1 2014). For the post-2011 period, this is however different. With the entry of Aleš Řebíček, the whole club was changed and a lot of new people were brought in. Important to note is that in the whole period from 2006 onwards, the club was in Czech hands and not owned by any foreign investors.

4.2 Founding of ACOS

SK Slavia Praha was founded on November 2, 1892 as *Akademický cyklistický odbor Slavia* (ACOS), the Academic Cycling Department Slavia, an association of students from Prague who wanted to do cycling together. Cycling was in the end of the 19th century a big upcoming sport in the Bohemian lands. The name “Slavia” was chosen because of the national revival movement within the Austro-Hungarian empire and was a form of emancipation of the Czechs, themselves a Slavic people. In its short period of existence, the club was very successful, winning 16 prizes. However, ACOS was disbanded on October 14, 1894 because of “subversive activities of most of the student youth” (SK Slavia Praha 2014a). In the beginning of May 1895 Slavia was re-established as *Sportovního klubu Slavia Praha*, Sports Club Slavia Praha. The new statutes stated that SK Slavia was the legal heir of ACOS. The colours this new club would carry were red and white. Red was chosen because it was the symbol of the heart they put in the game, and white because it was the symbol of purity and honourable combat: the opponent was to be considered an enemy, but a respected rival. A downwards looking five point red star was added to the white part of the shirt as a symbol of the elevation of the mind and the spirit. The sowing in between the red and the white, on the middle of the shirt, represented the duality of life: winning and losing, enthusiasm and disappointment, power and technical finesses (SK Slavia Praha 2014a).

4.3 SK Slavia Praha in the interbellum¹⁴

On January 21, 1896, SK Slavia Praha founded a football department, because of the rapidly growing interest in football in the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy. The first match played was the derby against AC Sparta Praha, which Slavia won 6-0. On January 8, 1899, SK Slavia Praha played its first international match, against a team of students from Berlin, which ended 0-0 (Houška 1992: 9-16). Future minister of Foreign Affairs and second President of Czechoslovakia, Edvard Benes, under various pseudonyms, was even a player of the club in these years, playing between 1901 and 1904 in the second reserve squad, Slavia C (Zápotocký and Suchan 2011). The club went on to become a very successful club in Bohemia after the entry of the English coach John Madden in 1905, who would coach the club until 1930. Under manager John Madden SK Slavia Praha won 438 times, played a draw in 96 matches and lost only 64 times. Their first league title was won by SK Slavia Praha in 1913. However, since this was before the split-up of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, it is not considered an official title. In 1925, after the establishment of Czechoslovakia, SK Slavia Praha won their first official League. Slavia became an even more successful club of Czechoslovakia after the signing of Josef 'Pepi' Bican. According to RSSSF, Bican scored over 800 official goals in his whole career, which would make him the most active striker of football history, higher than Romário de Souza Faria and Ferenc Puskás (Kolos 2009). In 1938

¹⁴ All game data from this section onwards are from the Czech wikipedia page of SK Slavia Praha, except for noted differently in the text (Wikipedi.cz: 2014)

SK Slavia Praha won the Mitropa Cup, during the *interbellum* the most important international championship in Europe, beating Ferencvárosi TC of Budapest in the final. In the interwar period Slavia developed into the club of the intellectuals, with Benes even becoming a honorary member in 1918 (Strmiska 2012). During the Protektorat of Bohemia and Moravia, which lasted from 1939 to 1945, SK Slavia Praha won the League four consecutive times from 1940 onwards (Zápotocký and Suchan 2011).

4.4 SK Slavia Praha under communism

In 1948 SK Slavia Praha would win the League title for the last time in almost 50 years: The club was deemed too nationalistic and with too many ties with the old regime (Houška 1992) and prolific players like Bican were forced to leave to other clubs and the club was renamed shortly to Sokol Slavia Praha, before being re-renamed Dynamo Slavia Praha, with the name "Slavia" being completely dropped in 1953, only to re-emerge in the name in 1965. In 1951, the club almost has to relegate to the second League but after play-offs they manage to stay in the first League. In 1953 the club changes home ground from Letna to Vrsovice, because of the erection of the statue for Stalin. Dark years arrive for Dynamo Praha in the beginning of the sixties, when the club relegates for the first time in their history to the second League. However, with the help of legendary player Jan Lála and the establishment of *Odbor Pratel Slavie*, the Department of Friends of Slavia, Dynamo Praha is rising again (I1 2014). *Odbor Pratel* is the first supporters organization of Czechoslovakia, showing the amount of support the club still has and it even helps the club to get new players (I1 2014). In the mid-sixties, after the club has been renamed again into SK Slavia, they are again playing for the

League title, however, are not capable of winning it. Frantisek Veselý joins the club in 1965, and he will keep on playing for Slavia until 1980, playing a record amount of 404 matches. In 1974 Slavia wins their first price under communism: the *Ceský Pohár*, the Czech Cup, is won in 1974. In the eighties the club is not capable to win any prices at all. In November 1989 Slavia decides to support the general strike of the opposition, refusing to play a match in Cheb and even managing to convince the players of the opponent to join them (SK Slavia Praha 2014a). In 1991, with the Velvet Revolution and the end of communism, Slavia finally gets renamed back to SK Slavia Praha, s.r.o. (I1 2014).

