

Scoring a hat trick: Nation, football, and critical discourse analysis

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Abstract

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 Greek national football team competed during Euro 2004. Its focus is on the discursive means that the sportscasters deployed with a view to constructing a national identity that promoted unification and solidarity amongst the audience. In parallel, it explores how the representatives of this national collectivity, i.e., the footballers, their coach and the fans, were depicted. Adopting a discourse-historical framework (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, Wodak *et al.* 1999), it becomes evident that the sportscasters show great support for their home team forging points of identification with the audience (Blain *et al.* 1993). In doing so, they confirm the ideological power that media sport has in generating, reinforcing and disseminating national identities.

Keywords: discourse analysis, sports, identity

1 More than a mere game

By being placed on the back page of newspapers or at the end of news coverage, sport seems to belong to a world of its own, away from the seriousness attached to political matters (Beard 1998). Its strong associations with recreation have led several people to claim that sport is outside the essential ingredients that make up culture. However, this is only partly true as apart from the physical relaxation and sense of escaping from reality offered by sport, its competitive nature is inevitably linked to the complex systems of human behavior, namely society (Beard 1998). Football—especially with its mass, almost global appeal—has been capable of uniting communities, cementing social formations as well as (re)producing identities (Dimeo 2001:105) related to class, gender and to what will be of particular interest here, nation (Blain *et al.* 1993).

From very early, football has provided a strong nucleus for representing nationality (Alabarces and Rodríguez 2000) becoming a significant ideological conduit by dint of which national narratives about contemporary societies can be conveyed (Boyle and Monteiro 2005:239). International football

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successes elevate the national team's players to symbols of 'modern patriotism' (Tavares in Boyle and Monteiro (2005:241)) fueling a sense of unity and homogenization within a nation, while breeding myths that equate football achievements to national supremacy (Alabarces *et al.* 2001:549, 563).

With these in mind, the purpose of this article is to reflect upon how national identity can be generated and reproduced through media sport discourse taking the case of the Greece national football team and their participation in the European Championship¹ 2004 (henceforth Euro 2004) as an example of such an expression of collective identity.

Tracing back to the national football team's history,² we will discover that Greece made their appearance in a major tournament only in 1980 at the Euro in Italy. Fourteen years later, Greece qualified for World Cup 1994 in the USA. Unfortunately, they did not make any impact as they lost all the games by scoring no goals and receiving ten, setting in this way one of the worst records in World Cup's history. Greece also failed to qualify for Euro 1996 and 2000 as well as for the World Cups 1998 and 2002. Nevertheless, after a successful qualifying campaign, Greece made it to Euro 2004, held in Portugal between 12 June and 4 July 2004. The team advanced to the final round for the first time in their history having faced Spain, Russia, France, the Czech Republic and Portugal. The meticulous combination not only of corners, headers and tackles, but also of thought and altruism was sufficient for the Greece footballers to complete one of the most remarkable stories in the history of football (Fletcher 2004, Papaloukas 2004).

Greece's triumph at Euro 2004 was considered one of the biggest sporting achievements in the country's history. Sport agents talked about the potential of the Greek sport; journalists emphasized the influence of this victory upon other countries forty days before the Athens Olympic Games; sport fans poured in the streets rejoicing while cars were incessantly honking; people who were initially totally indifferent towards football could not hide their fascination; public places and home balconies were overflowed with Greek flags; the team appeared on stamps and received medals from the government and the Church (Karakostaki 2005).

In sum, Euro 2004 heralded the metaphor of the national team's successful performance as a signifier of a wider national rejuvenation (Boyle and Monteiro 2005:238). It gave Greece the ability to look the rest of Europe in the eye as full equals promoting the nation's integration within an international, cultural, political and economic system (Chouliaraki 1999, Tzanelli 2006). But above all, it awakened Greeks' lethargic 'collective inner psyche' (Vološinov (1973) in Law (2001:300)).

2 Media sport discourse and nation

The story of Greece at Euro 2004 produced scores of discourses, all of which highlighted the paramount importance of the event (Karakostaki 2005). Taking as a starting point the Fairclough and Wodak (1997:28) definition of discourse as a form of social practice where the discursive event is not only shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them, my main concern is to focus on how media sport discourse treated the event amalgamating the sporting world with the national feeling.

Media sport extends beyond sport journalism; it is the 'cultural fusing of sport with communication' (Wenner 1998:xiii). Blain and Boyle (1998:370) see it as a field of production with which all kinds of cultural, political and psychological matters often become associated. The way in which sport is

¹The European Football Championship is a [quadrennial] football competition played between the countries of the continent.

²Adapted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece_national_football_team and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_European_Football_Championship (accessed 26/03/08).

written about or broadcasted constitutes a source of information about our beliefs and attitudes, in other words a sense of who we are and what other people are like (Blain and Boyle 1998:370). In order to achieve this, work on sport and the mass media involves the interaction of three major domains: a) production of mediated sport texts, b) messages/content of mediated sport texts, and c) audience response to mediated sport texts (Bernstein and Blain 2002, Kinkema and Harris 1998, Rowe 1999, Wenner 1998).

Production of mediated sport refers to the politico-economic context in which televised and print sport originates as well as the technical processes adopted for its production (Kinkema and Harris 1998:28). With regard to texts, these do not deal only with results, injuries and transfers (Rowe 1999:98); they also encompass multifarious social issues such as drugs, violence, gender and race relations, nationality, and commercialization swaying audiences towards particular ways of understanding these issues. Audience response, on the other hand, pertains to the processes by which audience members are influenced by media sport messages and the factors that motivate them to enjoy mediated sport (Kinkema and Harris 1998:33–49).

The interplay between media sport and nation is best manifested in international competitions like the World Cup and the Olympic Games (Rowe *et al.* 1998). The mediation of such spectacles has a twofold potential: on the one hand, it produces discourses and imagery of internationalism (Whitson and Macintosh (1996) in Bernstein and Blain (2002:14)) and, on the other, it serves as an occasion for national ‘flag-waving’ (Billig 1995). Hence, what media sport can attain is the transformation of an international sporting event into a wider ideological process by presenting sport as a ritual which apart from heightening the linking between individuals, it also enforces their collective identification with the political and cultural community of the nation (Blain *et al.* 1993:45).

Given the strong mix of history, culture and ideology projected by Greece winning Euro 2004 and the fertile soil that media sport discourse offers for the study of national identity, this article seeks to address how the Greek media sport constructed the nation’s identity in their coverage of Euro 2004, centering on the linguistic means that were deployed with a view to promoting identification and solidarity amongst Greeks. In parallel, it explores the ways in which the representatives of this national collectivity, i.e., the footballers, their coach and the fans, were depicted.

The analysis is situated within the realm of work of Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) scholars such as Wodak *et al.* (1999), Reisigl and Wodak (2001), Ricento (2003) and Bishop and Jaworski (2003) who have all made eloquent appeals to the discursive construction of national identity. What differentiates the present study is that the analyzed texts come from live football commentaries, a genre that has not been widely researched despite the interest it presents (Beard 1998, Delin 2000, Rowe 1999).

3 National identity

Identity³ can be broadly defined as the social positioning of self and other (Bucholtz and Hall 2005:586). To put it differently, identity refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished from other individuals and collectivities in their social relations (Jenkins 1996:4). It follows from this that identity bears two basic meanings: the one has to do with absolute sameness, while the other encompasses a notion of distinctiveness which, as Triandafyllidou and Wodak (2003:210) acknowledge, ‘presumes consistency and continuity over time’. What is more, identity is neither

³The question of identity is central to the research agenda of many disciplines including social psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, history, philosophy and linguistics. The aim here is to briefly discuss the very concept rather than review how it is presented across different fields.

natural nor static (Maguire 1994:410). In contrast, it is socially constructed and hence, should be viewed as ‘a condition of being or becoming that is constantly renewed, confirmed or transformed, at the individual or collective level’ (Triandafyllidou and Wodak 2003:210).

In accordance with Whannel (1992:135), the primary collective identity to which individuals are attached is the nation. By and large, nation is a sociological entity within a specific territory which presupposes common sentiments and a common identity shared by its members (Duke and Crolley 1996:4). Anderson (1983:15) was the first to conceptualize nation as an ‘imagined’ political community based on the fact that its members ‘will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each one lives the image of their communion’. Correspondingly, Hall (1992:292–295) has maintained that nation is not only a political formation, but also a system of cultural representation which includes five fundamental aspects:

1. The narrative of the nation as it is told and retold in literature, the media and culture tying everyday life to a ‘national destiny’.
2. Origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness.
3. The invention of traditions that transform disorder into community.
4. The foundational myth.
5. The idea of a pure, original people or ‘folk’.

If nation is understood as an imaginary complex of ideas that consists of collective unity and equality, boundaries and autonomy, then it can come into being when one is convinced of it, believes in it and identifies with it emotionally (Wodak *et al.* 1999:22) asserting his/her national identity. In concurrence with Schlesinger (1993:7), Billig (1995:8, 61–69), Higson (1998:358), de Cillia *et al.* (1999:154) and Hargreaves (2003:23), national identity consists of the following features:

- It is tantamount to possessing ways of talking about nationhood.
- It is an inward-looking process which binds nation to its unique destiny.
- It is an outward-looking process which differentiates one nation from other nations.
- It extends through time involving memory, remembrance and amnesia, so that the role of history becomes vital to the self-understanding of the nation.
- It extends in space; that is, people living in diaspora can enjoy national identity irrespective of territorial conditions.
- It is a form of life which is daily lived within the world of nations.

That said, nationalism is seen as a systematic transformation of this sense of national belonging between groups of people into an antagonistic orientation to other peoples and nations, regarding them as enemies, either oppressors or inferiors (Anderson (1983); Hargreaves (2003:23)). Nationalism thus as an ideology has made the world of nations and ‘our’ place within it seem natural suggesting that a world without nations would constitute an unimaginable possibility (Billig (1995:37); Bishop and Jaworski (2003:247)).

4 CDA and national identity

In investigating national identities, the point of departure for critical discourse analysts (de Cillia *et al.* (1999), Wodak *et al.* (1999); Triandafyllidou and Wodak (2003); Wodak (2006)) is that national identities are specific forms of social identities that can be discursively produced, transformed and dismantled by dint of language and other semiotic systems. The idea of a national community becomes reality through discourses which are launched by politicians, scholars and journalists and then disseminated by virtue of education, media, militarization and sports meetings. Drawing heavily not only on Anderson (1983) and Hall (1992, 1996), but also on Bourdieu (1993, 1994), they propose that national identity is a sort of *habitus*, namely a complex of common ideas and perceptions as well as of related emotional attitudes and behavioral dispositions, all of which are internalized through national socialization. These attitudes and dispositions become manifested in in-group and out-group relations: the feeling of solidarity towards one's own national group and the readiness to lock the 'others' out of this constructed collective. Consequently, the discursive construction of national identity is also a discursive construction of difference, distinctiveness and uniqueness. Additionally, there is no such thing as one national identity, but rather different identities that are dynamic, vulnerable and ambivalent being discursively constructed on the basis of context, i.e., the audience to which they are addressed, the setting of the discursive act and the topic under discussion.

