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The War of the Words?

Identity Politics in Anglo-German Press Coverage of EURO 96

■ *Joseph Maguire, Emma Poulton and Catherine Possamai*

ABSTRACT

■ This article is broadly concerned with the role that the sports press plays in the construction and representation of national identity and of identity politics. More specifically, it highlights the nature and form of media reporting within the German and English press during the 1996 European Football Championships, EURO 96. This is examined through the use of a quantitative content analysis supported and illustrated by qualitative discourse examples. The comparison of English and German print media is particularly relevant given the historical and contemporary rivalry, both sporting and political, that exists between the two nations. Past and present identity politics issues between England and Germany can be illuminated through this analysis. Attention is paid to whether national stereotyping, I/we images, established/outsider identities/relations, national habitus codes and Europeanization processes and politics were evident in the media coverage of EURO 96. It would appear that, in some countries, global sports are being used to reassert an intense form of national identity discourse in opposition to further European integration. ■

Key Words European identity politics, football, invented traditions, national habitus codes, national identity

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The official theme song of the 1996 European Football Championships, sung at the opening ceremony, was Simply Red's 'We're In This Together'. It was intended to promote the idea of peaceful, friendly competition, and of Europe being 'united' through football. However, this was not the song heard around the stadiums throughout the duration of the tournament, not at least from the English contingent in the crowds. Rather, it was the official song of the England team, 'Three Lions', with its chorus refrain of 'It's [Football's] Coming Home', a reworking of the organizers' other official slogan, 'Football Comes Home'. It was this pseudo-anthem, which celebrated the English origins of the game of football, nostalgically recalled England's World Cup victory of 1966 and willed a return to such former glories, that the English sporting public related to, rather than a song which extolled the virtues of European unity and togetherness.¹ This arguably reflects a broader trend prevalent in contemporary Europe, namely that 'for many Europeans . . . the most inclusive "we" still refers to citizens of their own country, and the citizens of other member countries of the EC remain "they"' (Mennell, 1994: 189). It would seem that European integration at a political level is outpacing European integration at an emotional level. Similarly, commenting on the greater potency of identification with the nation, in the light of recent attempts to construct a 'European' identity, Elias observed:

Think, for example, of the difference in the emotional charge between the statements: 'I am an Englishman', 'I am a Frenchman', 'I am a German' and the statement: 'I am an English, French or German European'. All references to the individual European nation-states have a strong emotive value to the people involved whether positive, negative or ambivalent. Statements like 'I am a European, a Latin American, an Asian' are emotively weak by comparison. (Elias, 1991: 226)

Underpinning these observations is a range of key figurational concepts, ideas and empirical enquiries. These include: Elias's developmental account of European history, social development and national identity; his use of concepts such as established and outsiders; his use of pronoun pairs — I/we, us/them — as a way of drawing attention to the emotionally charged character of relationships and identifications; the coupling of the concept of national habitus codes with the idea of multilayered identities, and the placing of both identity politics (and the role that sport plays in this regard) within the context of globalization processes.²

Theoretical observations

In this article we have some quite specific empirical objectives but also a broader conceptual aim. We want both to examine the contention that EURO 96 was about the union of Europe, promoted by the organizers through the rhetoric of being 'in it together' and juxtapositioning this with the identity politics that were evident during the Championships. We also consider the particular positions of Britain/England and Germany in relation to each other in the European political climate of the time, while also taking into account the historical legacy that also influences their relationship. More broadly, we want to make the case that, while the concepts of 'imagined communities' and 'invented traditions' are of considerable help in making sense of identity politics, Elias's examination of the sociogenesis of more deeply sedimented national character and habitus codes is more in keeping with Anthony Smith's analysis of nations and nationalism (Smith, 1991) and as such also sheds important light on current European identity politics.³ By 'invented traditions' we subscribe to Hobsbawm's definition of 'a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to include certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past' (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983: 1). In sporting terms, this can be seen in the adoption of national flags and emblems and colours in national team uniforms and the singing of national anthems prior to international contests.

One of the problems that Elias sought to address in his study of established and outsider figurations was:

. . . how and why human beings perceive one another as belonging to the same group and include one another within the group boundaries which they establish in saying 'we' in their reciprocal communications, while at the same time excluding other human beings whom they perceive as belonging to another group and to whom they collectively refer as 'they'. (Elias and Scotson, 1994: xxxvii)

In his introduction to *The Established and the Outsiders*, Elias made the connection between these issues of identity and national character, but it was in his work on the Germans where these links were most fully substantiated. In this latter study, Elias investigated the deeply embodied aspects of German habitus, personality, social structure and conduct and how these features (the I/we image of the Germans) emerged out of the nation's history and pattern of social development. The fortunes of the nation became sedimented, internalized and fused as part of the 'second

nature' — the habitus — of its citizens, whose actions remake the national habitus anew. The national habitus of both England and Germany have been indelibly affected by their change of status on the world stage during the 20th century. During the first half of this century Britain/England was a global political, military and economic — as well as sporting — power, with an overseas empire which stretched across the world; victorious in two World Wars. Germany, during the same period, was something of an international pariah, following defeat and disgrace in these two global conflicts, with the spectre of the Holocaust looming large. The Germany of 1945 was a nation vanquished not just militarily, but also economically, with its political influence almost negligible. However, the fortunes of both nations have changed dramatically during the latter part of the century. Britain/England lost her empire as one by one her colonies fought for, and gained, independence. The country has become weaker economically, and her political standing has also begun to gradually diminish. Meanwhile, (West) Germany's strength in these areas was growing. The so-called *Wirtschaftswunder* ('economic miracle') of the 1950s restored the country's economic strength, and her strategic geographical position during the Cold War increased the nation's political power. The advent of the European Union has emphasized the powerful position of a newly reunited Germany in relation to Britain/England. Germany is the dominant economic force within the EU, and one of the leaders in moves to further integration, whereas Britain/England remains suspicious of any further relinquishment of national sovereignty, and resentful of Germany's privileged position. The fortunes of the nation become sedimented as part of the national habitus of its people. Thus the events which have befallen Britain/England and Germany during the 20th century are crucially important to their citizens today, as the 'image' which the nation possesses is also constitutive of a person's self-image. These observations run counter to conventional notions of the individual, the nation and 'national character' — which conceptualize them as if they are separate entities. Yet, as Elias observes:

The concept of identification makes it appear that the individual is here and the nation is there; it implies that the 'individual' and 'nation' are two different entities separated in space. Since nations consist of individuals and individuals who live in the more developed twentieth century state-societies belong, in the majority of cases, unambiguously to a nation, a conceptualization which evokes the picture of two different entities separated in space, like mother and child, does not fit the facts (Elias, 1996: 152)