4.5 SK Slavia Praha after 1989

4.5.1 The entry of Boris Korbelt¹⁵

In August 1991, one and a half year after the Velvet Revolution, a new period for SK Slavia Praha arrives. In an unexpected manoeuvre, Boris Korbelt, a Czech-American businessman, buys over SK Slavia Praha. For the whole ownership history, see figure 1. This meant the entrance of the first entrepreneur in Czechoslovak football. Mr. Korbelt had first envisaged buying over AC Sparta Praha, still the nation's mayor franchise, but after the refusal of the board of AC Sparta Praha to let Mr. Korbelt buy over the club (I1 2014), he turns to the other famous Czech side, Slavia, which he buys over for 60%. The rest of the club stays in the ownership of SK Slavia Praha o.s., the association created

¹⁵ For sources of data about clubownership, see figure 1

after the fall of communism out of a merger with *Odbor Pratel* to manage the previously state-owned sports club. With Mr. Korbek, there is also an influx of money, over 300 million crowns in just a couple of years. Boris Korbek as well brings a new management, mainly the same people he was planning to bring to AC Sparta Praha or who were already working there (Houška 1992). On the sportive side came the signing of new players like Patrik Berger, who came as well over from AC Sparta Praha and the arrival of home-grown players like Vladimír Šmicer. Where SK Slavia Praha still played for 9th place in 1991, in 1993 they are already runners-up again. However, AC Sparta Praha kept on dominating the League. Plans were made for a new stadium, but these finally fell through when no funding was to be found. In June 1993 Mr. Korbek leaves the club again, officially because of tax law changes in the United States, but a conflict with the management of SK Slavia Praha might have been the real reason (Odbor Pratel 2014, Valenta and Zapotocký 2001). The 60% which was previously owned by Boris Korbek is transferred to *Odbor Pratel*, and the interim president is even a member of *Odbor Pratel*. Mr. Korbek however decided to waiver over 120 million crowns, and giving the rest of the money in loans to SK Slavia Praha, meaning that the club can continue working as before (I1 2014). In 1996 it finally pays off and SK Slavia Praha finally wins a League title again. Next to this, the club reaches the semi-finals of the UEFA Cup.

4.5.2 PPF and ENIC

At this point the club has already been sold again: A joint-venture of Czech investment firms PPF and WIKÁ buy over parts of the shares of SK Slavia Praha and *Odbor Pratel*. After a corruption scandal with the head of WIKÁ, Milan Vinkler, PPF buys over the 25% owned by WIKÁ in May 1994. In July 1996 the club is restricted into an a.s., after which

PPF, together with the share of the Czech Bank *Česká spořitelna*, which is at that time owned by PPF as well, owns 54% of the club. In October 1997, PPF, in the person of their owner, Petr Kellner, decides they want more influence and propose in a general meeting with *Odbor Pratel* to replace the Korbek-era management:

On the meeting there was the groundbreaking statement by Mr. Kellner, who simply said that the board should decide: Either they will look for a buyer and Mr. Kellner will sell its shares, or if he will still be in charge, then he will bring in his own management, his people, because he doesn't like it the way it is now (regarding the management of the club, red.). This because he wanted to own the club as a whole. Mr. Ondříček (the head of the board) felt offended and he said he will find a new buyer. (I1 2014)

Thus PPF decides to leave the club and the management is kept the same. In October 1997 ENIC, the English National Investment Company, decides to buy over PPF's shares. At that time ENIC already owns franchises all over Europe, in a plan to capitalize on "the explosion in the value of European football television rights by buying stakes in a number of European clubs" (ICAEW 2009), which would lead to the creation of a pan-European football League and player exchange programme. ENIC does not bring a new management and is comfortable having SK Slavia Praha manage themselves. The only person they appoint is a new General Director, Vladimír Leška (I1 2014). The club manages to win the Czech Cup another three times, in 1997, 1999 and 2002. However, no more League titles are won, ending the season mostly on second or third place behind AC Sparta Praha. Because after the semi finals of the UEFA cup in 1997 and EURO 1996, most of the important players of Slavia decide to leave the club to play somewhere else in Europe. Somewhere around 2001 ENIC manages to obtain the 34% of the shares that was still owned by a joint venture of *Odbor Pratel* and the association

SK Slavia Praha, at that point owning 96.7% of SK Slavia Praha. However, the plan of ENIC runs into troubles when UEFA and the European Commission decide that it is not allowed for an investor to own more than one club in the same league, including international leagues (Monti 2002) In 2004, Czech Republic joins the European Union. For SK Slavia Praha however not a lot changed: Through the FAČR, Czech football was already part of UEFA and *Bosman* had already been implemented before the accession to the EU. Next to this, because of UEFA's policy of not mixing sports and politics, the rules of the international matches weren't changed either for Czech Republic.

4.5.3 Key Investments, the League titles and the Champions League

In September 2006, when Slavia has to play against other ENIC asset Tottenham Hotspur FC, ENIC states that they don't own a majority in Slavia anymore (Conn 2006). At this time it seems they have already officially transferred the shares to a Czech post firm company, Key Investments a.s.. However, through Matthew Collecott, who has succeeded Miroslav Ondříček as head of the board of SK Slavia Praha, ENIC still is controlling the club (I1 2014). On the sportive side, the club finally is successful again: With the return of club legend Vladimír Šmicer, in the beginning of the 2007-2008 season the unthinkable happens: In the last qualification round, SK Slavia Praha defeats AFC Ajax 3-1 on aggregate, marking the first time ever that SK Slavia Praha is allowed to play group stage of the UEFA Champions League. In the begin of 2008, Key Investments manages to stage a *de-facto* coup and instead of managing the shares for ENIC, they decide to manage them for themselves, practically taking away the ownership from ENIC Next to this, new non-existent capital is created, because of the raise of the capital ceiling of the a.s. from 618 to 1040 million crowns, which makes Key

Investments the official new majority shareholder (Léko 2013). The club itself starts to finally win titles again, winning the League in 2008 and 2009. The 2008 title is the first one celebrated in the new stadium in Eden, after having played in Strahov in Stadion Evžena Rošického since 2000, the homeground in Eden had fallen too much in disrepair. Because of the building of the stadium, in 2006 the former General Director, Vladimír Leška, leaves SK Slavia Praha and becomes the chair of E-Side Properties Ltd., the new holding company of the Eden Aréna. The head of the board, Matthew Collecott, an ENIC employee, leaves as well around the same time, becoming financial director in Tottenham Hotspur FC. The former is succeeded in-house by Petr Doležal, the latter by Tomáš Rosen (I1 2014). Even though these two persons were already working in SK Slavia Praha before, it is not to be excluded that some form of socialization did indeed happen. On the other side, both Doležal and Rosen were themselves not linked to ENIC, nor seemed to have any foreign experiences before they joined SK Slavia Praha.