In line with Ricento (2003:630) and Wodak *et al.* (1999:22), the way in which a nation comes to have its own identity is a complex process. Discourses can be seen as sites where the building of national identity is revealed given that language (re)produces and reflects social relations and practices. Accepting, thus, that national identity is the product of discourse is of cardinal importance, as discourses are

[S]ites of action, not static receptacles or artifacts. They represent beliefs based on the interpretation of events and, in turn, help shape future events. They are windows into the lifeways of a culture and society (Ricento 2003:630).

5 Sport and national identity

National identity is provisional and has to be constantly reproduced through stories, images, symbols and rituals that represent shared meanings of nationhood. The key collective rituals that are bound to reinforce national togetherness are important political events (e.g. presidential elections), serious disasters, wars, national commemorations, state funerals, or major sporting events (Hare and Dauncey 1999:50). With reference to the latter, Blain *et al.* (1993:37) have cogently argued that sport has been an appreciable cultural arena through which representations of nationhood are continually articulated. Agreeing with them, Maguire (1994) has talked about a dialectal relationship between nation and sport where, on the one hand, sport functions as a catalyst for national identification, whereas nation pursues its self-assertion and recognition via sport on the other.

Needless to say that it is team sports rather than individual ones those which in principle contribute to the cultivation and display of community and national values (Jansen and Sabo 1994:13). Football is undoubtedly the world's premier team sport embraced with such passion by its devotees as no other form of popular culture (Giulianotti 1999). In juxtaposition with domestic matches where football's role in nation-building is trivial as the teams usually represent rival localities, at international level there is one team embodying the whole nation 'literally wrapping itself in the national flag and beginning matches with a communal singing of the national anthem' (Giulianotti 1999:23).

The footballers are no longer simple sportspersons but living *partes pro toto* for their nation generating strong feelings of national pride or national desperation depending on whether they succeed or not (de Cillia *et al.* (1999:160), Wodak *et al.* (1999:156), Billig (1995:112)).

As Armstrong and Mitchell (2001), Blain *et al.* (1993), and Rowe *et al.* (1998) have pointed out after Anderson (1983), if nation is an imagined construct, then the experience of watching/listening to one's national team playing knowing that thousands or even millions of other individuals, who have never met, are also doing the same, is an element in that process which allows the common communion of an intensely emotional national feeling.

6 Methodology

6.1 The genre of football commentaries

Both television and radio are said to draw huge audiences when major sporting events take place (Beard 1998:57). Football broadcasting is a media event which is pre-planned and publicized; live; takes space from the normal rhythms of television/radio daily schedules; and holds audience's attention acting as a channel for communal emotion (Alabarces *et al.* 2001:547). On account of these facts, the data for this study come from the Greek television and radio broadcasts of Greece's matches during Euro 2004, namely versus Portugal, Spain, Russia, France, the Czech Republic and Portugal (final) as well as from the award ceremony.

Football commentary is understood as a two-way process which is shaped by the nature of the game while it simultaneously defines that game for the viewing public (Beard 1998:60). In Whannel's (1992:26) words:

[T]here is on the one hand the impulse to describe the scene, show what [i]s happening, give the audience an accurate picture, and on the other the impulse to get people involved, keep up the interest, add suspense, shape the material and highlight the action.

Football talk is therefore situated somewhere between everyday communication and professional analysis (Stiehler and Marr 2002).

Unlike written football accounts which have a more intricate and coherent structure, football talk is unscripted, spontaneous and instantly responding to events as they happen aiming to capture their on-going excitement (Beard 1998:61). The sport's inherent unpredictability allows sportscasters to extend beyond the standard football jargon leavening their accounts with special colour giving rise to a highly inventive and restless language (Leigh and Woodhouse 2005:7). This becomes particularly evident in the coverage of international tournaments. As opposed to domestic football matches where commentators usually occupy an impartial position, in international matches they dispense any neutrality showing fervent support for their home team engaging the audience into a nationally homogenous collective (Blain *et al.* 1993:44).

As to the differences between television and radio commentaries (Beard 1998:59–80), the presence or absence of pictures is of utmost significance. Television commentators cannot deny what viewers see with their own eyes. That is why their flow of speech is frequently interrupted having to immediately react to what they see on the screen. So, incomplete utterances can make full sense when seen alongside the pictures. On the contrary, radio commentators' task is much more difficult since they must help the audience visualize what is going on. As sound is the only medium of communication, radio uses more words than television and concomitantly, radio commentators constantly talk because there are no pictures to give a sense of continuity. In my data, it was also

observed that Giorgos Chelakis, the radio commentator, used a much more conversational and spontaneous language than Costas Vernikos, the television commentator, something which was not only due to the sportscasters' different idiosyncrasies, but also to the fact that radio is reckoned to be more liberal than the rest of the media (O'Donnell 2002). Both television and radio, however, employ several people to comment on a game so that the main commentator is always surrounded by a second commentator or expert summarizer who provides the audience with an overview of the match occasionally initiating dialogues with the main commentator. As second commentators are known for their sophisticated speaking skills (Beard 1998:74) and apposite remarks, I included in my analysis extracts from both main and second commentators.

Transcribing every single minute of the matches would be beyond the bounds of possibility. The criteria for selecting particular excerpts stemmed from Delin's (2000:46) proposal that in football commentaries, we can distinguish utterances with the following functions:

- *Narrating*: describing what is happening play-by-play.
- *Evaluating*: giving opinions about players, teams, coaches and referee's decisions.
- *Elaborating*: giving background information about team and player records, the crowd, speculating on players' motives and thoughts.
- *Summarizing*: giving an overview of the game so far.

Therefore, I focused on utterances consisting of more subjective content, i.e., evaluating, elaborating and summarizing. These subjective bits tended to occur at certain points:

- Before and/or after the playing of the Greek national anthem.
- At the very first minutes of the match.
- When a Greek player scored or did something remarkable.
- When the camera zoomed in on particular social actors.
- At the end of the first half and/or beginning of the second one.
- Towards the end of the match when the score was unlikely to change and especially after the referee's final whistle.

After the completion of the transcribing process, the data were coded in terms of (a) identifying the information wished to cover (references to the team, the country, and the social actors), (b) selecting mnemonic abbreviations as codes to represent that information, and (c) matching codes to actual cases in the data (Lampert and Ervin-Tripp 1993:169). Coding allowed me to reduce the data overload, go systematically through them detecting patterns and themes as well as begin making generalizations (Cohen *et al.* 2000:283–284) whereas in revisiting them, I had to refine a number of codes abiding by the exact demands of my research question.

The final step had to do with translating into English the extracts that were to be presented. In my translation, I pursued both loyalty and functionality. Loyalty refers to the closest possible match in form and content between source and target version while in functionality, the impact of the target-text on target-readership is aimed to be equivalent to that of the source-text on original recipients (Sidiropoulou 1999:3). By and large, the communicative force of the Greek message was maintained through culturally preferred patterns of linguistic behaviour in English (Sidiropoulou 2003:20). For the translation of football terms, I leant on Leigh and Woodhouse (2005) and Jellis (2006). Notwithstanding, the speed with which the reports had to be compiled, the high degree of excitement and the unexpected turns of the game made commentators' language fairly incohesive, and this result is rendered almost intact into English.

6.2 The discourse-historical approach

For my data analysis, I adopted the discourse-historical approach, a theoretical as well as empirical approach in CDA developed in the Research Centre ‘Discourse, Politics, Identity’ in Vienna. The approach was set out with the object of tracing the constitution of anti-Semitic stereotypes in Austrian public discourse while later on it was elaborated by studies related to racist discrimination against Romanian immigrants and interestingly, the discourse about nation and national identity in Austria and the European Union (Wodak 2004).

One of the most salient features of the discourse-historical approach is that in order to investigate a specific discourse phenomenon, it follows the principle of triangulation by combining different, interdisciplinary, methodological and source-specific approaches and on the basis of various data and background information (de Cillia *et al.* 1999, Wodak 2001). My case study is built upon this principle intersecting sociology of sport, media studies and linguistics in two different sets of data, i.e., from television and radio, so as to provide an accurate picture of Greece at Euro 2004.

In exploring the discursive construction of national identity, discourse-historical analysts distinguish certain discursive strategies (Table 1). Referential or nomination strategies deal with how one constructs and represents in-groups and out-groups. The focus here is on the referential potential of collectivization and spatialization strategies. Collectivization is the way of representing social actors as groups via deictics and collectives (*we, they, team, nation*). Spatialization is concerned with how social actors are addressed in terms of origin; it is realized by toponyms and geonyms used as metonymies and/or personifications (place for people) as well as athroponyms referring to a person in terms of living in a place. Moreover, both strategies include the use of tropes, such as metaphors and synecdoches in the form of a part standing for the whole (*pars pro toto synecdoche*) or a whole standing for the part (*totum pro parte synecdoche*). Predicational strategies label social actors more or less deprecatorily or appreciatively. They are mainly realized by predicative adjectives/nouns/pronouns, prepositional phrases, collocations, comparisons, similes, metaphors, allusions, presuppositions and connotations. Argumentation is discussed in terms of topoi, that is content-related warrants or ‘conclusion rules’ that connect the argument with the conclusion, the claim, taking the form of either explicit or inferable premises. As such, they justify the transition from the argument to the conclusion. Intensification and mitigation strategies encode speakers’ emotions, moods and general dispositions. This kind of involvement is expressed through pitch and tone colour, repetition, emphasizing particles, rhetorical figures like metaphor, irony and hyperbole (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:44–83).

The model shown in Table 1 constituted the backbone of the analysis as the data were categorized and interpreted according to these strategies. In more than a few cases the data overlapped between the categories, so I opted for classifying them in terms of their most noticeable features.

7 Analysis

7.1 Referential/nomination strategies

7.1.1 Collectivisation: ‘We’

The personal pronoun ‘we’ is of prime importance in the discourse about national identities since it is used to indicate sameness (de Cillia *et al.* 1999:163). The commentators in both mediums mostly adopt ‘we’ in an integrative and shifting fashion suggesting solidarity and establishing bonds (Mühlhäusler and Harré 1990:172) with different referents: the team, the fans and the nation.

Strategy	Objectives	Devices
Referential/ nomination	Construction of in-groups/out-groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •membership categorization •metaphors, metonymies •synecdoches (pars pro toto, totum pro pars)
Predication	Labeling social actors positively or negatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •evaluative attributions •implicit and explicit predicates
Argumentation	Justification of positive or negative attributions	topoi
Intensification, mitigation	Modifying the epistemic status of a proposition	intensifying or mitigating the illocutionary force of utterances

Table 1: Discursive strategies for positive self- and negative other-representation (adapted from Wodak (2006:114)).

i) We: the team In this category, we could substitute ‘we’ for ‘our team’ or ‘our nation’ seeing the national football team standing in metonymic relationship for the whole nation (Bishop and Jaworski 2003:251). Examples (1)–(2) show that the commentators are fully identified with the national team and the national style of playing by appropriating the team’s performance as ‘ours’ (Rowe 1999:103), enacting at the same time an in-group/out-group division of ‘us’, the Greece players vs. ‘them’ (Portugal) in (2).

- (1) Θα συνέλθουμε και θα ανταποδώσουμε, ελπίζω, το τέρμα που δεχτήκαμε από στιγμιαία αδράνεια και λάθος εκτίμηση που έκανε η άμυνά μας. (r)⁴
Tha synelthoume kai tha antapodōsoume, elpizō, to terma pou dechtikame apo stigmiaia adraneia kai lathos ektimisē pou ekane ī amyna mas.