In fact, the emotional bonds of individuals with the nations they form with each other can have, as one of their levels, 'sleeping memories' which tend to crystallize and become organized around common symbols — national sport teams being one example. These symbols and sleeping memories usually go unnoticed, yet they powerfully reinforce the notion of I/we relations and form the focal point of a common belief system. Examining these habitus codes allows investigation of why, for example, European integration at the level of political institutions is running ahead of the degree of identification that many, perhaps the majority, of the citizens of the European nation-states feel towards the notion of being 'Europeans'. Writing in connection to this, Elias observed:

The deeply rooted nature of the distinctive national characteristics and the consciousness of national we-identity closely bound up with them can serve as a graphic example of the degree to which the social habitus of the individual provides a soil in which personal, individual differences can flourish. The individuality of the particular Englishman, Dutchman, Swede or German represents, in a sense, the personal elaboration of a common social, and in this case national, habitus. (Elias, 1994: 210)

In his studies on the Germans (Elias, 1996), established/outsider relations (Elias and Scotson, 1994) and the society of individuals (Elias, 1991), Elias provided an important conceptual framework that, along with the work of Smith (1991) and Hobsbawm (1983), we use in guiding our empirical research. In one insightful passage, Elias highlighted several specific issues that, we argue, were evident during EURO 96. He wrote:

A striking example in our time is that of the we-image and we-ideal of once-powerful nations whose superiority in relation to others has declined. . . . The radiance of their collective life as a nation has gone; their power superiority in relation to other groups . . . is irretrievably lost. Yet the dream of their special charisma is kept alive in a variety of ways — through the teaching of history, the old buildings, masterpieces of the nation in the time of its glory, or through new achievements which seemingly confirm the greatness of the past. For a time, the fantasy shield of their imagined charisma as a leading established group may give a declining nation the strength to carry on. . . . But the discrepancy between the actual and the imagined position of one's group among others can also entail a mistaken assessment of one's resources and, as a consequence, suggest a group strategy in pursuit of a fantasy image of one's own greatness that may lead to self-destruction. . . . The dreams of nations . . . are dangerous. (Elias, 1994: xliii)

What we suggest here is that international sport contests involve 'patriot games' in which the 'special charisma' embodied in the view which nations have of themselves can be nurtured, refined and further developed. Success in such contests can both reinforce and reflect the 'fantasy shield' of people's 'imagined charisma'. However, these sporting dreams, while having potential unifying internal effects, far from uniting nations, can, at one and the same time, be divisive and potentially dangerous. These 'dreams', fantasy images and 'imagined charisma' not only connect with deeply rooted habitus codes, but are also reflected in and reinforced by powerful media representations of political and cultural events. Following this logic then, the main focus of our broader substantive work is on different print and electronic media representations of EURO 96 in different nations. In this article, attention is primarily given to a quantitative content analysis of British/English and German newspapers with reference given to illustrative examples from a qualitative discourse analysis.⁴

At this juncture it is appropriate to engage with the important contribution which Blain et al. (1993), O'Donnell (1994) and Blain and O'Donnell (1998) have made to research examining sport, national identity and the sports media. While the process-sociological perspective and analysis adopted in this article offers an essentially different approach to understanding this relationship, there are some interesting comparisons and similar findings to be found in the work of Blain and O'Donnell as well as some distinct differences. We acknowledge that 'the semiological relationship between sport and culture is different in the UK from the equivalent continental relationships' (p. 40) — insofar as it is constructed and represented in the sports press — and that sport, in this case football, operates in a 'chiefly symbolic fashion' as far as we can determine from our analysis in a country like Germany, whereas in England 'it is made to bear, more precisely, an indexical relationship: it is metonymic rather than metaphorical' (Blain and O'Donnell, 1998: 40). However, while Blain and O'Donnell hypothesize that this relationship between sport and culture/national identity results from the degree of political modernity in the country in question, we have concentrated less on the modernity/postmodernity debate. Instead, we have focused on issues concerning the more deep-seated national habitus codes and 'sleeping memories' which are reawakened by contemporary identity politics. These, we argue, were evoked in the English press coverage of EURO 96. In connection with this, we can see the 'fantasy shields' of a nation's 'imagined charisma' also writ large in media sports discourse in a country like England, suffering as Blain and O'Donnell (1998: 40)

rightly point out a 'post-imperialist hangover'. This is in marked contrast to Germany, a country positively burgeoning in the contemporary politico-economic, as well as sporting, world. We suggest that our analysis complements aspects of Blain and O'Donnell's work and provides a framework for future study of the role of the media in the relationship between sport and national identity, both in Europe and in more global terms.

Methodology

The methodology involved a quantitative content analysis and a qualitative discourse analysis to support and illustrate the quantitative findings. The newspapers analysed included five English and two German. The English newspapers consisted of three broadsheets and their Sunday equivalents (*The Times* and *Sunday Times*; *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*; *The Guardian* and *The Observer*) and two tabloid newspapers with their Sunday sister papers (*Daily Mirror* and *Sunday Mirror*; *The Sun* and *News of the World*). We regrettably were unable to include a German tabloid, such as *Bild*, in our study due to the unavailability of German tabloids in England; we acknowledge this may restrict the analysis to some extent. However, we have sought to include some anecdotal evidence from *Bild* as was reported in the English press. The German newspapers that were studied were both broadsheets, representing different ends of the political spectrum. These were the conservative *Die Welt* and the liberal *Süd-Deutsche Zeitung*. The newspapers were analysed for a period of 25 days during the EURO 96 Championships, from 7 June to 1 July. This resulted in a total of 125 English editions (75 broadsheets and 50 tabloids) and 42 German editions (both of which print only one edition for the weekends) being analysed. Only the articles concerning EURO 96 were subject to coded content analysis. The English broadsheets then generated a total of 931 EURO 96 articles; the English tabloids, 1280 and the German broadsheets, 920.

The method by which each EURO 96 article was analysed allowed for both a qualitative and quantitative picture of newspaper coverage to be gained. The presence of certain discourse variables in each article were quantified as being in evidence 'often', 'occasionally' or 'not at all'. Here we combine the 'often' and 'occasionally' references to measure the occurrence of the various discourse variables. It was therefore possible to identify the broad nature of each newspaper's coverage of EURO 96. The trends identified in the quantitative content analysis could then be compared and illustrated with reference to the results found through the

qualitative discourse analysis. In order to facilitate comparison, the results shown in the following section are considered in terms of specific discourse variables, with newspapers grouped into three classifications: English tabloids, English broadsheets and German broadsheets. The frequency of reference to each discourse variable is presented as a percentage figure. This allows for the disparities between the respective newspapers in terms of the number of editions and particularly the varying number of EURO 96 articles within those editions to be taken into account. The German newspapers were translated and analysed by one of the authors who is a non-native speaker.