4.5.4 Aleš Řebíček and the downfall of SK Slavia Praha

In the beginning of the 2008-2009 season, SK Slavia Praha does not manage to qualify again for the group stage of Champions League, and almost immediately a financial crisis breaks out in the club. Since Slavia was expecting to get into group stage again, it already had the revenues planned in the books. However, without these revenues, 170 million crowns is instantly gone. The club is not able to pay both their players and their employees anymore and most of the top rank players have to be sent away (R3 2013). In March 2011 the Czech Football Association, the FAČR, threatens to revoke the club's license. At this point, the club is being sold for 50.9% by Key Investments to the Czech

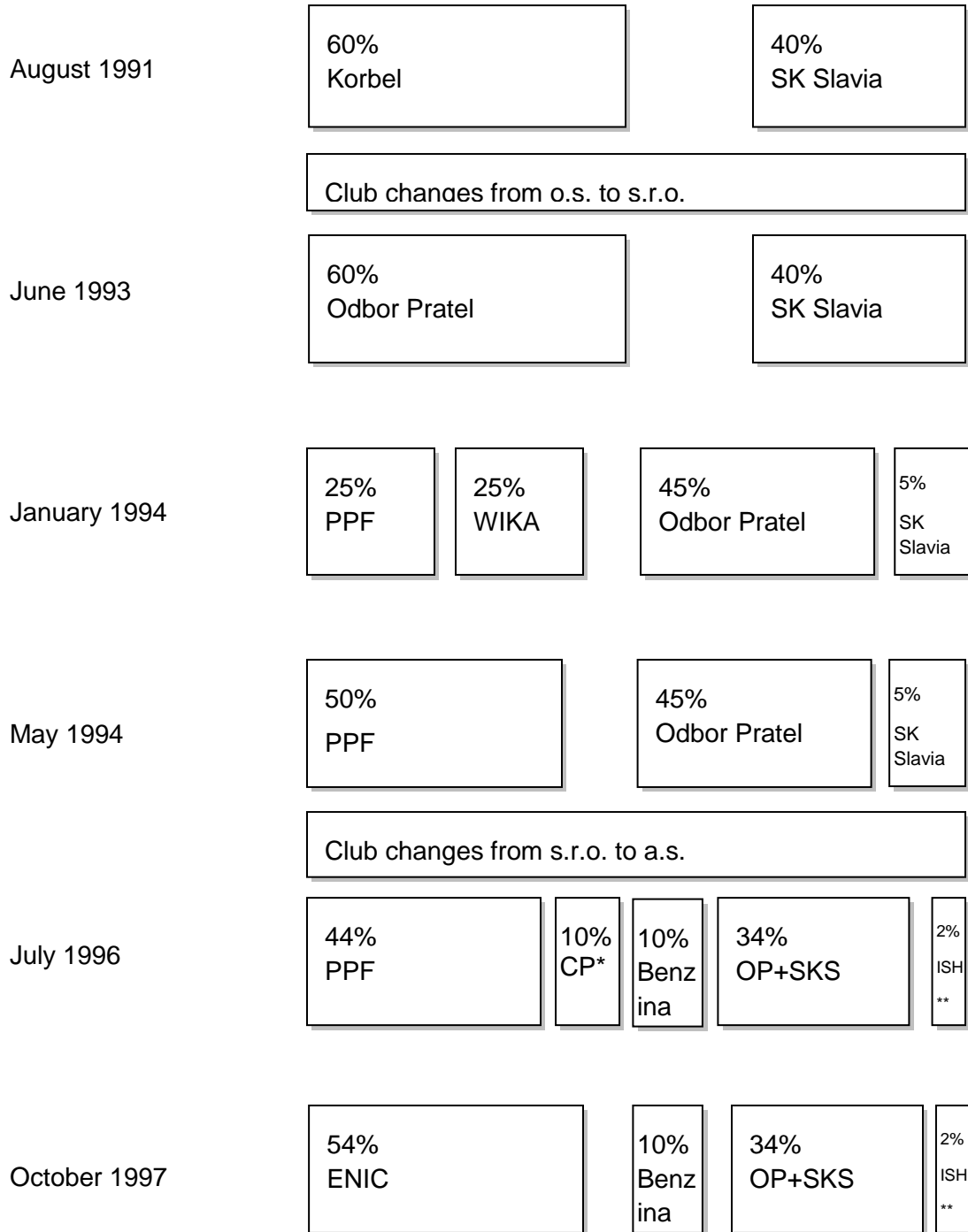
investor Natland Group, with the 33% still controlled by ENIC being bought over by Czech politician Aleš Řebíček (Natland Group 2011a). SK Slavia Praha is allowed to keep playing in the Gambrinus Liga after the debts are payed off, and in August 2011 Natland announces they have agreed to sell their stake to Mr. Řebíček, making him owner of 98% of the shares (Natland Group 2011b). With the entry of Aleš Řebíček there are for the first time big changes made in management: Both Mr. Doležal and Mr. Rosen leave the club, Mr. Řebíček becoming the head of the board himself (Vávra 2012, SK Slavia Praha 2014b). At that point however, SK Slavia Praha is already for over a year no longer a top ranking club anymore, finishing 9th in 2011 and 12th in 2012.