‘We’ll recover and we’ll pay back, I hope, the goal we received after the momentary inertia and mistaken estimation of our defence.’

- (2) Εμείς τους κατατροπώνουμε δυο φορές στα γήπεδά τους, τους νικάμε, τους αποσβολώνουμε (.) τους εκμηδενίζουμε ποδοσφαιρικά και δημιουργούμε μια νέα ποδοσφαιρική υπερδύναμη (.) που λέγεται Ελλάδα. (r)
Emeis tous katatropōnoume dyo fores sta gīpeda tous, tous nikame, tous aposvolōnoume, tous ekmīdenizoume podosfairika kai dīmīourgoume mia nea podosfairikī yperdynamī pou legetai Ellada.

‘We defeat them completely in their stadiums twice. We win them, we bowl them over (.) we annihilate them in football terms and we create a new football superpower (.) which is called Greece.’

This kind of identification with the team, which concomitantly positions the audience within this collective national enterprise (Bishop and Jaworski 2003:252), can also encompass culture-specific

⁴For transcription conventions see Appendix. The abbreviation (tv) next to an excerpt means that the particular bit comes from the television data. Respectively, (r) is used for the radio data.

allusions. Extracts (3) and (4) highlight certain intertextual connections with the Greek literary tradition.

- (3) *Αυτό που ζούμε σήμερα στο Dragão δεν είναι δυνατόν (.) να περιγραφεί με τα λόγια (.) ενός sportscaster. Χρειάζεται να επικαλεστεί κανείς (.) ποίηση και μάλιστα ποίηση (.) του Γιάννη Ρίτσου για να πει «Λίγο ακόμα να σηκωθούμε, λίγο ψηλότερα, λίγο ψηλότερα». Αυτό το πράγμα κάναμε σήμερα (.) εδώ στο στάδιο Dragão. (r)*

‘What we live here in Dragão is impossible (.) to be described by a radio sportscaster’s (.) words. One needs (.) to invoke poetry and in particular (.) Yannis Ritsos’ poetry⁵ in order to say ‘A little further, let us rise a little higher, a little higher’. That’s what we did today (.) here in Dragão stadium.’

- (4) *Όλο αυτό το μεγάλο ταξί-/ταξίδι κλείνει εδώ απόψε. Η Ιθάκη του ελληνικού ποδοσφαίρου (.) τη βρήκαμε εδώ στη Λισαβόνα, σ’ ένα άλλο μεγάλο λιμάνι. (tv)*

‘This whole long journ-/journey finishes tonight. Greek football’s Ithaca (.) we found it here in Lisbon, another big port.’

In (3), Chelakis, the radio commentator, admits that poetry is the most suitable genre for describing the team’s concerted effort (Αυτό το πράγμα κάναμε σήμερα—that’s what we did today) and that is why he recites verbatim the verse ‘Λίγο ακόμα να σηκωθούμε, λίγο ψηλότερα, λίγο ψηλότερα’ ‘A little further, let us rise a little higher, a little higher’ from the poem *Mythistorima* ‘Mythical Story’. This literary piece was written back in 1968 by Giorgos Seferis to give a message of hope to Greeks during the dictatorship and was turned to a song by the composer Mikis Theodorakis. Vernikos, the TV commentator, draws parallels in (4) between the team’s course, Homer’s *Odyssey* and Constantine Cavafy’s poem *Ithaca*. Similarly to Odysseus, the team was on a long journey (μεγάλο ταξίδι) until they reached their Ithaca (Ιθάκη), their final destination which was winning the trophy. In this fashion, Ithaca should not be viewed as an end in itself but as a seal of what has been gained along the way.

ii) We: the fans By employing an addressee-exclusive ‘we’ in order to describe the fans, the sportscasters take for granted that there is a homogeneous group with a shared lived experience and that the element of warm support characterises every single member of that national group equally.

- (5) *Είμαστε παντού. Είμαστε σ’ όλες τις εξέδρες του γηπέδου του Algarve. (r)*

‘We’re everywhere. We’re in all stands of Algarve stadium.’

⁵It was not written by Yannis Ritsos; I suppose Chelakis was confused in the heat of the moment.

- (6) «Ελλάς, Ελλάς» στις εξέδρες. Έχουμε υπεροχή κι εκεί. Φωνάζουμε, ενθαρρύνουμε τους Έλλας, Ellas' stis exedres. Echoume yperochī ki ekei. Fōnazoume, entharrynoume tous έλληνες ποδοσφαιριστές. (r)
ellīnes podosfairistes.
‘Hellas, Hellas’ in the stands. We have supremacy there too. We shout, we encourage the Greek footballers.’
- (7) Φωνάζουμε περισσότερο και καθόμαστε λιγότερο. Για να είμαστε, βέβαια, πιο ακριβείς (.) Φωνάζουμε perissotero kai kathomaste ligotero. Gia na eimaste, vevai, pio akriveis δεν καθόμαστε καθόλου. Είμαστε όρθιοι. Είμαστε μια μεγάλη γωνιά στο Da Luz (.) den kathomaste katholou. Eimaste orthioi. Eimaste mia megalī gōnia sto Da Luz βαμμένη στα γαλανόλευκα. (r)
vammenī sta galanolefka.
‘The more we shout, the less we sit. To be more precise (.) we don’t sit at all. We stand up. We’re a big corner in Da Luz (.) painted in blue and white.’

The emphatic exaggeration conveyed by παντού ‘everywhere’ and σ’ όλες τις εξέδρες ‘in all stands’ in (5) pertains to the huge number of Greek fans whereas κι ‘too’ in (6) means that Greeks have supremacy not only in the field as players but also in the stands as fans. By uttering φωνάζουμε, ενθαρρύνουμε ‘we shout, we encourage’ in (6) and είμαστε όρθιοι ‘we stand up’ in (7), the speaker stresses the fans’ enjoyment and anticipation. The reference to γωνιά βαμμένη στα γαλανόλευκα ‘corner painted in blue and white’ signifies in the first place that a particular corner of seats is occupied by Greeks synecdochically substituted by ‘blue and white’, the colors of the Greek flag, while in the second that these colours are literally reflected in the fans’ painted faces, clothes, banners and flags.

iii) We: the nation Another ‘we’ that was evoked by the sportscasters was the national ‘we’ via which they spoke to and for the Greek nation (Billig 1995:114). As shown in (8), the Greek people are indirectly encouraged through the commentator’s verbs υποθέτω, εύχομαι κι ελπίζω ‘suppose, wish and hope’ to fly the flag as a powerful statement of victory, national pride and solidarity (King 2006:249). This national pride is particularly reinforced via positive attributions in (9) (να πετύχουμε περισσότερα ‘achieve more’; για το καλύτερο ‘doing the best’) and (10) (ωραίο ‘beautiful’; υπερήφανοι ‘proud’). In (11), Chelakis straightforwardly addresses the nation twice by the toponymic anthroponym Έλληνες (Greeks) with εμείς (we) being the subject of three dynamic verbs (νικάμε, χορεύουμε, πανηγυρίζουμε ‘winning, rejoicing, dancing’) as if the nation’s agency is unequivocally asserted in a national success (O’Donnell 1994:368). The choice of συρτάκι is not incidental since it is regarded as one of the most popular and lively Greek folk dances.

- (8) ... ένας γερμανός προπονητής που μας κάλεσε να βγάλουμε τις ελληνικές σημαίες στα ... enas germanos proponītis pou mas kalese na vgaloume tis ellīnikes sīmaies sta μπαλκόνια (↑). (↑) Όσοι δεν το κάναμε μέχρι τώρα (.) θα το κάνουμε υποθέτω, εύχομαι balkonia. Osoi den to kaname mechri tōra tha to kanoume ypothetō, efchomai κι ελπίζω (.) απόψε το βράδυ (↑). (r)
ki elpizō apopse to vradu.
‘...a German coach who invited us to deck the balconies with Greek flags (↑). (↑) Those of us who haven’t done it yet (.) I suppose, wish and hope (.) that we’ll do it tonight (↑).’

- (9) *Μπορούμε να πετύχουμε περισσότερα πράγματα. Είμαστε ικανοί για το καλύτερο (.) σε κάθε τομέα. Το ποδόσφαιρο δείχνει το δρόμο. (r)*
 Boroume na petychoume perissotera pragmata. Eimaste ikanoi gia to kalytero (.) se kathe tomea. To podosfairo deichnei to dromo.
 ‘We can achieve more things. We’re capable of doing the best (.) in any sector. Football shows the way.’
- (10) *Ακουμπάμε πάνω στους ποδοσφαιριστές μας και φωνάζουμε δυναμικά στην προηγμένη Ευρώπη, ποδοσφαιρική, κοινωνική, ότι (.) εμείς είμαστε εδώ. Είμαστε ωραίοι ως Έλληνες, υπερήφανοι γι’ αυτό που είμαστε. (r)*
 Akoumpame panō stous podosfairistes mas kai fōnazoume dynamika stin proigmeni Enrōpī, podosfairiki koinōnikī, oti (.) emeis eimaste edō. Eimaste ōraioi ōs Ellīnes, yperīfanoi gi’ afto pou eimaste.
 ‘Leaning on our footballers we’re dynamically shouting (.) at the advanced in football and social terms Europe, that we’re here. We are beautiful as Greeks, proud of what we are.’
- (11) *Έλληνες, νικάμε στο Da Luz στον τελικό του Euro! ... Εμείς πανηγυρίζουμε στο Da Luz, Έλληνες! Εμείς τους χορεύουμε συρτάκι! (r)*
 Ellīnes, nikame sto Da Luz ston teliko tou Euro! ... Emeis panīgyrizoume sto Da Luz, Ellīnes! Emeis tous chorevoume syrtaki!
 ‘Greeks, we’re winning in Da Luz at the Euro final. ... We’re rejoicing in Da Luz, Greeks! We’re dancing the syrtaki for them!’

7.1.2 Collectivisation: ‘the team’

Vernikos in (12) substantiates the fact that commentators display different stances depending on whether the match is domestic or international. In (13) the TV sportscaster uses synecdoche to replace the names of the domestic teams Panathinaikos, Olympiakos, PAOK and AEK with their respective symbols, i.e., the clover (τριφύλλια), the crowned adolescent (δαφνοστεφανωμένοι έφηβοι), and the two-headed eagles (δικέφαλοι)⁶ being well aware of the local rivalries that could be activated amongst members of the audience in case he spelt out the proper names. By asserting that the domestic teams are ‘away’ (μακριά), he suggests that it is the phenomena of violence and vandalism—which frequently accompany domestic matches—that are away. On the counterbalance, being united in one team (ενωμένοι σε μια ομάδα), in this bunch of boys (σ’ αυτή την παρέα των παιδιών) as he endearingly calls the national team leads to experiencing όμορφες ‘beautiful’ or συγκινητικές στιγμές ‘stirring moments’, as Chelakis puts it in (14), that belong to the whole nation (είναι στιγμές ελληνικές ‘they’re Greek moments’).

- (12) *... επιτρέψτε μου ότι η εθνική ομάδα είναι πάνω απ’ όλους τους συλλόγους (.) και ... epitrepste mou oti i ethniki omada einai panō ap’ olous tous syllogous kai ασφαλώς αυτό είναι το πιο σημαντικό. (tv)*
 asfalōs afto einai to pio simantiko.
 ‘... allow me [to say] that the national team are above all other [football] clubs (.) and of course this is the most important thing.’