The quantitative analysis undertaken on the seven newspapers was manually recorded as part of a codification process and then entered on to file by a professional data entry service. The data were then parsed using Microsoft Office tools, with the SPSS package then used to read the files produced by the above-mentioned process to effect the required calculations. The qualitative discourse themes recorded included: national symbols/stereotypes; national identity/habitus and the use of personal pronouns; the vocabulary of war; narcissistic language; the reference of invented traditions/nostalgia and issues related to European (identity) politics to underpin the quantitative variables. As such, this approach is in keeping with the strategy employed by Berg (1995), Billig (1995), Blain et al. (1993), Fiske (1991), Wenner (1989) and Whannel (1992) towards qualitative discourse analysis. This study is part of a broader study of European newspapers in which a similar quantitative, but also qualitative methodology is employed (Maguire and Poulton, forthcoming; Maguire et al., 1997).

Main findings and observations

Four main findings can be identified. First, while the dominant form of English press coverage of EURO 96 served to 'divide' sections of the British/English from the nations of Europe (especially Germany), this was not a common trait of the German press. This English coverage appears typical of the response of nations whose former power superiority in relation to other groups has been lost. A 'fantasy shield' entailing an 'imagined charisma' — an illegitimate superiority complex, born of, in fact, an inferiority complex — is constructed. This manifests itself in a hostile reaction to more powerful contemporary nations, like Germany, arguably the dominant force within the EU. This was a feature in certain sections of the English press throughout EURO 96.

Second, the press coverage of both the English and German newspapers reflected several social currents that were evident in the countries' respective domestic politics of the time. For England, these social currents included: an anti-Europeanism, particularly with regard to the so-called 'Beef War', the prospective single currency and the perceived 'interference' by Brussels in internal British concerns; a latent anti-German sentiment reflecting long-standing rivalry, brought to the fore due to Germany's current standing and influence in Europe; and the desire of the then British Conservative government and its allies in the right-wing press to foster what was termed a 'feelgood factor'. For Germany, a nation not proud of its immediate past, emphasis was placed on contemporary international relations, with reactionary taunts towards England/Britain regarding the *Rinderwahnsinnserie* ('Mad Cow Crisis').

Third, the identity politics evident in the media discourse underpinning the English coverage of EURO 96 reflected more deep-seated British, probably mainly English, concerns regarding national decline and rapid social change which was identified by the German press and some of the English broadsheets. As a result, the dominant English media discourse tended towards two interwoven themes: nostalgia and ethnic assertiveness/defensiveness. The sense of nostalgia was particularly evident in the build-up to and in the early part of the tournament. Ethnic assertiveness/defensiveness became more evident as the tournament developed and the English team encountered a series of old European foes, specifically Scotland, Holland, Spain and Germany (Maguire et al., 1997). It is our contention that English media discourse of this kind can be understood as part of an active construction of 'fantasy group charisma', and that this is based on both the 'invention of traditions' and, at a deeper and more enduring level, the habitus codes that underpin the dominant 'national character' of European nations.

Finally, in light of all this, the German press coverage was marked by a distinct disinterest in nostalgic or otherwise historical references of their own and dismay at the English press's evocation of past hostilities between the two nations. The German press preferred to enjoy the present by depicting Germany as a powerful nation on the European/world stage, a position which Britain/England can no longer really claim to have despite its 'imagined charisma'. While a minority of English supporters may still chant 'two World Wars and one World Cup', as was heard echoing across the crowded platforms at Wembley central station within an hour of England's victory over Spain (which placed England against Germany in the EURO 96 semi-final) (*The Times*, 25 June 1996: 56), the reality is that the English have to look back to that World Cup

victory of 1966 to find the last time they can claim any form of superiority over Germany, on or off the football field. It is this fact that characterized the press coverage of EURO 96, with the English press dwelling nostalgically on former lost glories and power relations and marked by an ethnic assertiveness/defensiveness, while the German press appeared quite content to let their football team do the talking, seemingly taking satisfaction from the contemporary European political situation.

Styles and use of language within Anglo-German newspapers

The analysis of styles and use of language employed by the respective newspapers revealed some marked differences, particularly between the English and German newspapers. It was found that the English newspapers' use of personal pronouns ('we/they'; 'us/them') was much more pronounced than in the German newspapers. While this may have been expected from the English tabloids, which have a tendency towards accentuating the differences between rivals and competitors, the contrast between the English and German broadsheet newspapers was, perhaps, surprising. As Figure 1 demonstrates, nearly a quarter of all English broadsheet articles regarding EURO 96 featured the use of personal pronouns, whereas less than 3 percent of the German coverage showed evidence of this.

The use of personal pronoun pairs such as 'we/they' and 'us/them' have a powerful effect in generating feelings of inclusion and exclusion.



Figure 1 Percentage of EURO 96 articles containing personal pronouns

As Elias and Scotson (1994) point out, one of the crucial problems in a study of intergroup relations is to establish how and why humans perceive one another as belonging to a 'we' group — the established, while simultaneously excluding others and referring to them as 'they' — the outsiders. The sports media have an influential role in the propagation of 'us/them' discourses in the minds of the general public through the language used in their reports (Blain et al., 1993; Blain and O'Donnell, 1998; O'Donnell, 1994; Tudor, 1992; Wenner, 1989). Front-page headlines from the English tabloids' coverage of the England vs Netherlands match for example included 'Give Them Edam Good Threshing' (*Daily Mirror*, 18 June 1996: 1) and 'Our Boys Done Gouda' (*The Sun*, 19 June 1996: 1). These can have the effect of generating a feeling of identification with the national team and representing the nation — 'us'/'we' — as a single entity, united in victory (as well as defeat), while also specifically excluding other national groups through the use of 'them'/'they'. The headlines cited also illustrate another trait of newspaper reportage, that of national stereotyping. Furthermore the use of personal pronouns, while powerful in the generation of national sentiment, can sometimes take a more subtle form and therefore avoid accusations of blatant jingoism. Commenting on the arrival of the Spanish media intent on interviewing members of the England national squad, *The Times* observed:

The journalists and television crews streamed through the gates and into the interview tents not with the arrogance of *their* Armada but with the exaggerated respect of an invader who fears he is about to be repelled. (*The Times*, 20 June 1996: 48)

Interestingly, although there was little evidence of the use of personal pronouns by the German press, on the few occasions when such pronouns were utilized, the reference was only ever to 'them'/'they', never to 'we'/'us'. For example, following the England-Holland match: 'A whole country celebrated the resurrection of their football team' (*Die Welt*, 20 June 1996: 23) and likewise in a slight at the English:

They [the England team] all wear white T-shirts under their shirts — they're worried about catching cold. What the Scottish wear under their kilt remains their secret, but their footballers need nothing under their shirts. (*Süd-Deutsche Zeitung*, 12 June 1996: 30)

The newspapers' usage of foreign words in coverage of EURO 96 also demonstrated a marked difference between German and English reporting. Twenty-eight percent of all EURO 96 articles in the German newspapers contained foreign words. These were almost exclusively

English, reflecting the English origins of football. 'Team', 'coach', 'golden goal', 'superstar' and 'fair play' are all examples of words or phrases which appeared frequently within German newspaper coverage. There was considerably less use of foreign words by the English print media, with only 11 percent of tabloid EURO 96 articles and 8 percent of broadsheet EURO 96 articles employing foreign words. In these instances when foreign words were adopted by the English press, the language ordinarily reflected the England team's opposition. For example: 'Adios Amigos' (*Daily Mirror*, 22 June 1996: 1) and 'Goald' (*News of the World*, 23 June 1996: 88), as found in the tabloids and from the broadsheets likewise: 'Editor waves white flag after EURO 96 blitzkrieg' (*The Times*, 25 June 1996: 1). This headline refers to the *Daily Mirror's* public apology for their coverage on the eve of the England-Germany semi-final. It also demonstrates how the broadsheets, despite deploring the tabloids' use of war imagery and militaristic metaphors, enjoyed the utilization of similar images themselves, albeit through a more sophisticated and less confrontational style.