4.5.5 SK Slavia Praha in the season 2013-2014

In this season, 2013-2014, the squad of SK Slavia Praha has already seen three coaches. Michal Petrouš, a former player and youth coach, who was in charge of the club *ad interim* in the last matches in the previous season and was then appointed as new head coach, decides to leave on September 14, 2013. This happens after an 0:4 defeat against FK Mladá Boleslav, having already lost weeks before against FK Teplice 0:7, the biggest home defeat ever for the club (Šedivý 2014a). He is followed-up by Miroslav Koubek, who himself is replaced by Dutchman Alex Pastoor on March 4, 2014, after Slavia had been defeated 5:1 two weeks before in the away match against SK Sigma Olomouc (Šedivý 2014b). This was the first time since Hungarian Kálman Konrád in 1933-1935 a foreigner was coaching the first squad. In the organization as well big changes are taking place: In the last two years already many of the old employees decided to leave the club or were fired (R3 and R4: 2014), but December of 2013 the club announces the signing of Jan-Willem van Dop, a former General Director of the

Dutch sides FC Utrecht and Feyenoord Rotterdam, as advisor to the board of directors of SK Slavia Praha (Raush 2013). In a meeting with fans, he himself stated that he has come into the club as forefront for an possible new investor, who wants to buy over the club from Aleš Řebíček.

Figure 1: Overview of ownership of SK Slavia Praha after 1989



Somewhere 2001	96.7% ENIC			3.3% ISH **
September 2006	Club plays against other ENIC asset Tottenham. ENIC announces they don't have a majority anymore			
January 2008	Registered capital doubled from 618m to 1040m kc			
	61% Key Investments -Dolezal and Dozen	35,7% ENIC		3.3% ISH **
March 2011	FAČR announces the revoking of Slavia's license			
May 2011	50,9% NATLAND	33% Rebicek	16% ENIC	0.1% ISH **
May 2011	98% Viscontia			2% ISH **
	70% NATLAND	30% Rebicek		
August 2011	98% Rebicek			2% ISH **

* Česká pojišťovna ** Independent Share Holders

Sources: iSport.cz 2002, Conn 2006, , Natland Group 2011a, 2011b, Léko 2013, I1 2014, I2 2014 & Author's own calculations

5. The organization and the UEFA contacts in 2007

5.1 Organization of SK Slavia Praha

According to I3, around 15-20 people were working in SK Slavia Praha from 2007 to now. This is excluding any technical staff and the coaches, both of the youth teams and of the main squad. The atmosphere in the club was described as very cosy and easy to communicate. A certain amount of hierarchy was present, mainly in the sense that you “always have to respect your supervisor and director” (R4 2014). Next to this, the board of managers and the controlling body of SK Slavia Praha were very much respected and they were also the ones who were in the end deciding on all important issues (R3 2014). However, there were often inter-departmental meetings where everybody was allowed to bring in new ideas, which were also listened to (R3 2014). Within some of the departments it was easy to bend the rules, if this would create better results (R4 2014), in other departments everything had to be done by the rules and within a very strict budget (R3 2014).

In 2007, according to R3, most of the people working in the club were quite young, R3 himself for example was only mid-30 in those years and R4 being only 20 years old when Champions League was played. The youngest age group were the employees of marketing, where “mainly young girls” were employed (R3 2014). In the upper echelons of the club, the people were older, in 2014 the oldest were around 50 years old. Because of the development of the Eden Aréna, at least some of the employees left to work at E-Side Property Ltd., the best example being the former General Director of SK Slavia

Praha, Vladimír Leška, but according to R3, with the opening of the new stadium in 2008, a couple of employees followed him. R3 however could not specify anymore who exactly left and what kind of people came in their place.

Most employees of SK Slavia Praha already had previous experience when they started working for the club, meaning that the chance of any novice-factor was most probably very small. No mention was made by any of the respondents of employees having a job outside of the club. Next to this, the selection procedures were high: “(if you wanted to) work for Slavia, you needed a good biography” (R3 2014). In 2007, most people were staying with the club for at least 5 years, for example the technical director was already in the club before 1994 (R2 2014) and the financial manager since 1997 (R1 2014). The interviewed respondents were themselves far shorter employed in the club at that moment: R3 since 2003 and R4 since 2005. For R4 it was the first experience, R3 before was working as a teacher and changed functions within the club as well.

Not all members of SK Slavia Praha seem to have had the same common background as supporters of the club. Even though R3 implied that around 2007 this situation was better, I1 and I2 stated that not all employees seem to have been supporters of the club in the first place, sometimes coming from other clubs or from non-football jobs before. R3 himself was always a supporter of the club, R4 was not asked this question in her questionnaire

5.2 Interaction between SK Slavia Praha and UEFA

Before we can answer the main question, *Was there any socialization in the management of SK Slavia Praha after the club played the group stage of the Champions*

League?, we need to know if there was in the first place any contact between SK Slavia Praha and UEFA in preparation for the matches, and how intense this contact was. Both interviewed employees state that during the period directly before and during the playing of the group stage matches, which was the period from September 19, when the first home match was being played, against FC Steaua București, until December 12, when Slavia played their third match, against Sevilla FC (UEFA 2011). Within SK Slavia Praha there was a workgroup of 5 people who had the contacts with the UEFA European Competitions Department, but according to R4, during the Champions League itself, the whole club was involved. R4 herself had, according to R3, contact with UEFA on daily basis as assistant to the General Director of the club. The departments of marketing and communication had very intense cooperation with UEFA before both the home and away matches, both to streamline the marketing for the matches (the sale of tickets for example) and the communication between Slavia and the clubs they had to play against (R3 2014). Next to this, during the week before the home match, there was a work group combined of UEFA and the Swiss based TEAM Marketing, who are the official UEFA marketing agency (TEAM Marketing 2014) who were active in Slavia's stadium in Strahov to check if all UEFA regulations regarding the stadium were being implemented (R4 2014). Clubs have to fulfill all points in the "Regulations of the UEFA Champions League" manual, a 84 pages long set of instructions stipulating all regulations to be fulfilled before a club is allowed to play Champions League (UEFA 2007). Both respondents state that there were not morally important figures within UEFA when communicating with SK Slavia Praha, or at least, not that they can think of anymore.

