Hammers, Lions and Yids: Identity and Ethnicity on British Football Grounds

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Terrace Chants of West Ham United FC, Millwall FC and Tottenham Hotspur FC

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ABSTRACT

This essay will show how manifestations of local identity, ethnicity and community in the terrace chants of the three football clubs West Ham United Football Club, Millwall Football Club and Tottenham Hotspurs Football Club are created. By featuring a collection of chants from each club, a connection to the clubs' geographical areas, the home grounds and ethnic features will be described. By featuring a critical discourse analysis of the language used in the various clubs' chants at their respective home ground, this essay will display aspects of above mentioned aspects and how these are upheld in language and interaction between people.

Each club's supporters acknowledge allegiance to various communities. West Ham United is traditionally a club of working class Londoners who often relate to themselves as 'the cockney boys', while Millwall (although being set in working class London) identifies more with the geographical area (South London) where they are situated, than with their heritage. Tottenham is one of the clubs in Britain most strongly influenced by religion, as many of the supporters are Jews.

1. INTRODUCTION

A new era of football audiences was born when, instead of the whole audience taking active part in supporting the team vocally, a smaller group of people stood up and started singing more embroidered chants, both in support of their own team, but also against the opposing team. The terrace chant has since become a marker of people's sense of identity and local patriotism. In the declining British economy, due to the phase out of traditional industries such as steel, coal mining and fishing, people have turned to the terraces of football grounds in search of an identity. The terrace stands are predominantly male communities saturated with testosterone and adrenaline, often combined with large quantities of alcohol. The combination of these features creates a world of its own, separated from the real world, where its inhabitants can find a sense of belonging.

In 1998, at the age of fourteen, I saw my first match with the football team Djurgårdens IF (refers to the area of Djurgården in Stockholm) from the Sofia Stand on the Stockholm Olympic Stadium. As a young teenager, in desperate search of an identity, I stepped into a world of unity and brotherhood and was invited into a comradeship which set its own rules and social codes of conduct. By supporting and upholding the identity markers of Djurgårdens IF and the supporters' club Järnkaminerna (the Iron Stoves), a sense of belonging and an identity was created in my mind and has since been a large part of my life and my sense of self-image.

The Swedish terrace chants were imported from the British Isles in the 1980's and soon became a refuge for a predominantly male audience to find a sense of belonging in a society influenced by secularism and the Swedish Jantelag, the conventional belief of equal adequacy among citizens. Although separated by the North Sea, the terrace stands filled the same functions in two separate societies in a time of regression.

I will use this essay to show how the chants sung by supporters on the terrace stands of three football clubs from London manifest local patriotism and a sense of belonging within their community of people who are already connected within a community as citizens of the same country and inhabitants of the same city and also as supporters of football in general.

1.1 Aims

One's identity is created from belonging to many different communities. These communities can consist of many different aspects of one's social life, such as geography, use of language, social activities, etc. For football supporters, apart from being a community of people sharing

the love for a specific sport, identity is created and maintained through shared ideas of the greatness of one's own club and its heritage. This greatness and heritage are displayed in the terrace chants of each club, and by conducting a critical discourse analysis of terrace chants from the three London clubs West Ham United Football Club, Tottenham Hotspur Football Club and Millwall Football Club, this essay will display examples of how ethnicity and belonging to certain communities of geography and language help create a sense of identity within these groups of people.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Brief History

The game of football (American: soccer) was first mentioned by the clerk William FitzStephen in 1170, when he noted that:

> The elders, the fathers, and the men of wealth come on horseback to view the contests of their juniors, and in their fashion sport with the young men; and there seems to be aroused in these elders a stirring of natural heat by viewing so much activity and by participation in the joys of unrestrained youth (Simkin 2009).

As early as 1170, descriptions of football audiences are of the character that people become aroused and active by viewing such a lively sport. Although the act of singing terrace chants is relatively new, the game of football has always influenced its audience, and helped create community, by watching one's favourite contesters, such as: "the men of wealth [who] come on horseback to view the contests of their juniors" (Simkin 2009).

A little more than 800 years later, on 15 April, 1989, at Hillsborough Stadium the situation for football supporters was forever changed when a railing collapsed from the enormous pressure of an overpopulated terrace, and supporters of Liverpool FC fell to their death. The consequences of the Hillsborough Disaster led to the banning of terrace stands in favour of all-seat stadiums[1]. It has been claimed that this action killed the atmosphere of supporters singing chants during football matches, but still the terrace chants play a significant role in the creation of community among football supporters.