Evocative language within the Anglo-German newspapers

Both the English tabloid and broadsheet newspapers showed far greater evidence of the use of evocative language in their coverage of EURO 96 than the German newspapers. The English tabloids in particular demonstrated the greater usage of such discourse. This was particularly noticeable in the examples of narcissism (with such sentiments found in 26 percent of tabloid articles compared with 14 percent of broadsheet articles) and war vocabulary (see Figure 2). Narcissism was especially prevalent in the English tabloids, whose confidence verged on arrogance as the England team progressed through the tournament. As 'Ecstatic England Trample[d] Through the Tulips' (*The Sun*, 19 June 1996: 34), *The Sun* boasted:

Now the world knows we're a force to be reckoned with. Bearing the Dutch was only the start. El Tel and his boys can't wait to reign over Spain and then go on to glory. (*The Sun*, 20 June 1996: 6)

Other narcissistic headlines included: 'The UnDutchables' (*Daily Mirror*, 18 June 1996: 36); 'You're Done Juan' (*Daily Mirror*, 20 June 1996: 1); 'It's Glory Four Tel' (*The Sun*, 19 June 1996: 36), and occasionally from the broadsheets, although they tended to be more restrained: 'Pure Gazza, Pure Genius' (*Sunday Times*, 16 June 1996: 28). Indeed, the broadsheets did occasionally adopt a more tabloid style when heaping praise on the

England team, especially following the 4-1 defeat of the Dutch which saw England through to the quarter-final: 'With a display of pace, passion and power, England trounced Holland at Wembley. . . The lions were rampant, Holland were wilting' (*The Times*, 19 June 1996: 52).

The German newspapers, though modest by comparison, were not completely without some trace of narcissism with reference to their national team (4 percent of German articles contained such sentiments). As *Die Welt* (18 June 1996: 20) boasted: 'Germany were world champions three times and European Champions twice, because no other nation played such robust, self-confident football'. As Figure 2 indicates, over a quarter of all the English tabloid EURO 96 articles made use of war language or adopted military metaphors and imagery, with English broadsheet articles containing slightly less and the German broadsheets just a fraction by comparison. Given the nature of the coding during the content analysis of the newspapers, it should be noted that the data shown in Figure 2, with reference to the percentage of EURO 96 articles containing war vocabulary, include those instances where newspapers reviewed or commented on other sections of the media and their use of this discourse.⁷ This is especially true of the German newspapers, which commented extensively on the war-mongering carried out by the English tabloid newspapers around the time of the England-Germany semi-final match. Thus the already small percentage of articles in the German press containing evidence of war vocabulary would be further reduced if those articles concerning the English newspapers' usage of war vocabulary were

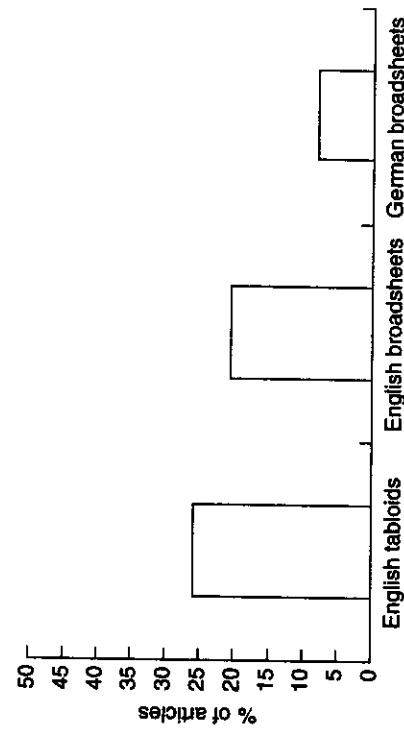


Figure 2 Percentage of EURO 96 articles containing war vocabulary and/or militaristic metaphors

discounted. This is also true in relation to articles containing narcissism.

The lack of military metaphors in the German print media is indicative of a general distaste for all war vocabulary, which was evident in their reaction to the *Daily Mirror's* infamous 'ACHTUNG SUR-RENDER' front page headline (*Daily Mirror*, 24 June 1996) which declared 'football war' in a style reminiscent of the Neville Chamberlain declaration of war in 1939:

When Asterix visited England he made a legendary quote, 'They're mad, the English'. It is very possible that a German who was visiting the self-same island yesterday could have gained a similar impression, particularly if, whilst having a warm drink that goes under the original name of coffee here, he picked up a copy of the *Daily Mirror*. . . Perhaps the word hasn't got around yet that the War is over? (*Sud-Deutsche Zeitung*, 25 June 1996: 34)

Similarly, in their build-up to the Croatia-Germany quarter-final, the German newspapers again demonstrated their abhorrence of military metaphors in criticism of the Croatian coach, who had reawakened memories of the Second World War with some inflammatory comments before the match:

A man by the name of Blazevic has forgotten everything — the dead of his homeland, whose graves are still fresh. And he knows nothing about football, although he identifies himself as the chief trainer of the Croatian team. He defined the German football success against Russia as 'late revenge for Stalingrad' and now he is saying 'I am preparing our players as kamikaze pilots to line up against the German stukas.' (*Die Welt*, 23 June 1996: 24)

An exception to the assiduous avoidance by the German newspapers of the use of their own war imagery was found in a double-edged observation concerning English playing styles that: 'The battle in the air was once a British speciality' (*Sud-Deutsche Zeitung*, 10 June 1996: 36). The reaction among the English broadsheets to their tabloid counterparts' nationalistic sentiment and xenophobia was to attempt to claim the moral high ground by condemning the tabloid excesses, and, to a certain extent, the 20 percent of broadsheet articles containing war vocabulary can be justified as reporting on the deeds of the tabloid editors. While *The Guardian* forecast that 'no doubt the next 72 hours will see certain sections of the media resorting to . . . childlike jingoism' and to 'Beware of the Hun in the Sun' (*The Guardian*, 24 June 1996: 3), *The Times*, with a similar disapproving tone, confirmed such predictions the following day:

Yesterday the heavy artillery of the tabloids went to work with their dismissal of 'Fritz', mock addresses from war bunkers and cartoons of England players in tin hats. The mobilisation against Germany is well and truly under way. (*The Times*, 25 June 1996: 56)