⁶Both PAOK and AEK have a two-headed eagle as their mascot, though different from each other.

- (13) *Όμορφες στιγμές. Μακριά τα τριφύλλια, μακριά οι δαφνοστεφανωμένοι έφηβοι, μακριά οι*
Omorfes stigmes. Makria ta trifyllia, makria oi dafnostefanōmenoi efīvoi, makria oi
δικέφαλοι βορρά και νότου. Όλοι ενωμένοι σε μια ομάδα, σ' αυτή την παρέα των
dikefaloi vorra kai notou. Oloi enōmenoi se mia omada, s' afti tin parea ton
παιδιών. (tv)
paidiōn.
 'Beautiful moments. The clovers are away, the laurel-crowned adolescents are away, the two-headed eagles of both North and South are away. All united in one team, in this bunch of boys.'
- (14) (↑) *Είναι συγκινητικές στιγμές! (↑) Είναι στιγμές που δεν έχουν προηγούμενο στο ελληνικό*
Einai sygkinītikes stigmes! Einai stigmes pou den echoun proīgoumeno sto ellīniko
ποδόσφαιρο (↑). (↑) Είναι στιγμές εθνικής ομάδας, επομένως είναι στιγμές ελληνικές (↑). (r)
podosfairo. Einai stigmes ethnikīs omadas, epomenōs einai stigmes ellīnikes.
 '(↑) These are stirring moments (↑)! (↑) These moments are (.) unprecedented in the Greek football (↑). (↑) They're the national team's moments, therefore they're Greek moments (↑).'

The Greek national team is rhetorically represented in terms of personifications and/or anthropomorphizations, tropes that animate collective subjects inviting the recipients to identify or feel intimacy with the personified entity (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:58). Consider (15), where the lexical choice of καρδιά 'heart' as a synecdoche replacing the collective 'team' connotes great emotional intensity and attachment (Ricento 2003) to Greece.

- (15) *... στην ελληνική (.) καρδιά που απόψε πάλεψε όσο μπορούσε ξέροντας ότι έχει μια πολύ*
... stin ellīnikī kardia pou apopse palepse oso borouse xerontas oti echei mia poly
μεγάλη ομάδα απέναντί της και τα κατάφερε. (tv)
megalī omada apenanti tis kai ta katafere.
 '... the Greek (.) heart that fought tonight as much as they could, knowing that they had a great team against them and they did it.'

The ingredient that made the team act as a robust organism was teamwork, as (16) reveals. The defining characteristics of teamwork, namely loyalty, co-ordination and unity (Segrave 2000:52) are encapsulated in Vernikos's φοβερή αλληλοκάλυψη 'tremendous mutual assistance' and ο ένας για τον άλλο και όλοι μαζί για την ομάδα 'all for one and one for all', which echoes the motto that Alexander Dumas's Three Musketeers used to chant. Not only does he repeat the word ομάδα 'team', but he also places emphatic stress on it. In addition, in speaking on behalf of the nation (βλέπουμε 'we ... see'; να είμαστε ενωμένοι και να δουλεύουμε ομαδικά 'be united and work as a team'), he admits that this ideal of self-sacrificing for the general welfare is hardly ever the case enforcing his statement by directly quoting Samaranch, the former president of the International Olympic Committee.

- (16) *Φοβερή αλληλοκάλυψη από τους Έλληνες παίκτες. Είναι αυτό η ομάδα, η ομάδα. Ο ένας*
Foveri allilokalypsī apo tous Ellīnes paichtes. Afto einai ī omada, ī omada. O enas
για τον άλλο και όλοι μαζί για την ομάδα. Κάτι που πολύ, μα πολύ σπάνια το βλέπουμε (.)
gia ton allo kai oloi mazi gia tin omada. Kati pou poly, ma poly spania to vlepoume (.)
σε εκδηλώσεις της ελληνικής φυλής, να είμαστε ενωμένοι και να δουλεύουμε ομαδικά.
se ekdīlōseis tis ellīnikīs fylīs, na eimaste enōmenoi kai na doulevoume omadika.
... Ki o Samaranch to 'lege «όταν είστε ενωμένοι, κάνετε θαύματα». (tv)
... Ki o Samaranch to 'lege «otan eiste enōmenoi, kanete thavmata'.

‘Tremendous mutual assistance among the Greece players. That’s what the team is, the team. All for one and one for all [for the team]. Something that we very, indeed, very rarely see (.) in the manifestations of the Greek nationality [that is] to be united and work as a team. ... Samaranch ... had been saying that ‘When you are united, you can do wonders.’

After Greece’s victory against Portugal in the first match, the team was nicknamed το πειρατικό ‘the pirate ship’ by Chelakis who drew his inspiration from the opening ceremony involving a caravela⁷ floating on the field, homage to Portugal’s history of exploration.⁸ As pirate ships carry the connotations of fearsomeness and teamwork,⁹ the theme repeated itself throughout the tournament.

- (17) Το πειρατικό του Κάπταιν Τζίμι που (↑) μ’ αυτό θα φύγουμε κι εμείς (↑) (.) ταξιδεύει στο Το peiratiko του Kaptain Tzimi pou m’ afto tha fygoume ki emeis taxidevei sto archipelagos του Dragão. Kouvalaei panō tou (.) ta oneira kai tis elpides tōn peripou 4.000 Ελλήνων που βρίσκονται εδώ για να παρακολουθήσουν την προσπάθεια της εθνικής 4.000 Ellinōn pou vriskontai edō gia na parakolouthīsoun tīn prospatheia tis ethnikīs omadas kai tōn ekatommyriōn allōn pou tīn parakolouthoun ap’ to/apō tīn tīleorasi kai tīn akoune apo to radiofōno. (r) kai tīn akoune apo to radiofōno.

‘Captain Jimmy’s pirate ship (↑) with which we’ll also leave (↑) (.) is sailing on Dragão’s archipelago. It carries on it (.) the dreams and hopes of nearly 4,000 Greeks that are here to watch the national team’s effort as well as of the million others that are watching it on t-/on the television and listening to it on the radio.’

In (17), το πειρατικό ‘the pirate ship’ becomes an allegory for the nation (Wodak *et al.* 1999). ‘Captain Jimmy’s pirate ship’ is an intertextual reference to Nikos Kavvadias’s poem *Armida*¹⁰ which became popular amongst Greeks when it was turned into a song. Note here that Kavvadias was one of the Greek poets par excellence who praised Greece’s outstanding topographical feature, the sea. That the pirate ship carries on it the dreams and hopes (κουβαλάει πάνω του (.) τα όνειρα και τις ελπίδες) of so many Greeks suggests that team and nation are one and the same, all sailing towards the same direction and having the same future before them. Remarkably, the nation is imagined in the Andersonian sense too, where millions of Greeks are said to share the same experience via television and radio.

7.1.3 Spatialization

i) Greece The first issue here is the metonymical and concurrently personified representation of Greeks in terms of their country (Blain *et al.* 1993:83) as the very vividness of personification suggests intra-national uniformity and equity. Greece is a sentient being involved in various processes: relational-possessive in (22) (δικαιούται ‘has the right’), relational-circumstantial in (18) (παρούσα ‘being present’), material in (21) (ψάχνει ‘seeks’; βρίσκει ‘finds’) and mental ones in (20) (ζει την ένταση, την αγωνία ‘live heat and anxiety’).

⁷Type of sailing ship used by the Portuguese and Spanish navigators in 15th and 16th century.

⁸Adapted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece_national_football_team (accessed 05/04/08).

⁹Adapted from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piracy> (accessed 05/04/08).

¹⁰Armida was an enchantress who bewitched a crusader in Torquato Tasso’s epic poem *Gerusalemme Liberata* ‘Jerusalem Delivered’.

- (18) *Η Ελλάδα (1) φέτος έχει το μεγάλο της καλοκαίρι. Παρούσα τώρα στο Euro (.) παρούσα Ἴ Ellada fetos echei to megalō tis kalokairi. Parousa tōra sto Euro parousa λίγο αργότερα στους Ολυμπιακούς Αγώνες. (tv) ligo argotera stous Olympiakous Agōnes.*
 ‘This year (1) Greece has its big summer. Being present now at Euro (.) present a bit later at the Olympic Games.’
- (19) *Όλη η Ελλάδα. Όλη η Ελλάδα περιμένει. Όλη η Ελλάδα μετράει. (tv) Olī ī Ellada. Olī ī Ellada perimenei. Olī ī Ellada metraei.*
 ‘All of Greece. All of Greece is waiting. All of Greece is timing.’
- (20) *Ρεχάγκελ όρθιος (1) Βrückner στον πάγκο του ζουν με τον δικό τους τρόπο την ένταση, Rechagkel orthios Brückner ston pagko tou zoun me ton diko tous tropo tin entasī, την αγωνία του αγώνα (.) όπως κι όλη η Ελλάδα, φαντάζομαι, απόψε. (tv) tin agōnia tou agōna opōs ki olī ī Ellada, fantazomai, apopse.*
 ‘Rehhagel stands up (1) Brückner is on the bench. They live in their own way the heat, the anxiety of the match (.) as all of Greece also does tonight, I imagine.’
- (21) *... σε μια γωνιά της Ευρώπης υπάρχει ριγμένη μια χώρα που λέγεται Ελλάδα, που ... se mia gōnia tis Evrōpīs yparchei rigmenī mia chōra pou legetai Ellada, που ψάχνει βηματισμό και τον βρίσκει στα πόδια του Βασίλη Τσάρτα, στην αγκαλιά του psachnei vīmatismo kai ton vriskei sta podia tou Vasilī Tsarta, stin agkalia tou Αντώνη Νικοπολίδη, στο κεφάλι του Τραϊανού Δέλλα, στην ελληνική μαγκιά του Θωδωρή Antonī Nikopolidī, sto kefali tou Traianou Della, stīn ellīnikī magkia tou Thodorī Ζαγοράκη, στο απaráμιλλο σθένος του Γιώργου Καραγκούνη, στον ποδοσφαιρικό Zagorakī, sto aparamillo sthenos tou Giorgou Karagkounī, ston podosfairiko δυναμισμό του Μιχάλη Καψή, στην εξυπνάδα και το σφρίγος του Στέλιου dynamismo tou Michalī Kapsī, stīn exyρνada kai to sφrīgos tou Steliou Γιαννακόπουλου, στη σβελλάδα και την ταχύτητα του Γιώργου/Γιούρκα Σεϊταρίδη (1) στο Giannakopoulou, stī sveltada kai tīn tachytīta tou Giōrgou/Giourka Seitaridī sto ταλέντο, στο μεγάλο ταλέντο (.) του Τάκη Φύσσα. (r) talento, sto megalō talento tou Takī Fyssa.*
 ‘... in one of Europe’s corners, a small country is cast which is called Greece, which seeks its steps and finds them in Vassilis Tsartas’s feet, Antonis Nikopolidis’s hug, Traianos Dellas’s head (.) in Thodoris Zagorakis’s Greek cunning behaviour, Giorgos Karagounis’s (.) unique vigour, Michalis Kapsis’s football dynamism, Stelios Giannakopoulos’s cleverness and pep, in Giorgos/Giourkas Seitaridis’s agility and speed (1) in Takis Fyssas’s talent (.) great talent.’
- (22) *Η Ελλάδα δικαιούται να γιορτάζει, δικαιούται να ονειρεύεται αυτές τις στιγμές που της Ἴ Ellada dikaioutai na giortazei, dikaioutai na oneirevetai aftes tis stigmes pou tis προσφέρει (.) ο αθλητισμός, μόνο ο αθλητισμός. (tv) proferei o athlītismos, mono o athlītismos.*
 ‘Greece has the right to celebrate, has the right to dream these moments that are offered to it (.) by sport and only sport.’