6. The socialization of SK Slavia Praha in 2007

6.1 Socialization of employees

Within the club, it is not completely certain how open the employees were to begin with: Both respondents stated the opposite when asked whether the employees were pro-Czech or pro-European, for example. However, what does come forth is the fact that to a certain degree, the employees wanted to do things their own way, which was not always the way of the UEFA in the first place. A good example is the venue where the group stage matches were supposed to be played, Stadion Evžena Rošického in Strahov. This stadium was from 2000 until 2008 the home ground of SK Slavia Praha, because their old ground in Eden was too old and was being redeveloped into the Eden Aréna. For this reason, SK Slavia Praha moved to Strahov. As R3 remembers, the problem with the new stadium was, that it was never meant to host international matches. The employees of the club really wanted to have the group stage matches being played in Stadion Evžena Rošického, because this would generate the most revenues for the club. Moving to the stadium of AC Sparta Praha, which was licensed for group stage Champions League matches, was deemed problematic because the rent of the stadium would make lower revenues for the club. Therefore, Slavia insisted that the matches should be played at Strahov. UEFA in the beginning was a bit sceptical with this idea, but when they came to inspect the venue, it turned out all the demands could be achieved with small changes to the stadium. UEFA was very reasonable in their interaction with SK Slavia Praha: "They (UEFA) knew what the club was capable of and what it could do" and "they understood we cannot rebuild the stadium" (R3: 2014). It however did take the

employees more effort than one normally might expect: The commentator booth on the middle line of the pitch had to be removed, because at this exact point the main camera for broadcasting the match had to be installed. Next to this, the VIP area also had to be completely redeveloped, not being on the high level UEFA demanded (R3 2014).

The club itself definitely became more professional because of the Champions League (R3 2014). R3 stated that the whole way of organizing press conferences, for example, was turned around, after seeing the way how this was done in the Champions League. The employees in the club got more professional and changed their attitude towards European football for the better (R3 2014). They were very much impressed by the way how everything was organized in Champions League and the way how the stadium was dressed up. The employees were able to lift themselves to a higher level because of this (R3 2014). However, when asked where the respondents thought the change came from UEFA, R4 stated that the entry UEFA did not make any difference at all in the club. R4 reinforced this by stating that she had the feeling that it would not have been easy for any of the employees if they would have had the option to move to a West-European club after 2007. This indicates that according to R4, the employees in Slavia still were not on the same level of norms and values, mainly in the level of professionalism, as their colleagues in the more western clubs. R3 disagrees on this: He pointed out the employees were all professionals, who were “highly rated by UEFA”.

Both respondents state that the people in the club did change in the years they were with the club. R4 states that she did see “an improvement” (2014) in the norms and values of the employees in the years she was working with the club. R3 indicated that the change in the club in the upper echelons was more negative: Because they now had

achieved the entry in the group stage once, they expected to get into the group stage every year from now on. “They never ever thought that a Sherrif Tiraspol¹⁶ would come around” (R3: 2014). The upper echelons of the club started to behave irresponsibly, expecting that any debts which were taken up now, could be paid off in the year afterwards if they would qualify for Champions League again. The lower echelons of the club were watching at this with a wary eye, but were not able to do anything against it. Both respondents agree that the employees were eager to learn and that they did want to change for the better. One of the employees is now even enrolled in a FIFA Masters study, just because of the fact that he wanted to improve himself after the Champions League experience (R3 2014).

6.2 Socialization of Respondents

When asked the respondents if they *themselves* changed, a more coherent image comes up. Both respondents indicate that the added value of the club playing Champions League was immense, and that without having experienced this, they would have been worse off. R3 goes as far as stating: “If we would have not played Champions League, I would not have the expertise right now”, saying as well that without these experiences, he would not have gotten the job he has right now. He himself was very much impressed by the way how UEFA organized things:

¹⁶ FC Sheriff Tiraspol was the club SK Slavia Praha had to play against to qualify for the Group stage in 2009, which ended after two matches in 0-0 in Tiraspol and 1-1 in Prague, meaning that FC Sherriff Tiraspol was allowed to advance into the last round of play-offs and SK Slavia Praha had to go into play-offs for Europa League

“They (the Champions League matches) changed my attitude towards football, it was the part of my job I liked the most. It was very systematically organized, compared to Czech football, which is very chaotic. I liked it, I really liked it” (R3 2014).

During the interview R3 showed himself a belief that almost everything what UEFA did, was good. When recalling a story how they had to change microphones in the stadium, because the old ones were not of good quality, he said: “(They said) we needed proper microphones, so I said yes (laughs) and we bought them!” (R3 2014). R3 was as well impressed by the other clubs they visited during the group stage, stating that in Arsenal FC, every player had its own personal assistant for the communication with the media, whereas they were just with 3 persons for the whole club. He himself also initiated the change in the way how post-match press conferences were organized in the Gambrinus Liga, after having seen how they organized it in Champions League. In Champions League it is normal to have separate press conferences for both coaches, so that they don't have to wait for each other. It also eliminates any chances of verbal fighting between coaches, which according to R3 did happen sometimes in the Gambrinus Liga and did not look really professional¹⁷. He decided to contact AC Sparta Praha to change this format for the next derby the club were going to play, and after this experiment turned out to be successful, FAČR decided to implement it for the all the Gambrinus Liga post-match interviews.

¹⁷ On a side note, it does create great television sometimes: The author remembers a Dutch post-match interview between a very curtly Louis van Gaal of AZ Alkmaar and Ron Jans of FC Groningen on April 23, 2006 and February 18, 2007. The fragment has over 400.000 hits on YouTube (Talpa 2007)

R4 has the same kind of experience and even though she answered in shorter terms¹⁸, she as well wanted to take over “some of their working principles” and “to get better” (R4 2014), when asked whether UEFA influenced her or not. Next to this, she states: “I really like the UEFA values and norms, especially the will to improve women’s and youth football and competitions” (R4: 2014).