This quotation demonstrates how the broadsheets were able to condemn the tabloids, while utilizing the war vocabulary and military imagery they were actually criticizing. In this way the English broadsheet newspapers were also flagging up the sport/war connection for which they vilified their colleagues from *The Sun* and *Daily Mirror*. Take the following example: in acclaiming the fact that the English goalkeeper David Seaman had saved a decisive penalty against Spain, the *Sunday Telegraph* (23 June 1996: 1) headline echoed the historical connection to the Armada that had been a feature of media discourse and proclaimed that 'Spain still can't beat an English Seaman'. The *Observer's* headline similarly noted: 'Seaman Sinks Armada' (23 June 1996: 10 [Sportsweek supplement]). That save also provoked another broadsheet headline which evoked images of war: 'New Wembley Appointment as Seaman's Save Keeps the Home Fires Burning' (*Daily Telegraph*, 24 June 1996: 1 [sports supplement]). Earlier in the tournament, on the eve of the match between the 'Auld Enemies', England and Scotland, the broadsheets relished the opportunity to evoke military metaphors: 'Scots Invaders Take the Capital' declared a front-page headline from *The Times*, explaining 'a Tartan Army was encamped in England's capital last night after eight years of uneasy soccer peace' (*The Times*, 15 June 1996: 1) — 1989 being the last time the two countries had met before the previously annual fixture was abandoned due to incidents of crowd disturbance.

Indeed, both English tabloid and broadsheet reporting on the England-Scotland game was loaded with the vocabulary and imagery of war: the match was depicted as 'the battle of Britain' (*The Sun*, 15 June 1996: 34) with constant reference made in all the English newspapers to the past battles of Bannockburn (1314) and Culloden (1746). Imagery of this kind was underpinned by discourse that emphasized that the game was a 'passion play' (*The Times*, 15 June 1996: 56), where 'ancient hostilities' would be replayed (*The Times*, 14 June 1996: 46). Meanwhile in the tabloids, players were cast in the roles of being either Lionhearts or Bravehearts (*Daily Mirror*, 15 June 1996: 36).

As this example from the *Daily Telegraph* demonstrates, the England-Scotland match involved something more than football for the broadsheets and tabloids alike; as was to be seen in the coverage of subsequent EURO 96 matches. In one lengthy article that linked the game to a clash of cultures and historical rivalries, the writer observed

that the game was 'a momentous internal clash that will be recalled and raked over for generations' (*Daily Telegraph*, 15 June 1996: 24). As it turned out, English national pride was secure, with Scottish defeat, according to the *Sunday Times* (16 June 1996: 28) entailing 'the routing of the clans'. As England progressed through the tournament, their matches against a series of 'old enemies' became increasingly framed as 'patriot games', opportunities to settle 'old scores' — both sporting and political — by both the English tabloids and broadsheets. A feature of this was the war imagery and use of military imagery as discussed in the explanation of Figure 2. This was demonstrated none more so than in the coverage of the England–Germany semi-final, which is outlined in preliminary form below (see also Maguire et al., 1997).

National identity discourses within Anglo-German newspapers

The two discourse variables which were quantified specifically concerning national identity featured: the deploying of 'national stereotyping' and 'nationalistic sentiments'. The most interesting results obtained concerned 'national stereotyping'. Both the English broadsheet and tabloid newspapers contained more examples of stereotyping of national character than the German print media, but it was the English broadsheets which most frequently deployed stereotypes, with nearly a quarter of all articles on EURO 96 including such terms and images, compared with one-fifth of tabloid articles.

With 24 percent of broadsheet articles deploying national stereotypes, here is further evidence of the fact that although *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian* (with their Sunday sister papers) may have been more subtle in their use of language and imagery, their reporting style arguably reinforced national stereotypes in ways not dissimilar to the tabloid press. Indeed, it could even be argued that given its more subtle form, it could therefore have a more unobtrusive effect on people's thinking and on their opinions of outsider groups (Billig, 1995). Comments like 'mercenary Spain' (*Daily Telegraph*, 19 June 1996: 48) and 'Scottish doggedness' (*Daily Telegraph*, 24 June 1996: 47) serve to create and/or reinforce readers' images and feelings about the 'national character' of other peoples. In a report on the England–Holland match, the *Daily Telegraph* (19 June 1996: 48) observed that 'for a nation of cyclists, the Dutch should be used to back-peddalling'. Even *The Guardian*, perhaps the newspaper with the most outspoken stance against tabloid xenophobia, in an article that criticized the English team for wearing a grey uniform,

suggested that they were 'kitted out like the Waffen SS' (*The Guardian*, 25 June 1996: 24), a reference evoking wartime imagery.

The broadsheets were also able to indulge in the use of stereotypical images through commentary on their tabloid counterparts, which helps to explain why the broadsheets record the highest percentage of stereotypical references. For example, an article headlined 'Spain Have a Beef with the Tabloids' Beasts and Burchers', *The Guardian* observed that: 'Since the middle of the week when the identity of England's opponents became known, the Spanish jokes have kept on coming: waiters, bull-fighting, wineskins, Spanish fly' (*The Guardian*, 22 June 1996: 21). Likewise, in a feature actually about national stereotypes, entitled, 'Germany Offer *Umat* Answer to Question of Stereotype' (emphasis added), *The Times* was able to deploy such stereotypes at will:

... German football teams never quite slide into self-parody. Certainly it would be amusing to see them as a series of blonde machines, mindlessly fulfilling their coaches' aspirations, men without flair or creativity. It is still true, and surely it always must be true, that a German team inspires in outsiders respect, rather than affection, admiration, rather than awe. No Englishman feels about the Germans as he does about the Brazilians. (*The Times*, 24 June 1996: 27)

There was not a complete absence of national stereotyping in the German press, indeed, some 14 percent of German articles contained such images, although there were significantly fewer references than in the English newspapers. *Sud-Deutsche Zeitung* demonstrated this with a vivid observation made in reference to the English player Paul Gascoigne: 'Only a few minutes into the second half Gazza's head took on the colour of a British beer-belly in late afternoon on the first day of a holiday in Majorca' (*Sud-Deutsche Zeitung*, 10 June 1996: 26). Similarly, with an inference towards a perceived English/British propensity for beer-drinking (especially following a pre-tournament controversy surrounding the England team over drunken behaviour), *Sud-Deutsche Zeitung* again joked: 'How do you get 22 England football players in a phone box? ... Throw a can of beer inside!' (*Sud-Deutsche Zeitung*, 14 June 1996: 24).