Greece is also synecdochically referred through the national symbols of the flag and the anthem. The propositions in (23) and (24) show how the Greek identity solidifies into these symbols.

- (23) *Ο Καραγκούνης βρήκε μια ελληνική σημαία. Είναι η σημαία της νίκης και της επιτυχίας. Είναι τα γαλανόλευκα χρώματα της υπεροχής.* (r)
 O Karagkounīs vrike mia ellīnikī sīmaia. Einai ī sīmaia tīs nīkīs kai tīs epitychias. Einai ta galanolefka chrōmata tīs yperochīs.
 ‘Karagounis has found a Greek flag. It’s the flag of victory and success. The blue and white colours of supremacy.’
- (24) *Εμείς θα μείνουμε εδώ 12.000 Έλληνες καρφωμένοι στις θέσεις μας (.) ψάλλοντας τον εθνικό ύμνο. 12.000 παραληρούντες (.) με τη βοήθεια των στίχων (.) του Διονύση Σολωμού (.) βρίσκουμε υπόσταση (.) επανάσταση εθνική και υψηλό φρόνημα.* (r)
 Emeis tha meinoume edō 12.000 Ellīnes karfōmenoi stis theseis mas psallontas ton ethniko ymno. 12.000 paralīrountes me tī voitheia tōn stichōn (.) tou Dionysī Solōmou vriskoume ypostasī epanastasī ethikī kai ypsilo fronīma.
 ‘We’ll stay here (.) 12,000 Greeks fixed to our positions (.) chanting the national anthem. 12,000 overexcited people (.) who find hypostasis (.) national revolution and high morale (.) through Dionysios Solomos’s (.) verses.’

Besides the collective ‘team’, the footballers were often presented as a whole under the toponym Ελλάδα ‘Greece’. Yumul and Özkırımlı (2000:800) enunciate that “[t]his style of presenting the nations rather than the teams as main actors emphasizes the national dimension of the games.” This tendency to identify the teams with their respective countries has become ubiquitous in the sporting world, so (25) is chosen as a representative example where the tropes of metonymy/personification are again apparent.

- (25) *Η Ελλάδα που στάθηκε καλά στην παράταση (.) η Ελλάδα που ξεπέρασε τους Τσέχους. ... Είχε την τύχη με το μέρος της σαφώς, στο τέλος όμως μίλησε (.) η Ελλάδα.* (tv)
 Ī Ellada pou stathīke kala stīn paratasī Ī Ellada pou xeperase tous Tsechous ... Eiche tīn tychī me to meros tīs safōs, sto telos omōs milise Ī Ellada.
 ‘Greece that stood well during the extra time (.) Greece that outdid the Czechs. ... Of course they had [the factor of] luck by their side, but in the end it was Greece’s (.) turn to speak.’

ii) Greek The anthroponyms Έλληνας ‘Greek (n.)’, Έλληνες ‘Greeks’ and ελληνικός ‘Greek (adj.)’ are used interchangeably for the footballers in (26), the fans in (27) and the audience in (28).

- (26) *Οι Έλληνες δεν τα παράτησαν (1.5) και να τους απόψε εδώ (5). Άσχετα με το τι θα κάνουν στη συνέχεια (.) η αποψινή εμφάνιση τους δίνει πάρα πολλά εύσημα.* (tv)
 Oi Ellīnes den ta paratisan kai na tous apopse edō. Ascheta me to ti tha kanoun stī synecheia (.) ī aropsinī emfanisī tous dinei para polla efsīma.
 ‘The Greeks didn’t give up (1.5) and here they’re tonight (5). Irrespective of what they’ll do later on (.) this evening’s performance (.) gives them a great deal of credits.’
- (27) *Οι Έλληνες περιμένουν με αγωνία, δεν έχουν (.) ούτε δύναμη να φωνάξουν (.) απ’ την αγωνία.* (tv)
 Oi Ellīnes perimenoun me agōnia, den echoun oute dynamī na fōnaxoun ap’ tīn agōnia

‘The Greeks are anxiously waiting. They don’t (.) even have the strength to shout (.) because of anxiety.’

- (28) Θα ’ναι πολύ ευτυχισμένοι οι άνθρωποι της Βέρντερ Βρέμης βλέποντάς τον να κάνει αυτά
Tha ’nai poly eftychismenoi oi anthrōpoi tīs Verder Vremīs vlepontās ton na kanei afta
τα παιχνίδια εδώ (.) αλλά πολύ περισσότερο όλοι οι Έλληνες. (tv)
ta paichnidia edō alla poly perissotero oloi oi Ellīnes.

‘Werder Bremen’s people will be very happy watching Charisteads playing these games here (.) but it is all Greeks that will be even happier.’

Interestingly, as shown in (29), Έλληνας was also used for Greece’s German coach Otto Rehhagel indicating his faith and full commitment to the team.

- (29) Είναι ελληνικό, είναι ελληνικό το πειρατικό. ... Σ’ αυτό το πειρατικό (.) δεν
Einai ellīniko, einai ellīniko to peiratiko. ... S’ afto to peiratiko den
μπορεί ν’ ανέβει κανένας άλλος (.) εάν τυχόν δεν είναι Έλληνας. Κι ο Ρεχάγκελ
borei n’ anevēi kanenas allos ean tychon den einai Ellīnas. Ki o Rechagkel
είναι ένας από μας. Έλληνας σαν κι εμάς. (r)
einai enas apo mas. Ellīnas san ki emas.

‘The pirate ship is Greek, it is Greek. ... No one can embark on this pirate ship (.) unless s/he is Greek. And Rehhagel is one of us. Greek like us.’

7.2 Predication strategies

Predication strategies dealt with the discursive portrayal of the social actors who set in motion the Greek national identity during Euro 2004, namely the German coach Otto Rehhagel and the Greece players as well as the nation’s ‘ambassadors’ to the Portuguese stadiums, i.e., the Greek fans.

7.2.1 Coach

Throughout the data, Otto Rehhagel was presented as the catalyst for this national success. The way he promoted and created high levels of group cohesion had a dramatic effect on the team’s performance and concomitantly on the nation’s temperament. It can be seen from the examples in (30) that Rehhagel is given active roles (Halliday 1994) which underline his overzealousness during the matches and his care about the team.

- (30) **Rehhagel’s roles:**

a. **Actor:**

Παναγιύρισε ο Γερμανός αλλά δεν έχασε την (...) ε αυτοσυγκέντρωσή του. (tv)

Panīgyrise o Germanos alla den echase tīn e aftosygkentrosī tou.

‘The German *celebrated* but didn’t lose (...) er his self-concentration.’

b. **Senser:**

Ο Γερμανός που πίστεψε και πιστεύει σ’ αυτή την ομάδα, την έφερε μέχρι εδώ (.) και

O Germanos pou pistepse kai pistevei s’ aftī tīn omada, tīn efere mechri edō kai

πιστεύει ότι μπορεί να γυρίσει και με το κύπελλο στην Αθήνα. (tv)

pistevei oti borei na gyrisei kai me to kypello stīn Athīna.

‘The German who *believed* and *believes* in this team, brought them up to here (.) and *believes* that he can also return to Athens with the trophy.’

- c. **Sayer:**
Δίνει (.) οδηγίες συνεχώς. (r)
 Dinei odīgies synechōs.
 ‘He constantly gives instructions.’
- d. **Behaver:**
Ρεχάγκελ πάντα όρθιος. (tv)
 Rechagkel panta orthios.
 ‘Rehhagel always stands up.’

His activation is further realized (van Leeuwen 1996) in the following examples:

- (31) a. **prepositional circumstantials:**
Πολύ καλά διαβασμένο το παιχνίδι των Ισπανών από τον Ρεχάγκελ. (r)
 Poly kala diavasmeno to paichnidi tōn Ispanōn apo ton Rechagkel.
 ‘The Spanish’s game is read very well by Rehhagel.’
- b. **postmodification:**
Ρεχάγκελ, ...ο (.) πρωτομάστορας της (...) ελληνικής πορείας. (tv)
 Rechagkel, ...o prōtomastoras tīs ellinikīs poreias.
 ‘Rehhagel ...the (.) foreman of (...) the Greece course’
- c. **possession:**
η επόμενη κίνηση στη σκακιέρα του Ρεχάγκελ. (r)
 Ī epomenī kinisī stī skakiera tou Rechagkel.
 ‘the next movement in Rehhagel’s chessboard.’
- d. *τα παιδιά του Ρεχάγκελ (tv)*
 ta paidia tou Rechagkel
 ‘Rehhagel’s boys’
- e. *της εθνικής του Ρεχάγκελ (tv)*
 tīs ethnikīs tou Rechagkel
 ‘Rehhagel’s national team’

where πολύ καλά διαβασμένο ‘read very well’ and σκακιέρα ‘chessboard’ suggest deep thought and concentration while πρωτομάστορας ‘foreman’ connotes organisation and responsibility and that is why the boys (παιδιά) and the team (εθνικής) appear to belong to him.

7.2.2 Footballers

The metaphoric connection between war and football has become naturalised (Bishop and Jaworski 2003) considering that both aim at ‘conquest, glory and victory through courage, aggression and strength’ (Segrave 2000:49). Footballers are often depicted as symbolic warriors who are on a mission to uphold the honour of their nation by doing ‘battle’ and protecting it from its ‘enemies’ (Billig (1995:123); Bishop and Jaworski (2003:251)). Apart from the standard metaphors of ‘attack’, ‘defence’ and ‘shot’ (Beard 1998:34), the Greece players were represented in terms of a more extensive wartime vocabulary specified in (32)–(34).

(32) **Bravery:**

- a. *Ο Νικοπολίδης έσωσε την Ελλάδα. (tv)*
O Nikopolidīs esōse tīn Ellada.
'Nikopolidis *saved* Greece.'
- b. *με Παπαδόπουλο (.) και Βενετίδη που έκαναν ηρωική προσπάθεια (r)*
me Papadopoulo kai Venetidī pou ekanan īrōikī prospathēia
'with Papadopoulos (.) and Venetidis who *made a heroic effort*'
- c. *Είναι μαχητής και ο Βρύζας και ο Χαριστέας και ο Γιαννακόπουλος. (tv)*
Einai machītīs kai o Vryzas kai o Charisteas kai o Giannakopoulos.
'Vryzas, Charisteas and Giannakopoulos are *fighters*'
- d. *Όποια τρύπα μπορεί να βουλώσει παντού και πάντα (.) με αυταπάρνηση (.) ο Ζαγοράκης. (tv)*
Opoia trypa mporei na voulōsei pantou kai panta me aftaparnīsī o Zagorakīs.
'Zagorakis is always there to stuff up any hole with *self-denial*'
- e. *[Ο Καραγκούνης] έπεσε με αυτοθυσία σ' ένα τάκλιν. (r)*
[O Karagkounīs] epese me aftothysia s' ena taklin.
'[Karagounis] tackled with *self-sacrifice*'
- f. *Δέλλας (.) απροσπέλαστος στην άμυνα. (r)*
Dellas aprospelastos stīn amyna
'Dellas (.) *impenetrable* in the defence'

(33) **Ferocity:**

- a. *Ο Καψής (.) που εξαφάνισε (.) τον γίγαντα Koller. (tv)*
O Kapsīs pou exafanise ton giganta Koller.
'Kapsis (.) who *exterminated* (.) the giant Koller.'
- b. *[Βρύζας] είναι πολύ επικίνδυνος για τα δόντια του Marchena και για του Helguera. (r)*
[O Vryzas] einai poly epikindynos gia ta dontia tou Marchena kai gia tou Helguera. (r)
Helguera.
'[Vryzas] is very *dangerous* for Marchena and Helguera's teeth.'