6.3 Type I versus Type II socialization

6.3.1 Employees

R3 and R4 are not agreeing on the main identifiers for Type I or Type II socialization. According to R4, the employees of the club were both more pro-Czech than pro-European and wanted to “make it by their own” (R4 2014). R3 states that the employees were from the beginning more pro-European and, and that all everything that UEFA said, “made sense”. According to R3, the employees, or at least the employees in the communications department, were already very international before Slavia played Champions League, and always looked forward to travelling abroad for the away matches (R3 2013). Both state that UEFA was very much trusted, which is something the respondents of *Odbor Pratel* also indicated. R3 however states that at least his employees learned a lot from their time in the Champions League. This all indicates that the employees, if they socialized, were doing so because they believed in the new norms and values, and not because they had to do so.

¹⁸ This was most probably because the interview was done by email and not face-to-face

However, when asked directly to the respondents, R4 states that the employees adapted the new norms and values both because they had to do so, and because they believed in some of them. This means that according to R4, both Type I and Type II socialization was happening with the employees.

6.3.2 Respondents

Both respondents themselves were not able to answer really properly on the direct question whether they changed because they had to, or because they believed in them. R4 simply stated: "I believe (in) anti racism and fairplay ideas" (2014). Because this interview was conducted over email, it was also very difficult to find out the way how she talked about the experience in Champions League. The -short- answer she gave however does indicate that R4 has had some form of Type II socialization. Overall the answers in her questionnaire also give the impression at least that she herself did believe in the added value of UEFA and their norms and values, being maybe a bit more cynical about the rest of the club. As one of the persons who had the most intense contact with UEFA, in fact on daily basis (R3 2013), this would also make sense.

R3 himself did not answer the question directly. During the interview it became quite obvious that R3 was very much in favour of the norms and values of UEFA, for example being very much pro democracy, his family being punished for being part of Prague Spring in 1968. He seemed to honestly believe in the norms and values of UEFA, saying that all of the changes that UEFA asked for both in the Eden Aréna and in Stadion Evžena Rošického made a lot of sense. In this regard the anecdote about the microphones, as already stated above, goes without saying.

6.4 Persuasion techniques used by UEFA

The interviews with the respondents show that UEFA used far less persuasion techniques than expected. Firstly, no form of “carrot and stick” technique, meaning the extra revenues the club would get out of playing Champions League, was used at all. However, R3 did state more than once that at least he was well aware of the amount of money UEFA brought with them, being 170 million Czech crowns, which was just as much as one whole year budget of SK Slavia Praha: “They did bring in a lot of money” (R3 2014). R4 simply answered with “no” when asked if UEFA ever used any ‘rewarding’-methods. Both respondents do agree that the communication of UEFA with the club was very much consistent and structured, using the UEFA Regulations Manual (UEFA 2007) as an example of this. UEFA did use sometimes examples of other clubs who had already implemented certain changes, as R4 recalls: “The venue director used some examples but UEFA never pushed us to do something. As I remember they just came with very good advises” (R4 2014). These advises are on exactly the same way recalled by R3, as already stated above in the anecdotes.

Interestingly, sometimes, as in the case of Stadion Evžena Rošického, persuasion even happened the other way around: SK Slavia Praha was in the end able to persuade UEFA that the venue was good enough to play Champions League in it, even though in the beginning UEFA was very sceptical about this.

7. The organization and the UEFA / ECA contacts in 2014

7.1 Organization of SK Slavia Praha

Because of the lack of success in the last years and because of the entry of the new owner, a lot has changed in the organizational structure of the club. For example, both R3 and R4, who were intensively in contact with UEFA and who both showed a strong socialization as stated above, have left the club. The reason for this in most of the cases are the changes in the organization of the departments (R2 2014). In December 2013 for the first time since Matthew Collecott, a foreigner, Jan Willem van Dop, has become part of the club, be it as an advisor of the Board of Directors and not, at the moment, in a more official function. On the other hand, some employees are still in the club who were there 15 years ago, like the people from the financial department (R4 2014). At the moment, around 25% of the workforce is employed in the club for less than a year, 25% for one to three years, and 50% is already employed for more than three years (R1 2014). On total the club employs about 16 people right now (R2 2014). According to R2 the age range is very wide, ranging from 24 for the Department of Communications to the age of 50 for the clubs higher management. R1 stated the average age is around 40, having the feeling that he might be in fact the oldest person employed right now.

The most of the employees have previous experience: the manager Operations is a former police agent, whereas the Business Director is used to be employed within Czech Ice Hockey (R1 2014). The exception here is the Communications Department, whose new employees were recruited from the fans and for whom this is their first job (R2

2014). R2 himself was already employed in the club as website editor and reporter for the official Slavia publication *Poločas*, before becoming the Deputy Communications Director. R1 has previous experiences Dutch football clubs Feyenoord Rotterdam and FC Utrecht and as a consultant for the KNVB, the Dutch FA.

It is interesting to see is that both respondents have a different opinion on whether or not Slavia is a modern European club: R2 states that in his personal opinion, it is not at all, and because of the reasons he states, he also is not expecting change any time soon. R1 agrees that the club right now is not very much European, but that it is capable of become it again and that the foundation is there, more than in the Dutch clubs he was employed in. R1 states the same for the employees: They are not like West-European employees at the moment, but they are ready to change for the better. R2 states that most of the employees would have a very hard time to adapt in a West-European club right now, a lot more at least than during the time Slavia played international. R1 agrees with this, but he also sees potential with some of the employees.

Communication in SK Slavia Praha has changed a lot since 2007: According to R1 there are no longer any interdepartmental meetings organized on regular basis, as used to be the case in 2007 (R3 2014). Before R1 restarted these meetings in the previous months, there had not been any such a meeting for over a year. The departments in the club are very much isolated, all sitting in different (closed) rooms without regular contact with the rest of the employees (R1 2014). R2 is not agreeing with this, stating that according to him everything is still being discussed trough all departments, in which everyone is open to discussion. Regarding hierarchy the same can be said: Whereas R1 states that there is a quite strong hierarchy which can be very demotivational, R2 thinks that "Slavia

nowadays works more as a 'family' club than a highly organized top club" (R2 2014). Both do agree that there is very little space for own initiatives. On the other hand, both respondents have the feeling rules are often bended or can be worked around and communication can be very flexible (R1 2014, R2 2014).