The discourse variable concerned with nationalistic sentiments/nationalism included references of both a positive and negative nature in the coding system. Instances of its use were recorded both in reference to, for example, a newspaper's own nation/national team (which were ordinarily positive and prevalent in both the English broadsheets and tabloids, but especially the tabloids) and also when in reference to the opposition (which was more often negative and more prevalent in the English tabloids). Examples of positive nationalism, i.e. in the assertion

of one's own national identity, can be seen in *The Sun's* rejoice: 'The mighty lions of England are roaring with pride' (*The Sun*, 26 June 1996: 6). The broadsheets took similar delight following the English victory over Holland: 'Four goals, three lions, two towers, and one sensational result for England at Wembley last night' (*Daily Telegraph*, 19 June 1996: 48). Indeed, in an article on the 'Night Three Lions Brought Wembley War Back to Life', Henry Winter of the *Daily Telegraph* considered the positive (re)emergence of an English national identity and with it a nationalistic sentiment:

The celebration of Englishness, as tens of thousands did so deliriously following the 4-1 vanquishing of Holland at Wembley, is a rare phenomenon nowadays. There are annual pageants, like Royal Ascot which honour English traits and traditions, but not England herself. Most countries have annual outpourings of pride when a nation reminds itself of its identity. Andrew, David and Patrick all have their day in the sun, but not poor George. Until, that is, representatives of the national obsession, football, start knocking over the foreigners. (*Daily Telegraph*, 20 June 1996: 32)

Underpinning this observation are also discourses concerning invented tradition, habitus codes and internal British tensions and rivalries. A more negative and hostile instance of nationalistic sentiment can be seen in the declaration of 'football war' on Germany by the *Daily Mirror* (25 June 1996: 1) with the ultimatum given to 'roll up their [the Germans'] towels now and head home with an honourable surrender' (*Daily Mirror*, 24 June 1996: 2), alongside *The Sun's* (24 June 1996: 4) call of 'Let's Blitz Fritz!' Other negatively nationalistic headlines bellowing from the tabloid back-pages were: 'Blow Their Jocks Off' with reference to the Scots (*The Sun*, 15 June 1996: 39); 'Shearer Clogs 'Em', i.e. the Dutch, and 'Tee-ay-adios we beat them again!' [the Spanish] (*News of the World*, 23 June 1996: 1). References were also recorded in the coding process if a newspaper was citing the nationalistic sentiments of other newspapers, rather than articulating such sentiments itself, as seen predominantly in the German and also some English broadsheets (see note 5). Here is one example:

By bringing the imagery of war to a sporting event, by perpetuating grievances and exaggerating stereotypes, the Fritz-blitzers do football a disservice. The emphasis should be on promoting national pride, not prejudice. (*Daily Telegraph*, 25 June 1996: 35)

In sum then, the use of nationalistic sentiment in the English newspapers followed a more expected pattern, with the tabloids showing more

evidence of it, especially of a negative form, than the broadsheet newspapers. Again, all the English print media contained a much larger amount than their German counterparts. Nearly 30 percent of English tabloid EURO 96 articles contained examples of nationalistic discourse, as compared to 19 percent of English broadsheets and only 7 percent of German EURO 96 articles, and the majority of the latter were actually commentary on the English press coverage:

Is it not deeply tasteless when for example the *Daily Mirror* shows the heads of Stuart Pearce and Paul Gascoigne wearing steel helmets on the front page, and underneath is written 'Achtung! Surrender. For you Fritz, EURO 96 is over . . . with more or less successful puns, the English press have begun a battle before tomorrow's semi-final. (*Die Welt*, 25 June 1996: 24)

Despite the German newspapers' dismay and disgust at the way the English press promoted the semi-final as a continuation of the Second World War, it was generally accepted with resignation. *Sud-Deutsche Zeitung* pointed out that 'The so-called "Kraut-bashing" counts as one of the British national sports with traditional roots; like cricket, dog racing, dart-throwing or bingo' (*Sud-Deutsche Zeitung*, 26 June 1996: 28). It added 'if El Tel's lads play against the French on Sunday, the colleagues from the tabloids will surely play their word games with Wembley and Waterloo' (26 June 1996: 3). An alternative reaction, however, was that found in *Bild*, a German tabloid, following the *Daily Mirror's* declaration of 'Fußball Krieg', as reported in the *Daily Express* back in England. Perpetuating a stereotype of German sobriety, the *Daily Express* covered *Bild's* counter-attack somewhat mockingly:

After a front-page headline screaming *Football War*, *Bild* asked 11 questions of England, displaying what actually appears to be a sense of humour for the Germans: Why do you drive on the wrong side of the road? Why, as the birthplace of football, were you never European Champions? Why can't you pull a decent pint of beer? Why do you wear baching trunks in the sauna? Why do your electric locomotives still carry a fireman? Why do you eat your pork chops with peppermint sauce? Why can't you beat your former colonies at cricket? Why do you look like lobsters after a sunny day on the beach? Who won the World Cup semi-final in 1990, you or us? When did an Englishman last win Wimbledon? Why are you the only people who still think the Wembley goal in the 1966 World Cup final went in? (*Daily Express*, 26 June 1996: 4)

This article suggests *Bild's* response was still quite moderate in the face of the 'cross-fire' coming from the English press as has been illustrated by the jingoistic war-mongering and 'Kraut-bashing', especially from the

Sporting experiences can be very much a part of the national habitus, often sedimented as deeply as those of a sociopolitical origin, like that of world wars, in an individual's identity. The impact of sport was noted by a commentator in the *Daily Telegraph* (20 June 1996: 32): 'Sport can etch a collection of minutes into millions of memories'. Such discourses were evident in the English and German press with 11 percent of English broadsheet articles, 14 percent of English tabloid articles and 2 percent of German articles making reference to habitus issues. The most eloquent examples were found in the English broadsheets:

... England face Holland, their serial tormentors from the past eight years. From Dusseldorf to Rotterdam, English dreams have disappeared in a cloud of orange dust. A nation's collective consciousness has been too regularly, and too recently, assailed with cruel images, of Marco van Basten and Denis Bergkamp playing the silent predators, of Marc Overmars falling, of Jan Wouters' elbowing, of Ronald Koeman escaping punishment, of a manager travelling a metre into oblivion. (*Daily Telegraph*, 18 June 1996: 40)

Similarly, dates synonymous with past encounters against Germany were readily available in the habitus of the English football fan: 'We've scores to settle too ... from Italy in 1990 and Mexico in '70' (*The Sun*, 24 June 1996: 6). Any reference to 1966 of course, for both the English and German, awakened a host of 'sleeping memories'. For the Germans, 1966 stands for the controversial goal which signalled their defeat in the World Cup final; as *Die Welt* (26 June 1996: 23) explained: 'All goals, which are not goals, but allowed are called *Wembley goals*'. For the English on the other hand, '66 and all that', evoked much happier and jubilant, if distant, memories of World Cup success from within the national habitus. These were rekindled throughout the English press coverage of EURO 96 through nostalgic discourses as the England team went in search of their greatest success for thirty years' (*Daily Mirror*, 8 June 1996: 1). The *Daily Telegraph* (8 June 1996: 30) noted on a similar theme: 'The time has come for 11 Englishmen to relight the fire. Thirty years have crawled by since the game's founders last progressed to a podium, pain following pain like locusts before harvest time.' The 30 years since that victory had been 'thirty years of hurt', according to the 'Three Lions' anthem. One newspaper correspondent, Brough Scott, commenting on the song, noted its chorus of 'Football's Coming Home', and observed: 'It's a new anthem. It was sung with belief before the match. With hope in the middle. And then with flooded, overwhelming, almost disbelieving belief at the finish' (*Sunday Telegraph*, 23 June 1996: 3 [sports supplement]). Such emotions captured the mood of the English nation, at least as it was framed by the English press throughout EURO

tablets. In fact, *Bild's* reporting of the German victory in the final was also far more moderate than one might have expected from *The Sun* and *Daily Mirror* had England won. It merely proclaimed 'Yes Europe! We have the Cup' (*Bild*, 1 July 1996: 1). In this same connection *Die Welt* reprinted a lengthy observation from a passage in Aldous Huxley's *Eyefes in Gaza* that highlights the sport/war metaphor. Games [like football], wrote Huxley, are:

