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Title: The Discursive Construction of National Identity in Media Sport: The case of Greece at Euro 2004

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Abstract:

It has been argued that media sport constitutes a significant arena within which discourses about national identities are continually articulated (Blain et al. 1993). This study analyses the football commentaries of the matches in which the Greece national football team competed during the European Championship 2004 as they were broadcasted by the Greek television and radio. Its main focus is on the linguistic means that the sportscasters deployed with a view to constructing a national identity that promoted unification, identification and solidarity amongst the audience. In parallel, it explores how the representatives of this national collectivity in Euro 2004, i.e. the footballers, their coach and the fans, were depicted. Adopting a discourse-historical framework (Wodak et al. 1999, Reisigl and Wodak 2001), it is shown that the Greek national identity is built and established by dint of constructive strategies expressed through nomination, predication, argumentation, discourse representation and intensification. Having demonstrated that these strategies are linguistically realised by devices that indicate sameness, assimilation, inclusion, uniqueness and continuity such as the deictic 'we', rhetorical tropes, allusions, topoi and attitudinal lexis, it becomes evident that the sportscasters dispense any kind of neutrality in their reports showing great support for their home team on the one hand and forging points of identification with the audience on the other (Blain et al. 1993). In doing so, they confirm the ideological power that media sport has in generating, reinforcing and disseminating national identities.

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