There seem to be no morally important people in the club, even though after the interview with R1, the author got the idea that the respondent himself might be the morally important figure. This however could not be confirmed by any other sources.

7.2 Interaction between SK Slavia Praha and UEFA / ECA

Since 2007, SK Slavia Praha has not played any Champions League group stage matches anymore. Even more, since their last Europa League group stage match on December 19, 2009 against LOSC Lille, no international match has been played by SK Slavia Praha anymore for four and a half year. As a result, the club is nowadays only an associated member at ECA, where they used to be an ordinary member (ECA 2014c, R3 2014). During the succesfull years, Petr Doležal was a member on one of the ECA committiees. At the moment, there are no employees of SK Slavia Praha involved in ECA. The official contact of the club to ECA is the Technical Director, who is at the same time working in the Youth Academy. Because of these jobs taking most of his time away, he is often not capable of attending the four yearly meetings of ECA (R1 2014). Since the entry of R1 in the club this has been changed, since he is now the one attending ECA meetings. Even so, within ECA the club is of no importance anymore (R1 2014). With UEFA there are no contacts at all, the only possible contacts being the informal contacts R1 has left over from his previous jobs (R1 2014).

8. The socialization of SK Slavia Praha in 2014

8.1 Socialization of employees

According to R1, the young employees in the club can be considered pro-European, but the older generation is more old fashioned, citing closed doors and no shown interest in friendly contacts with the rest of the employees. The employees are not really trusting UEFA nor ECA, citing problems with the lack of Czech representatives in the upper echelons (R1 2014). The employees themselves also don't seem to care that much about UEFA and ECA anymore:

“Right now in a club like Slavia, there is no will (= no need) from UEFA/ECA to cooperate. In the past, there was an active participation in ECA sessions from the Communications director and International secretary of Slavia and the club always cooperated with UEFA willingly” (R2 2014).

And

“Other than some nice memories, there is not a lot left of the spirit of UEFA anymore” (R1 2014).

When asked whether or not the people in the club changed, R2 answers quite cynical that the employees rather have the more relaxed job without UEFA, than “solving difficult and complex problems in connection with e.g. Champions League games”. According to R1, most of the employees are very much open towards changes, and are willing to listen to the changes he proposes. Some people however, like the financial manager, have just completely lost interest in any form of change, and are just working in their own style now, being almost impossible to change (R1 2014).

8.2 Socialization of Respondents

R2 himself did seem to be socialized, when he states that “working in Slavia (makes) you (...) realize, how important is to have (a) stable management and (a) stable owner. Everything else goes hand in hand with that” (R2 2014). Interestingly enough, R1 seems to also have been socialized, even though he has been working in the club for half a year. However, this socialization came mainly from Czech society, stating the respect he has gotten for the way how Czechs respect their elderly people. When it comes to socialization out of the club, there seem to be none.

8.3 Socialization: Field Research

8.3.1 communications

During the field research, the same was visible: The club is missing an English website, and all communication is as well done only in Czech. There are no ways how to get tours through the Eden Aréna for tourists. Getting tickets for away matches can be very difficult if you are not friends with any of the Ultras. The owner of SK Slavia Praha, Aleš Řebíček, seems to almost never show up at home matches, or at least not at the grand stand, something which was confirmed by R1. On its website, the club does not even always communicate at all about the transport to the away matches, which is normally organized by *Tribuna Sever*. Even more interesting, where in Dutch clubs like AFC Ajax already months before the end of the season people are being asked to prolong their season ticket, in SK Slavia Praha, one week before the last round of Gambrinus Liga, still no such news item has popped up. Within the stadium, there is no strict control of

tickets for the North and East stand, meaning that people are completely free to move from the one to the other. This can be regarded as a very relaxing atmosphere, something that all people spoken with in the stadium agreed upon, but it is very different even from the strict control in the O2 Arena, where ice hockey club HC Slavia Praha plays its matches.

8.3.2 Social Media

On the other hand, regarding Social Media the club is making a lot of progress. The *Vždycky spolu* campaign, meaning 'always together', attracted within weeks on facebook more than 1000 likes and is very sympathetic towards all different groups of fans of SK Slavia Praha, reposting posts from *Tribuna Sever* and *Odbor Pratel* (Vždycky spolu: 2014). Over the last months, the pre-match line-up graphics on facebook have also improved a lot, making it far easier to understand who is going to play and in what formation. Since Alex Pastoor's arrival in the club, the TvSlavia interviews with him are in English with Czech subtitles. However, the interviews with the players are still only in Czech (TvSlavia 2014). However, when compared with AC Sparta Praha, who even have an official English twitter account which is updated regularly (AC Sparta EN: 2014), SK Slavia Praha is far behind.

8.3.3 Comparing with other Czech clubs

However, when compared with the other Prague clubs, for example FK Dukla Praha or FK Mladá Boleslav, not everything is that bad. FK Dukla Praha has a far more non-professional atmosphere during the match. Their fanshop is for example a party tent, and they have been selling the same scarf for at least one and a half year.

Refreshments are being sold from behind hastily put together tables. The same goes for FK Mladá Boleslav, where the catering for the away sector is situated under a party tent. SK Slavia Praha has because of the modern Eden Aréna a very professional catering, and the fanshop has its own store in the stadium, accessible from both within and outside of the Eden Aréna. R1 stated that the professionalism of the fanshop *ProSlavisty* is very high, being very much impressed with it, the first time he saw it. It has to be noted that the fanshop itself is not officially owned by SK Slavia Praha, but an independent entity being owned by *Odbor Pratel* members. The fanshop just licenses the logo of the club and not even the purchase of the official teamsport line made by Umbro is done together with the club (I3 2014).