(34) **Weaponry:**

- a. *Χάρη στην κανονιά του Χαριστέα ... μετά την μπαλιά ξυραφιά του μετρ του είδους Βασίλη Τσάρτα. (r)*
Charī stīn kanonia tou Charistea ... meta tīn balia xyrafia tou metr tou eidous Vasilī Tsarta.
'Thanks to Charisteas's *cannon-shot* ... after the *razor-sharp* kick by the expert Vassilis Tsartas.'
- b. *το θωρηκτό της επίθεσης (.) ο Άγγελος Χαριστέας (r)*
To thōrikto tīs epithesīs o Aggelos Charisteas
'the *warship* of the attack (.) Angelos Charisteas'

Another theme very closely related to war is that of pain and injury. Footballers become heroes not only because of their outstanding performance, but also their endurance of hardships (van de Berg 1998).

- (35) *Ο Τραϊανός Δέλλας, ο στυλοβάτης της ελληνικής άμυνας, παίζει με μισό πόδι. (r)*
 O Traianos Dellas, o stylovatis tis ellīnikīs amynas, paizei me miso podi.
 ‘Traianos Dellas, the pillar of the Greece defence, is playing with half a leg.’
- (36) (↑) *Μπράβο στον ταλαιπωρημένο από τραυματισμούς Ντέμη που έκανε 20 ενέσεις για να δώσει το «παρών» στο ραντεβού (↑). (r)*
 Bravo ston talaiporīmeno apo travmatismous Demī pou ekane 20 eneseis gia na dōsei to “parōn” sto rantevou.
 ‘(↑) Well done to Demis who, being weary of injuries, was given twenty injections so as to be present at this meeting (↑).’
- (37) *Μιχάλης Καψής με πρόβλημα, αλλά παίζει όμως το παιδί σήμερα. (tv)*
 Michalis Kapsīs me provlīma, alla paizei omōs to paidi sīmera.
 ‘Michalis Kapsīs has a problem but the boy is playing today.’

Playing with injuries [με μισό πόδι ‘with half a leg’ in (35), ταλαιπωρημένο από τραυματισμούς ‘weary of injuries’ in (36), πρόβλημα ‘problem’ in (37)] is a mark of courage and strong character that is worth valorising [Μπράβο ‘Well done’ in (31)] (Nixon (2003); Sabo and Jansen (1998:209)).

By and large, the Greek footballers were described in terms of positively connotated attributions (see examples (38)–(45)) which foregrounded superiority and suggested a certain national model character. In many circumstances, these attributions belonged to the repertoire of Greeks’ collective knowledge (Wodak 2004) presupposing thus continuity at national level.

(38) **Physique:**

- a. *ο ογκόλιθος αρχηγός ο Θοδωρής Ζαγοράκης (r)*
 o ogkolithos archīgos o Thodorīs Zagorakīs
 ‘the *boulder* captain Thodoris Zagorakis’
- b. *[Δέλλας] ο Κολοσσός της Ρόδου (tv)*
 [Dellas] o Kolossos tis Rodou
 ‘[Dellas] the *Colossus of Rhodes*’

(39) **Prowess:**

- a. *του Ζήση Βρύζα που σαν έτοιμος από καιρό (r)*
 tou Zīsī Vryza pou san etoimos apo kairo
 ‘[Vryzas] who as if long *prepared*’
- b. *μεστωμένο, παραγωγικό παιχνίδι από τον Γιώργο Καραγκούνη (r)*
 mestōmeno, paragōgiko paichnidi apo ton Giōrgo Karagkounī
 ‘*mature and productive* game by Giorgos Karagounis’
- c. *τον έμπειρο goalkeeper (.) της εθνικής μας ομάδας (r)*
 ton empeiro goalkeeper tis ethnikīs mas omadas
 ‘the *experienced* goalkeeper (.) of our national team’
- d. *το μαέστρο της μπάλας, τον βιρτουόζο Βασίλη Τσάρτα (r)*
 to maestro tis balas, ton virtouozo Vasilī Tsarta
 ‘the *master* of the ball, the *virtuoso* Vassilis Tsartas’
- e. *Σείταρίδης, ο φτεροπόδαρος Ερμής των γηπέδων (r)*
 Seitaridīs, o fteropodaros Ermīs tōn gīpedōn
 ‘Seitaridis the *swift-footed Hermes* of the fields’

- (40) **Aristocracy:**
- a. Αυτοκράτορας κυριολεκτικά ο Τραϊανός (tv)
Aftokratōras kyriolektika o Traianos
‘[Traianos] *an emperor* literally speaking’
 - b. ο άρχοντας της αριστερής πτέρυγας, ο Τάκης ο Φύσσας (r)
O archontas tīs aristerīs pterygas, o Takīs Fyssas
‘the lord of the left side, Takis Fyssas’
- (41) **Support:**
- a. **physical**
Τραϊανό Δέλλα (1) τον κεντρικό πυλώνα της ελληνικής αμυντικής διάταξης. (r)
Traiano Della ton kentriko pylōna tīs ellīnikīs amyntikīs diataxīs
‘Dellas, the central *pillar* of the Greek defence’
 - b. **moral**
Ζαγοράκης εμπυχώνει τους συμπαίχτες του (tv)
Zagorakīs empsychōnei tous sympaichtes tou
‘Zagorakis *heartens* his team-mates’
- (42) **Religion:**
- a. (↑) Είμαστε στα ουράνια από δυο αγγέλους που είναι στο γήπεδο (↑). (↑) Τον Μπασινά και τον Χαριστέα (↑). (r)
Eimaste sta ourania apo dyo aggelous pou einai sto gīpedo. Ton Basina kai ton Charistea.
‘We’re up to the heavens due to two *angels* that are in the field (.) Basinas and Charistead.’
 - b. Ο Γιαννακόπουλος που ... έδωσε τη δική του πνοή στην ομάδα (tv)
O Giannakopoulos pou ... edōse tī dikī tou pnoī stīn omada.
‘Giannakopoulos who ... *gave* his own *breath* to the team.’
- (43) **Machines:**
- a. Στο κέντρο τρεις ατμομηχανές, ο Ζαγοράκης, ο Κατσουράνης και ο Μπασινάς. (r)
Sto kentro treis atmomīchanes, o Zagorakīs, o Katsouranīs kai o Basinas.
‘Three *steam-engines* in the centre, Zagorakis, Katsouranis and Basinas.’
- (44) **Animals:**
- a. ο Τάκης Φύσσας, ο πραγματικός αητός της Λισαβόνας (r)
o Takīs Fyssas, o pragmatikos aītos tīs Lisavonas
‘Fyssas, Lisbon’s real *eagle*’
- (45) **Football styles:**
- a. την αργεντίνικη μπαλιά (.) του Βρύζα (r)
tīn argentīnikī balia tou Bryza
‘[Vryzas’s] *Argentinean* kick’
 - b. Σ’ αυτή την χατζιπαναγίσια πράγματι ντρίπλα που κάνει ο Ζήσης Βρύζας (r)
S’ aftī tīn chatzīpanagisia pragmati dripla pou kanei o Zīsīs Vryzas
‘*á la Chatzipanagis*, indeed, dribble by Zisis Vryzas’

In (38b), Κολοσσός της Ρόδου ‘Colossus of Rhodes’, one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world, is a name tag used for Dellas to signify his tall stature and vital position in the defence. Σαν έτοιμος από καιρό ‘As if long prepared’ in (39a) is intertextually linked to Constantine Cavafy’s poem *The God Abandons Antony* with a view to suggesting readiness, while Seitaridis in (39e) is characterised as Ερμής ‘Hermes’, one of the ancient Greek deities known for his agility. In (40a) and (42a), the commentators pun on the players’ names: Traianos ‘Dellas’/Trajan (the Roman emperor) and angel/Angelos ‘Angelos Basinas, Angelos Charisteas’. (42b) can be deemed a biblical allusion to God’s giving his own breath to Adam and Eve. Lastly, Chatzipanagis in (45b) was a football legend in Greece.

7.2.3 Fans

A common way of representing the Greek fans was through the *pars pro toto synecdoche* εξέδρα (stand) as in example (46):

- (46) Κοιτάζτε την ελληνική εξέδρα πολυάριθμη, ενθουσιώδης, όμορφη (1) χωρίς βιαιότητες (tv)
 koitaxte tīn ellīnikī exedra polyarithmī, enthousiōdīs, omorfī chōris viaiotites
 ‘look at the Greek stand. Numerous, enthusiastic, beautiful (1) without (...) violent acts’

as well as metaphors indicating energy, vivacity and warfare:

- (47) a. Οι Έλληνες δίνουν βροντερό «παρών» εδώ. (r)
 Oi Ellīnes dinoun vrontero “parōn” edō.
 ‘The Greeks have a thunderous presence here.’
- b. την εξέδρα την ελληνική να έχει πάρει τώρα φωτιά (tv)
 tīn exedra tīn ellīnikī na echei parei tōra fōtia
 ‘the Greek stand is on fire now’
- c. Πάλλεται η ελληνική εξέδρα (tv)
 Palletai ī ellīnikī exedra
 ‘the Greek stand vibrates’
- d. Η ελληνική εξέδρα έχει κερδίσει τη μάχη της εξέδρας πριν ξεκινήσει. (tv)
 Ī ellīnikī exedra echei kerdisei tī machī tīs exedras prin xekinīsei.
 ‘The Greek stand has won the battle of the stands before the game’s kick-off.’

Moreover, they were allocated with active roles expressed through verbs indicating incentive like βοηθήσουν ‘help’ (tv), υποστηρίζουν ‘support’ (tv), ενθαρρύνουν ‘encourage’ (r) and παροτρύνουν ‘stimulate’ (r). Their ardent support entailed χειροκροτούν, φωνάζουν κι επευφημούν ‘applauding, shouting and cheering’ (r), χορεύουν ‘dancing’ (tv) and τραγουδούν τον εθνικό ύμνο ‘singing the national anthem’ (r) while their chants were provided by means of direct quotations: «Θέλω γκολ, Ελλάδαρα θέλω γκολ» ‘I want a goal, great Greece I want a goal (r)’, «Σήκωσέ το, δεν μπορώ να περιμένω» ‘Lift it (the cup), I can’t wait (r)’, «Ελλάς, Ελλάς, Ελλάς μπορείς να προκριθείς» ‘Hellas, Hellas¹¹ you can advance (r)’. Yet, before taking action within the stadiums, the Greek followers had a long way lying before them:

¹¹Hellas is the Greek name for Greece in Katharevousa while in Modern Greek is *Elláda*. *Hellas* however is preferred in the chants for reasons of euphony.