... the greatest English contribution to civilization.... Much more important than parliamentary government, or steam engines, or Newton's Principia. More important than English poetry. Poetry can never be a substitute for war and murder. Whereas games can. A complete and genuine substitute. (*Die Welt*, 26 June 1996: 22)

This proposed role of sport as a substitute for war has some similarity with the Orwellian contention that international sport is 'war minus the shooting', though Orwell was perhaps more critical in his remarks (Orwell, 1970). We can but speculate as to whether Huxley would have maintained his belief that sport as a substitute for war was 'the greatest English contribution to civilization' upon reading some of the English sports press's coverage of EURO 96, where, at times in the tabloid cross-fire, the only thing missing was indeed the shooting.

Historical references within Anglo-German newspapers

The historical discourses coded in the content analysis were references to habitus, invented tradition and nostalgia (see Figure 3). The importance of habitus codes and invented tradition in the maintenance and promotion of national identity has been highlighted by Elias (1996), Menell (1994) and also Hobsbawm (1983), as introduced earlier. It was noticeable that these variables were more evident in the English newspaper coverage as compared with the German. This is in keeping with the premise that whereas Germany's immediate past is not one that they are necessarily proud of, many British/English actually seek solace from the nostalgic remembrance of a period when 'Britannia ruled the waves' and the nation enjoyed success and power in the political, economic and cultural, as well as sporting, arena. In contrast, German history has been characterized by military conflict which culminated in the disastrous wars of the 20th century. These events retain a restrictive influence over the development of any kind of positive nationalism (Blain et al., 1993; Elias, 1996), hence a reluctance it seems by the German newspapers in their coverage of EURO 96 to recall past history and relations with their opposition, off the football field.

96, with the 'spirit of '66' prevailing (*Daily Mirror*, 8 June 1996: 6). Heroes from 1966 were used to give their advice and analysis to the England team and endorse the tabloid's attempts to mobilize the nation:

England's EURO 96 stars were last night told to keep it simply-red as high street stores reported a kit stampede. Fans are rushing to buy replica red shirts, as worn by Sir Alf Ramsey's World Cup winners thirty years ago. And 1966 hat-trick hero Geoff Hurst is backing public clamour for England to ditch their John Major grey away strip and revert to traditional blood red. (*Daily Mirror*, 22 June 1996: 1 [EURO 96 supplement])

A wilful nostalgia was evident throughout the English press as the newspapers in turn willed that EURO 96 would see a repeat of the 1966 success, as can be seen in the catchy tabloid slogan: 'We did it in '66; we'll do it in '96' (*Daily Mirror*, 8 June 1996: 29).

A key feature then of English press coverage, both in the tabloids and broadsheets, as Figure 3 indicates, was a keen interest in history — sociopolitical and sporting — with an abundant use of nostalgic discourse in the recollection of former glories, as well as in the numerous references to invented traditions. Central to the reference to invented traditions was the theme of football's homecoming, as previously illustrated, and to the three lions national emblem, coupled with the re-emergence of the Cross of St George as the English flag, as opposed to the Union flag, so commonly misused in the past. As one tabloid newspaper noted: 'It was a great week for Europe, England — and St George. . . . Not since the Crusades can the Cross of St George have had such a proud showing' (*News of the World*, 23 June 1996: 8). Eleven percent of English broadsheet articles, 13 percent of English tabloid articles and 4 percent of German articles made reference to such invented traditions.

Most German references to these discourse variables of nostalgia and invented tradition, however — which is significant when looking at Figure 3 — were concerned with those of an *English* origin or those prevalent in the English coverage which they commented on (see note 5). For example, reference was frequently made to one of the EURO 96 organizers' slogans, 'Football Comes Home' ('Fußball kehrt heim'), and it was commonly accepted by the German newspapers in connection with this 'home' (*heimat*) issue that England was the 'Mutterland des Fußball' (*Sud-Deutsche Zeitung*, 8 June 1996: 26; *Die Welt*, 8 June 1996: 22). The discourse of invented tradition which was evident to some degree can be seen in, for example, the description of Wembley Stadium as 'the cathedral of football' (*Sud-Deutsche Zeitung*, 10 June 1996: 24) and

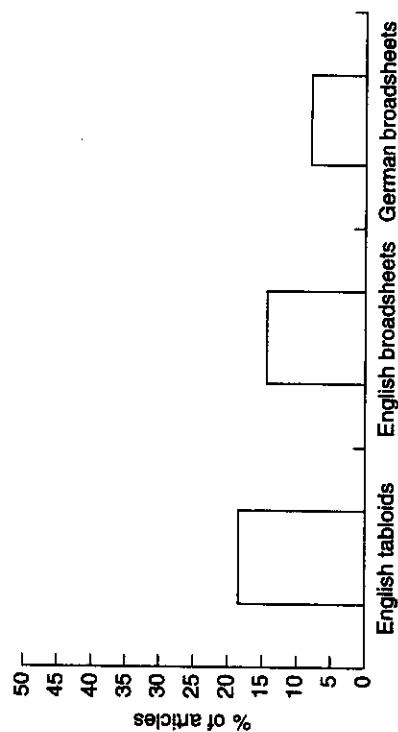


Figure 3 Percentage of EURO 96 articles containing nostalgic references

similarly, 'their Wembley temple' (*Sud-Deutsche Zeitung*, 24 June 1996: 1). Observations were also made by the German press about the nostalgically fuelled expectations of the English, as demonstrated in the following example: 'Thirty years after the triumph of the 1966 World Cup, the nation expects the title at their European Championships' (*Die Welt*, 24 June 1996: 24). In an astute commentary on the English press coverage as the England team progressed through the tournament having beaten Holland, *Sud-Deutsche Zeitung* noted:

The time travel of the printing press goes further, and on the morning after, the Gascoignes, Sheeters and Sheringhams are in the papers as though Bobby Moore had risen from the dead, and Bobby Charlton and Geoff Hurst had short trousers on once again. (*Sud-Deutsche Zeitung*, 20 June 1996: 26)