8.4 Type I versus Type II socialization

As already shown above, not a lot of socialization is happening in the club anymore, except for maybe R2. He himself while answering his questionnaire seems to have been prone to Type II socialization, showing that he himself believes that internationalism is the right way to go. However, with regard to any possible new socialization coming out of renewed attempts at socializing the employees by R1, there is a high chance this will be again Type II socialization, since the indicators seem to show that the people are to a certain degree still believing in adopting new norms and values. This is not completely certain, since it has not happened yet and some of the indicators brought up by R2 seem to suggest that the employees are not interested in changed at all anymore.

9. Conclusions

9.1 Answering the main research question

“Was there any socialization in the management of SK Slavia Praha after the club played the group stage of Champions League?”

For the 2007 period, overall it seems that the conclusion is quite clear: Most of the people working in the club were indeed socialized, or to the very least were willing to adopt the value of professionalism of UEFA. However, it has turned out to be quite difficult to let respondents evaluate their own employees, even more when the respondents have to remember details from over seven years ago. Most probably for this reason the answers on their own colleagues are different for both respondents.

The employees were not completely socialized by the contact with UEFA, as indicated by the fact that the employees wanted to make it by their own, which means they didn't unscrupulously take over any norms and values of UEFA. In this case the duality between the pro-Czech behaviour and the pro-European behaviour as the respondents pointed out, makes sense: Both were most probably true.

The fact that one of the respondents state that the entry of UEFA in the club did not make any difference however is remarkable and shows that there might have been more going with the employees than this research has been able to find. For this reason, more research is needed, mostly with more respondents and over a longer period of time.

On the other hand, it can also have been a wrong observation: The respondent in fact did see the norms and values of the employees change over the years.

Both respondents themselves seem to have socialized more than their respective colleagues. The value of professionalism was taken over by both of them. Next to this, UEFA seems to have made on both an impression. In addition, one of the respondents as well took over norms and values on the way how to interact with for example players and coaches and seems to have profoundly changed all in all because of the UEFA interaction.

9.1.1 Predictions for socialization

Most of the in the literature mentioned predictions of socialization were in place during the interactions. There were only two of the predictions missing: A common background was sometimes lacking and there was no feeling of policy failure.

On the other hand, the meetings with UEFA were regularly repeated and very dense, and a pressure from outside was never mentioned. Within the club there was both strict rules and a hierarchy, but also room for own initiatives and regular inter-departmental meetings. Therefore, was a level of Agent Autonomy. Both UEFA and SK Slavia Praha had the same preferences, both wanting to play the matches in the same stadium and both wanting to improve the stadium as much as possible. There were also no other actors involved than the club itself, meaning that there was a primacy of the organization. Both UEFA and SK Slavia Praha seemed to have had a very coherent identity, with both having as well a clearly linked set of norms: UEFA the instruction manuals, and Slavia with Stadion Evžena Rošického.

Lastly, even though most of the employees were not novices as in the fact that it was their first job, both respondents were definitely young themselves and eager to learn.

The average age was also very low and the fact that some of the longer employed employees left to Eden Aréna also must have giving this rejuvenation a boost. The observation that all employees were very much impressed by Champions League does mean they had never experienced something like this before.

9.2 Answering the follow-up questions

9.2.1 Type I versus Type II socialization

“Was this socialization Type I (Logic of Consequence) or Type II (Logic of Appropriateness?)”

The socialization was mainly of the Type II variant, meaning that at least the respondents themselves, and their colleagues, were actually believing in the changes they were making. UEFA in this sense seemed as the right organization to look up to and to be trusted. However, one has to take in mind that one respondent did mention that some of the changes were made in a Logic of Consequence, so that it is not to be ruled out there was Type I socialization going on as well. For this however more research is needed to find out the actual type of socialization in individual employees.

9.2.2 Persuasion

“Was there any persuasion involved by UEFA to get the management of SK Slavia Praha socialized?”

UEFA never used any rewarding methods to get the club to do what they wanted. However, the employees in the club themselves seemed to have been aware of these rewards, even without UEFA ever having stated them out loud. The upper echelons of

the club even calculated playing yearly Champions League in their budgets, though because of the qualification stage, those chances were slim from the beginning.

Authority was never used by UEFA. A couple of times UEFA used social proof as a form of persuasion, but it did not make a big impact with the respondents. UEFA did have a very structured and consistent communication with the club, which was perceived as something positive.

Persuasion from the side of UEFA was thus not the most influential direct reason for the socialization of the employees, but it did play a role in winning the trust of the employees. Further research would be needed in how exactly the revenues were part of the persuasion and if persuasion can happen without the socializer actively using this type of persuasion

9.2.3 The lasting of socialization in 2014

“Did socialization prevail after not playing in the Champions League anymore?”

Unfortunately for SK Slavia Praha, most of the socialization seems to have been lost over time. After seven years, the reorganization of the departments and the departure of some of the most socialized employees, the club seems to be back in the times before 2007.

This is in line with the theory of the norm entrepreneur: All contact with UEFA and ECA seems to have been lost since 2010, and the people in the club who had the contacts left as well, making it almost impossible to get new employees properly socialized.

One of the respondents seemed to be at still socialized, but both respondents state that the rest of the employees in the club are not that much socialized by the norms and values of UEFA anymore.

The field research has shown the same overall development, even though there seems to have been an improvement in the last year regarding the communication with the supporters. Next to this, because of the modernity of the Eden Aréna, some of the professionalism is still available, but often on a level where it does not influence the management, since Eden Aréna and SK Slavia Praha are two different entities.

There are however chances for new socialization because of the entry of a possible new norm entrepreneur, but these changes have not yet happened, or at least, are not yet measurable at the moment. The reshuffle of the employees makes this even more possible, but for this a strong socializer, be it UEFA, ECA or R1, needs to come back into the club.

At the moment, for this the future looks grim. SK Slavia Praha is while writing this MA thesis on the brink of relegation into the second League, instead of winning in the Gambrinus Liga. If there will be no change of this, no change in the management is expected either. However, both seem to go hand in hand at SK Slavia Praha at the moment. If this is the case, the employees of the club still have a long way to go before reaching the levels of professionalism and structure they once got from the interaction with UEFA again.

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