- (48) a. *Ταξίδεψαν, διέσχισαν όλη τη Μεσόγειο για να φτάσουν εδώ. (tv)*
 Taxidepsan, dieschisan olī tī Mesogeio gia na ftasoun edō.
 ‘They travelled; they crossed all of the Mediterranean in order to arrive here.’
- b. *Με κάθε μέσο οι Έλληνες είναι εδώ, από κάθε γωνιά του πλανήτη, από κάθε γωνιά της Ελλάδας. (r)*
 Me kathe meso oi Ellīnes einai edō, apo kathe gōnia tou planitī, apo kathe gōnia tis Elladas.
 ‘Using any means of transportation, the Greeks are here from every corner of the world, from every corner of Greece.’

7.3 Argumentation

7.3.1 Topos of comparison

We-groups are not only defined with reference to their own characteristics, but also in contradistinction to other such groups realised in the rhetoric of ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ (Bishop and Jaworski 2003, Blain *et al.* 1993, Yumul and Özkırımlı 2000). In examples (49) and (50), the Greek team’s superiority is asserted through comparatives (ουσιαστικότερο ‘more substantial’) and positively connotated attributions (καρδιά, πίστη, πάθος ‘heart, faith, passion’). In (35), the differentiation is based on a word play involving the two main branches of the Christian Church, the Catholic and the Orthodox, and the meaning of the adjective ‘orthodox’ as something ‘generally accepted or approved of’ (Hornby 2005).

- (49) *Αλλάζουν επί το επιθετικότερο και το θεαματικότερο οι Πορτογάλοι. Εμείς επί το ουσιαστικότερο. (r)*
 Allazoun epi to epithetikotero kai to theamatikotero oi Portugaloι. Emeis epi to ousiastikotero.
 ‘The Portuguese make substitutions to become more offensive and more spectacular. We [make substitutions] to become more substantial.’
- (50) *... εμείς στην εντεκάδα μας ε έχουμε πέντε παίκτες στα τριάντα και λίγο παραπάνω, ενώ οι Ισπανοί, έτσι ένα ενδιαφέρον πιστεύω στοιχείο, είναι ότι έχουν ίσως μία από τις πιο νεανικές ομάδες με κανένα παίκτη πάνω από τριάντα ετών και μόνο δύο, έναν στα είκοσι εννιά, τον Helguera, και δύο στα είκοσι οκτώ, τον Baraja και τον Morientes. Φυσικά, όλα αυτά δεν ξέρουμε πόσο θα μετρήσουν στο γήπεδο. Στο γήπεδο μετράει και η καρδιά, η πίστη, το πάθος και σε λίγο θα δούμε ε τι απ’ όλα θα υπερισχύσει στον αγωνιστικό χώρο. (tv)*
 ... Emeis stīn entekada mas e echoume pente paichtes sta trianta kai ligo parapanō, enō oi Ispanoi, etsi ena endiaferon pistevō stoicheio, einai oti echoun isōs mia apo tis pio neanikes omades me kanena paichtī panō apo trianta etōn kai mono dyo, enan sta eikosi ennia, ton Helguera, kai dyo sta eikosi oktō, ton Baracha kai ton Morientes. Fysika ola afta den xeroume poso tha metrisoun sto gīpedo. Sto gīpedo metraei kai ī kardia, ī pistī, to pathos kai se ligo tha doume e ti ap’ ola tha yperischysei ston agōnistiko chōro.
 chōro.
 ‘... we have, er, five players in their thirties or slightly above in our eleven whereas the Spanish, I think that’s an interesting piece of information, have one of the youngest teams, with no player above thirty and only one at twenty nine [that is] Helguera and two at twenty

eight [that is] Baraja and Morientes. Of course we don't know how much all these things will count inside the pitch. What also counts inside the pitch is heart, faith and passion and in a moment we'll see er which among all these will prevail in the field.'

- (51) Διακογιάννης: *Αν και καθολικοί οι Γάλλοι, παίζουν ανορθόδοξα τελείως.* Βερνίκος: *Ενώ*
 Diakogiannis: *An kai katholikoi oi Galloi, paizoun anorthodoxa teleiōs.* Vernikos: *Enō*
oi Ellhnes orthodoxoi, orthodoxa. (tv)

'Diakogiannis (2nd commentator): Although the French are Catholics, they're playing in a completely unorthodox way. ...Vernikos: Whereas the Greeks who are Orthodox [are playing] in an orthodox way.'

Yet, *topoi* of comparison are not solely employed to indicate difference but also similarity. The key item in (52) is *κι* 'also', which tacitly refers to Greece and the 'scare' stories circulated in the European media about the problems the Greeks were facing in completing Olympic venues in time for the 2004 Athens Olympic Games (Boyle and Monteiro 2005:228). Portugal confronted similar problems but what eventually counts is that the job is done (*η δουλειά γίνεται*) as Vernikos states setting his compatriots' mind at rest.

- (52) *Πορτογαλία που κι αυτή παλεύει να κάνει καλή διοργάνωση (1). Τα έργα ακόμα στους*
Portogalia pou ki afti palevei na kanei kali diorganōsi. *Τα έργα ακόμα στους*
δρόμους είναι (.) στο αεροδρόμιο, έξω απ' το γήπεδο (3). Αν βλέπατε τους χώρους της
dromous einai sto aerodromio, exō ap' to gīpedo. *Αν βλέπατε τους χώρους της*
τηλεόρασης έξω απ' το γήπεδο είναι (.) θυμίζουν ερείπιο (1.5) αλλά η δουλειά γίνεται όπως
tileorasis exō ap' to gīpedo einai thymizoun ereipio alla i douleia ginetai opōs
άλλωστε σε όλες τις μεγάλες διοργανώσεις. (tv)
allōste se oles tis megales diorganōseis.

'Portugal that also fights to host a good tournament (1). The public works are still in process in the roads (.) in the airport, outside the stadium (3). If you could see the television facilities outside the stadium, they are (.) they remind us of a wreck (1.5) but apart from that, the job is done as is the case in all big tournaments.'

7.3.2 Topos of numbers

The numerical references in (53) and (54) finely encapsulate a sense of an imagined community united because of football. The speakers mitigate their utterances by *δεν ξέρω* 'I don't know', *περίπου* 'nearly' and *ίσως* 'perhaps' to avoid sounding fallacious.

- (53) Βερνίκος: (↑) *Η Ελλάδα βγάζει έξω τους Γάλλους, το/τον Zidane (↑) »*
 Vernikos: (↑) *Ī Ellada vgazei exō tous Gallous, to/ton Zidane (↑) »*
 'Vernikos: (↑) Greece exclude the French, Zidane (↑)'

Διακογιάννης: *Και το φαβορί αυτού του δωδέκατου πρωταθλήματος Ευρώπης.*
 Diakogiannis: *Kai to favori aftou tou dōdekatau prōtathlimatos Envrōpīs.*

'Diakogiannis: The favourite of this 12th European Championship.'

Βερνίκος: *Βεβαίως, το σούπερ φαβορί [Τον Zidane, τον Makélélé, τον Henry, τον Trézéguet*
 Vernikos: *Vevaiōs, to souper favori [Ton Zidane, ton Makélélé, ton Henry, ton Trézéguet*
 'Vernikos: Yes, the super favourite [Zidane, Makélélé, Henry, and Trézéguet'

Διακογιάννης: [Μπροστά σε 45.350 [θεατές] και (.) δεν ξέρω πόσα
 Diakogiannīs: [Brosta se 45.350 [theates] kai (.) den xerō posa
 εκατομμύρια τηλεθεατών σ’ όλο τον κόσμο. (tv)
 ekatommyria tiletheatōn s’ olo ton kosmo.

‘In front of 45,350 [people in the stadium] And (.) I don’t know how many millions of viewers around the world.’

- (54) Το ακούτε το ζεστό χειροκρότημα (.) περίπου 10.000 (.) ίσως και παραπάνω Ελλήνων εδώ στο Dragão. Και οι (...) έντεκα παίχτες μας ακούν το χειροκρότημα όχι μόνο των 10.000 αλλά των εκατομμυρίων Ελλήνων που είναι αυτή τη στιγμή μπροστά στις τηλεοράσεις και στα ραδιόφωνα. (r)
 To akoute to zesto cheirokrotīma peripou 10.000 isōs kai parapanō Ellīnōn edō sto Dragão. Kai oi enteka paichtes mas akoun to cheirokrotīma ochi mono tōn 10.000 alla tōn ekatommyriōn Ellīnōn pou einai aftī tī stigmī mprosta stis tileoraseis kai sta radiofōna. (r)

‘You can hear the warm applause (.) by the nearly 10,000 (.) perhaps even more Greeks here in Dragão. All of (.) our eleven players hear the applause that comes not only from the 10,000 but from the millions of Greeks that are in front of both the televisions and radios right now.’

7.4 Intensification strategies

Examples (55)–(65) summarize some of the discursive means that both commentators deployed to express their inner states, attitudes and feelings as well as to engage the audience emotionally and cognitively in their discourse (Reisigl and Wodak 2001:82–83).

- (55) **Expressive phonology:**

a. **με την κεφαλιά του Τραϊανού Δέλλα γράφουμε ιστορία, γράφουμε ιστορί::::α!** (r)
 Me tīn kefalia tou Traianou Della grafoume istoria, grafoume istoria!

‘With Traianos Dellas’s header (.) we make history, we make hi::::story!’

- (56) **Repetition/parallelism:**

a. **Εμείς κυριαρχούμε στις εξέδρες. Εμείς υπάρχουμε παντού. Εμείς δίνουμε τον τόνο. Εμείς έχουμε τις μεγάλες προσδοκίες. Εμείς έχουμε αποφασίσει να πουλήσουμε ακριβά το τομάρι μας σήμερα. Εμείς πιστεύουμε ότι θα δώσουμε το μεγάλο ραντεβού (.) την Κυριακή το βράδυ (.) στο γήπεδο (.) στη Λισαβόνα στο περίφημο στάδιο Da Luz.** (r)
 Emeis kyriarchoume stis exedres. Emeis yparchoume pantou. Emeis dinoume ton tonο. Emeis echoume tis megales prosdokies. Emeis echoume apofasisei na poulisoume akriva to tomari mas simera. Emeis pistevoume oti tha dosoume to megalo rantevou tīn Kyriakī to vrady sto gīpedο stī Lisavona sto perifīmo stadio Da Luz. (r)

‘We predominate in the stands. We exist everywhere. We set the pace. We have great expectations. We have decided to fight tooth and nail today. We believe that we’ll attend the big meeting (.) on Sunday evening (.) in Lisbon’s famous stadium, Da Luz.’

(57) **Evaluation:**

- a. (↑) *Είναι μια μεγάλη, απίστευτη επιτυχία για το ελληνικό ποδόσφαιρο* (↑). (r)
Einaï mia megalī, apisteftī epitychia gia to ellīniko podosfairō.
'It's a great, unbelievable success for Greek football.'
- b. *το εξαιρετικό γκολ του Γιώργου Καραγκούνη* (tv)
to exairetiko gkol tou Giōrgou Karagkounī
'astonishing goal by Giorgos Karagounis'
- c. *εκπληκτική αντεπίθεση των Ελλήνων* (r)
ekpliktikī antepithesi tōn Ellīnōn
'amazing counterattack by the Greeks'

(58) **Hyperboles:**

- a. *Οι Τσέχοι είναι στο χορτάρι. Θα φέρουν κλαρκ (.) για να τους σηκώσουν.* (r)
Oï Tsechoi einai sto chortari. Tha feroun klark gia na tous sīkōsoun.
'The Czechs are on the grass. They'll bring a forklift truck (.) to lift them up.'