As the semi-final match between Germany and England approached, the Germans' sense of injustice surrounding the disputed goal in the 1966 World Cup final — which put England 3-2 ahead — emerged. *Sud-Deutsche Zeitung* (20 June 1996: 35) rekindled memories of this, adding a comment on England's lack of success since 1966 'when the goodwill of a man in black lifted them to their only title to date'. This observation demonstrates again the use of personal pronouns — them and their — to generate feelings of inclusion and exclusion among the German readership. *Die Welt* (26 June 1996: 23) devoted an entire article to the contentious 1966 goal entitled: 'Tor oder nicht? — Die ewig junge Frage' ('Goal or not? — the eternal question'). It was only in reference to this debate that the German newspapers tended to look to the past for their

agenda and employed any nostalgic discourse of their own. The emphasis was on the present, not the past, as is perhaps characteristic of a nation currently enjoying a powerful international standing, in the sporting as well as politico-economic arena.⁶

Conclusion: European identity politics and Anglo-German coverage of EURO 96

The analysis of the English and German newspaper coverage of EURO 96 presents several findings. First, British/English press coverage of EURO 96 served more to 'divide' than to 'unite' the nations of Europe, especially in relation to Germany. Second, the English newspapers reflected the social currents that were evident in British politics at the time, possibly reinforcing anti-European sentiments more broadly. This was done through the deploying of national stereotypes, nationalistic sentiments and the vocabulary/imagery of war. 'Old foes' provided convenient excuses to buttress deeply laden habitus codes about the fragile I/we identities of the British/English. The identity politics evident in the discourse of the English newspapers' underpinning their EURO 96 coverage reflected more deep-seated British concerns regarding national decline, the fragmentation of the British Isles and European integration. Third, such press discourse tended towards two interwoven themes: nostalgia, especially with the recollection of '66 and all that', and ethnic assertiveness/defensiveness. Such sentiments were, of course, also a reflection of the Thatcher/Major years. While elements of EURO 96 reflect such sentiments, it is also necessary to observe that media reporting emphasized less the Football Association's EURO 96 slogan 'We're In This Together', and more a nostalgia for the past and an assertive ethnic defensiveness in the face of ongoing Europeanization. Such sport media discourse reinforces invented traditions but also national habitus codes, especially for a nation such as England whose 'fantasy shield of their imagined charisma as a leading established group may give a declining nation the strength to carry on' (Elias and Scotson, 1994: xliii). A fourth main finding can also be identified: the German press set their agenda by contemporary politics, rather than dwelling on a past beset with historical antagonisms which they would sooner erase from their habitus. Germany could take comfort and confidence from their current power base as a footballing nation and in the world at large.

The fantasy shields and imagined group charismas of European nations are based on both media discourses and also 'daily unnoticed

practices', in this case that of the activities of spectators and supporters. EURO 96 thus served to reinforce the stronger emotive I/we identification of European citizens with their nation rather than with the wider identity notion that they are also Europeans. Dominant I/we national identities are arguably strengthened in sporting tournaments of this nature. As such, EURO 96 acted as a 'drag' on further European integration. Indeed, it is possible to conclude that international team sports seemingly bind people to dominant I/we national identities, and the incipient European identity remains at an 'emergent' stage. As Elias went on to warn: 'the discrepancy between the actual and the imagined position of one's group among others can also entail a mistaken assessment of one's resources' (Elias and Scotson, 1994: p. xliii). It is necessary to consider whether the ethnic defensiveness/assertiveness and wilful nostalgia, identified as a typical feature of the English press coverage, is exceptional in a European context, or whether, indeed, it is the absence of such features in the German press which is atypical. Further analysis of other European press is therefore needed. However, there is some agreement on the distinctiveness of the English tabloid press (Blain et al., 1993). Further to this, the commentary from other national press in light of the English press coverage of the England-Germany match is revealing; the French sports daily, *L'Equipe*, observed that it was: 'as if Germany had never made peace with the Allies. It was almost as if they once again bombed London with their VIs. As if Vogts was a general of the Wehrmacht' (*L'Equipe*, 25 June 1996: 8).

A continuation of the historic and contemporary rivalry between England and Germany can be seen in the controversy surrounding bids to host the 2006 FIFA World Cup. The two nations are the leading European contenders for hosting the largest global sporting contest, English tabloids have charged: 'KRAUT OF ORDER! Euro chiefs are always crawling to Germans' (*News of the World*, 2 February 1997: 61) amid suggestions that UEFA will back the German bid and cries of foul-play given that Germany is the only country with two representatives on their 15-strong executive committee. This debate is all the more pertinent when considered alongside similar discontent over German ascendancy in European politics. For an insecure English nation struggling to come to terms with European integration, the loss of empire and other dislocating processes, the global sports arena for the English sports press seems to appear as a last bastion for the preservation of the English/British 'imagined charisma'. Yet again, however, Germany, portrayed as ever the folk-devil, stands in the way.

Notes

1. Sport and national identity has proved to be a rich and fruitful area of study over the last decade. While there is not the time or space to elaborate on a review of the literature, see the following: Bairner (1996), Jarvie and Walker (1994) and Maguire and Tuck (1997). The study of sport, Europe and international relations has been explored by: Arbena (1993), Duke and Crolley (1996), Klein (1997), Kruger (1993), MacClancy (1996) and Mangan (1996). The connections between sport, the media and national identity have been examined by: Blain et al. (1993), Maguire (1993), O'Donnell (1994), Tudor (1992) and Whannel (1992), with Blain and O'Donnell (1998) offering an alternative approach to a media analysis of EURO 96.
2. For a further explanation of the process-sociological perspective which provides the framework for this article, see Maguire (1993, 1994) and Maguire and Tuck (1997). See also Mennell (1994).
3. We do not have space to discuss the general literature on national identity. For further discussion of English/British issues see: Anderson (1983), Colls (1986), Cohen (1994), Colley (1992), Crick (1991), Hobsbawm (1990), Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), Nairn (1977) and Schwarz (1992). For a more general consideration of approaches to national identity, see: Billig (1995), Bloom (1990), Connerton (1989), Gellner (1983), Hall (1991), Nelson et al. (1992), Smith (1991) and Treanor (1997). On Germany, see Hughes (1988), Elias (1996) and Fletcher (1997).
4. For a more comprehensive qualitative analysis, see Maguire and Poulton (forthcoming) and Maguire et al. (1997).
5. The quantitative analysis did not provide a record of the percentage of EURO 96 articles containing war vocabulary that included instances where newspapers reviewed or commented on other sections of the media and their use of this discourse. The same was true of the discourses relating to nationalistic sentiments, nostalgia and invented tradition.
6. For a more detailed analysis and discussion of the press coverage surrounding the semi-final match between England and Germany which highlights the Anglo-German tensions underpinning EURO 96, see Maguire et al. (1997).
7. A feature of some continental press is to have sports-specific newspapers, such as *L'Equipe* in France, *Gazzetta dello Sport* in Italy and *Marca* in Spain. The literariness of some of this sports writing contrasts markedly with certain generic features of British sports journalism (Blain et al., 1993: 6).

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