(59) **Compliments:**

- a. *Μπράβο μας! Ναι, μπράβο μας! Κατά τη διάρκεια της ανάκρουσης του εθνικού ύμνου
Bravo mas! Nai, bravo mas! Kata tī diärkeia tis anakrousis tou ethnīkou ymnou
της Πορτογαλίας (.) οι Έλληνες είχαν στα χέρια τους σημαίες της Πορτογαλίας και
tīs Portogalias oï Ellīnes eichan sta cheria tous sīmaies tīs Portogalias kai
κασκόλ τα είχαν (.) υψωμένα και ανέμιζαν τις σημαίες.* (r)
kaskol ta eichan ypsōmena kai anemizan tis sīmaies.
'Well done to us! Yes, well done to us! During the playing of Portugal's national anthem
(.) the Greeks were holding Portuguese flags and they had scarves (.) raised and they
were waving the flags.'

(60) **Wishes:**

- a. *Να μην τελειώσει ποτέ αυτό το καλοκαίρι! Να μην τελειώσει ποτέ αυτό το
Na mīn teleiōsei pote afto to kalokairi! Na mīn teleiōsei pote afto to
τουρνουά! (tv)
tournoua!
'May this summer never end! May this tournament never end!'*

(61) **Requests through imperatives:**

- a. *Ο εθνικός ύμνος ακούγεται από χιλιάδες Έλληνες εδώ (.) στο José Alvalade.
O ethnīkos ymnos akougetai apo chiliades Ellīnes edō sto José Alvalade.
Δυναμώστε τον ήχο του ραδιοφώνου σας! (r)
Dynamōste ton īcho tou radiofōnou sas!
'The national anthem is chanted by thousands of Greeks here (.) in José Alvalade. Turn
the volume of your radio on!'*

(62) **Endearments** (by using players' first names):

- a. *Σούταρε, Βασίλη!* (r)
Soutare, Vasilī!
'Shoot, Vassilis!'

- b. *Μπράβο, Στέλιο (tv)*
 Bravo, Stelio
 ‘well done, Stelios’

(63) **Rhetorical questions:**

- a. (↑) *Μα πώς είναι δυνατόν; Πώς είναι δυνατόν (.) 15.000 Έλληνες να μην καταδέχονται τα καθίσματα του Da Luz (↑); (r)*
 Ma pōs einai dynaton; Pōs einai dynaton 15.000 Ellines na min katadechontai ta kathismata tou Da Luz
 ta kathismata tou Da Luz
 ‘(↑) But how is this possible (↑)? (↑) How is this possible, 15,000 Greeks not deigning Da Luz’s seats (↑)?’

(64) **Irony:**

- a. *Έμαθε όλη η Ευρώπη τι σημαίνει Ελλάδα. Μας ήξεραν Greece, μας ήξεραν Grecia, μας ήξεραν (.) μ’ όλα τα παρεπόμενα, μάθανε και το Ελλάς τώρα (.) απ’ το ποδόσφαιρο. (tv)*
 Emathe oli i Evropi ti simainei Ellas. Mas ixeran Greece, mas ixeran Grecia, mas ixeran (.) m’ ola ta parepomena, mathane kai to Ellas tōra ap’ to podosfairo.
 podosfairo.
 ‘The whole Europe learnt what Hellas means. ... They knew us as Greece, they knew as Grecia, they knew us (.) with several other attributes, now they’ve learnt Hellas (.) due to football.’

(65) **Religious (over)tones:**

- a. *στην παλιά Ελλάδα ήταν δώδεκα θεοί, έντεκα είναι εδώ (1) κάπως σαν να βοηθάει κι ένας παραπάνω. (tv)*
 Stin palia Ellada itan dōdeka theoi, enteka einai edō kapōs san na voithaei ki enas parapanō.
 enas parapanō.
 ‘there were twelve gods in Ancient Greece, the eleven are here (1) and it is as if an additional one somehow helps’

It has been argued that a nation is discursively brought into being not only by glorifying its past and dramatizing its present, but also by investing onto its future under the criteria of continuity, timeless and anticipation (Bishop and Jaworski (2003:250); Chouliaraki (1999:55); Wodak *et al.* (1999:26)). The sportscasters saw Euro 2004 as a milestone for the nation’s future:

- (66) *Η μεγαλύτερη διαφήμιση, η μεγαλύτερη προβολή για τη χώρα μας σε όλα τα επίπεδα. ... The year of Greece, το βλέπετε κι εσείς. Η χρονιά της Ελλάδας. Είναι η χρονιά της Ελλάδας. Μια χρονιά που μπορεί να μας βοηθήσει πάρα, πάρα πολύ για τα επόμενα χρόνια σε όλα τα επίπεδα. Κι όχι μόνο αθλητικά (1). Η προβολή της χώρας μας είναι τεράστια (.) και εδώ αλλά και στη συνέχεια. (tv)*
 I megalyteri diafimisī, i megalyteri provoli gia ti chōra mas se ola ta epipeda. ... The year of Greece, to vlepete ki eseis. I chronia tis Elladas. Einai i chronia tis Elladas. Mia chronia pou mporei na mas voithisei para, para poly gia ta epomena chronia se ola ta epipeda. Ki ochi mono athlitika. I provoli tis chōras mas einai terastia (.) kai edō alla kai sti synecheia.
 edō alla kai sti synecheia.

‘The best advertisement, the best promotion of our country on all levels. ... The year of Greece, you can see it. The year of Greece. It is the year of Greece. A year that can help us very, very

much on all levels for years to come. And not only in sport terms (1). The promotion of our country is huge (.) not only now but also in what follows.’

Example (66) is replete with linguistic markers of intensification: the repetitions of σε όλα τα επίπεδα ‘on all levels’, η χρονιά της Ελλάδας ‘the year of Greece’, προβολή για τη χώρα ‘promotion of our country’, the value-laden adjectives μεγαλύτερη ‘best’ and τεράστια ‘huge’, the double use of the emphasizing particle πάρα ‘very’ particularly stressed, while the ‘projection forward’ (Heidegger 1962) in Bishop and Jaworski (2003)) is observed in για τα επόμενα χρόνια ‘for years to come’ and στη συνέχεια ‘in what follows’.

However, examples (67) and (68) slow down the general patriotic fervor. Sportscasters are very conscious of the fact that football tournaments are ephemeral and after their completion, it is hard to keep them alive (Karakostaki 2005).

- (67) *Αρκεί βέβαια (.) τέτοιες επιτυχίες του ποδοσφαίρου, των (...) αθλητών του στίβου, της άρσης βαρών, του μπάσκετ το '87 κι άλλες επιτυχίες (.) να μη μας κάνουνε να (...) αρσῖς varōn, tou basket to '87 ki alles epitychies, na mī mas kanoune na ξεχάσουμε τα προβλήματα που έχει (.) ο ελληνικός λαός. (tv)*
xechasoume ta provlīmata pou echei o ellīnikos laos.

‘Suffice to say that (.) such successes in football, in (...) track and field events, in weightlifting, in basketball in '87 and other successes (.) should not make us (...) forget the problems that the Greek people (.) have.’

- (68) ***Αποταμιεύστε χαρά και σπαταλήστε την αύριο και μεθαύριο κόντρα στα προβλήματα της καθημερινότητας (.) που δεν τα λύνει ένα τρόπαιο. (r)***
Apotamiefste chara kai spataliste tīn avrio kai methavrio kontra sta provlīmata tis kathimerinotitas pou den ta lynei ena tropaio.

‘[S]ave happiness and spend it tomorrow and the day after tomorrow against the daily problems (.) that a trophy doesn’t solve.’

Conversely, what should be kept alive is neither the event nor the celebration of the event but the profound message that the commentator gets across to the nation: έχουμε και τις (1) δυνατότητες, τις ικανότητες να φτάσουμε, κάτι καλύτερο να κάνουμε ‘we have the capabilities, the abilities to reach/to do something better’ (tv).

8 Conclusion

The present article attempted to shed light on how football provides a setting in which discourses of national identity are bound to be displayed and mediated by mass communication. The issue was investigated though the spectrum of the Greece team’s participation in Euro 2004 as it was broadcasted via the Greek television and radio. Leaning heavily on a discourse-historical framework, it was shown that the commentators appealed directly and/or indirectly to national solidarity and union using constructive strategies and presupposing assimilation. These constructive strategies took the form of referential/nomination, predication, argumentation and intensification strategies. Centring on the various uses of ‘we’, the collective ‘team’, rhetorical tropes and instances of spatial reference, nomination invited the nation to identify itself with the team as well as verify its existence and unity because of the team. Predication promoted a commendable image of the social

actors involved in Euro 2004. The coach, German in origin, but Greek at heart, by being involved in a series of dynamic processes managed to unite a team and consequently a whole nation. The symbols of 'modern patriotism', the Greece footballers were valorised and put on pedestals through a wide range of metaphors and other evaluative attributions which aimed at enforcing their stamina and instigating a feeling of pride amongst Greeks. The fans were construed as dignified and passionate ambassadors of the nation by means of behavioural and verbal processes. Argumentation on the other hand highlighted a sense of distinctiveness. Finally, a plethora of intensifying strategies created a sense of immediacy binding commentators and audience together into a shared national experience.

The marshalling of national traits and symbols enacted through references to Greece's history made clear that the language of commentaries is neither neutral, nor purely informative, but 'a potentially powerful instrument for the symbolic unification [...] of nations at moments of high sporting excitement (Rowe 1999:119). It should be recalled that commentators are media professionals and as such, they have the power to shape and influence the ideological structure of society on the one hand and make sense of the world for others on the other (Oktar 2001:320).

However, a number of caveats should be allowed for in relation to this study. Firstly, as the case is Greek-specific, the decoding and interpretation of the produced meanings may vary among addressees with different socio-cultural, historical and geographical specificities. Secondly, although the commentators had an implied Greek audience in mind, this does not mean that all Greeks without exception were equated with this implied audience. So, different decodings may arise from Greeks as well. Thirdly, it should be recognised that national identity is mobilised situationally; its activation within the sport ritual is not necessarily reflected in all other social spheres (King 2006:250). Whichever the case, what should be kept in mind is that 'the language which sport speaks is no different from any other language; it is part of the social, [cultural, economic] and political fabric of nations' (Beard 1998:7, 39).

Appendix: Transcription conventions

(.)	pause of less than 0.1 sec.
(3)	longer pauses have the number of seconds recorded
(...)	hesitation
[onset of simultaneous speech
»	interruption
	supportive interruption
-	indicates that the lexical item was left incomplete
/	self-repair
(laughs)	comments on paralinguistic features or background information
()	inaudible or indecipherable sequence
{ }	not heard very clearly
[]	added lexical items that facilitate understanding (not in the original)
<u>underline</u>	underlining indicates emphatic stress
...	omitted material
::	lengthened segments
bold letters	mark very loud speech
(↑) ... (↑)	mark beginning and ending of rising pitch
(↓) ... (↓)	mark beginning and ending of falling pitch

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