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[1] Read more in the Taylor Report at: http://badconscience.files.wordpress.com/2010/06/hillsborough-stadium-disaster-final-report.pdf

2.2 Previous Research

2.2.1 Community

People can be divided in many different communities, and different communities fulfil various aspects of a person's sense of identity. Examples of communities are families, work colleagues and friends. Every community has its own rules and social codes of conduct, and they are all building blocks in a person's creation of identity.

Community as a concept does not, however, relate only to a confined group of people. Every different community works in its own way and is created from different reasons. In the creation of nations, the act of creating myths of national pride and a sense of one's nations' superiority over another are central features to the theory of imagined communities. In this specific kind of community, special reverence is directed towards death and the pride of defending the superiority of one's nation, exemplified by nations' reverence of the graves of Unknown Soldiers (Anderson 1991: 9). This reverence of symbols of great importance is recognizable in supporters reverence for their clubs' home ground and the geographical area where they are situated.

These imagined communities are designed to create unity amongst larger groups of people, and do not work as a concept on smaller groups of people. Smaller groups of people, for example supporters of a football club, relate more to the concept of communities of practice, as described by Etienne Wenger (2006), who describes a community of practice as groups of people sharing a passion for something and the wish to explore that passion further.

Although different groups of people share an interest for something, which they explore together, they do not necessarily constitute a community of practice. In general, three characteristics of a community of practice can be identified. Etienne Wenger (2006) refers to these characteristics as 1) the domain, 2) the community and 3) the practice.

The domain of a community of practice refers to the members of the group and the knowledge they possess about their community. This knowledge is not by necessity recognized as something positive outside the group. The community of a community of practice refers to a process of learning and interaction between its members. Colleagues at a work place may work together all day, but unless they work together with a specific problem hands-on, they do not participate in a process of learning to enhance the domain of the group. The practice of a community of practice refers to the knowledge created by the members through the learning process. By collecting stories and other forms of relevant material,

constructed through the interaction amongst the community's members, the members have managed the final characteristic and are considered a community of practice.

Football supporters are members of various communities of practice. Each club's supporters form their community of practice around their passion for the club (the domain), the creation and performance of terrace chants (the community), and also the invention and internalization of these (the practice).

2.2.2 The Importance of Language

Paramount to the creation of unity is a shared language. The ability to communicate with one's fellow community members (and also to exclude outsiders) makes the speakers of that specific language feel a special unity. Just as with supporters singing terrace chants of their favourite club, this aspect of language can be recognized in the national anthems. By singing the same words at the same time of a song specific for the nation, while simultaneously waving flags representing the nation, participants can experience a very specific unity within their community as citizens (Anderson 1991: 145).

This aspect of language use can be recognized in the concept of speech communities. A speech community is a group of people that feels connected due to the sharing of a specific language (Gumperz 1962: 101). Language, in this instance, does not by necessity need to imply different national and/or ethnic languages, although that is often the case, as in social dialects referred to as *vernaculars*. Vernaculars are a form of low-status variation of a language often connected to a smaller group of people within a larger speech community (Yule 2006: 212), for example speakers of the vernacular African-American Vernacular English in the United States and speakers of the Cockney vernacular in Britain.

However, as above mentioned, a speech community need not be constituted by speakers of a specific national/ethnic language. In the case of football supporters, the terrace chants of each respective club could be considered a specific language of its own, allowing its 'speakers' to form a speech community. It has been claimed that a speech community does not have to be related to a language community (Romaine 1994: 22). This implies that a language community is the community of speakers of the national/ethnic language of the geographical area where the supporters of a football club are situated, while the speech community in this case (i.e. the supporters singing terrace chants) relates more to a set of shared norms of how to use that particular language.

2.2.3 Football and Community

Football supporters use many different ways to display the difference between themselves, separated as members of different communities of language and ethnicity. In Manchester, the rivalry between Manchester United and Manchester City derives very much from the colours of the two clubs. Manchester City plays in blue jerseys and Manchester United in red. Identity through colour is so strong in Manchester that, apart from the football jerseys, it is unthinkable for a Manchester City-fan to wear a red shirt, and, similarly, for a Manchester United-fan to wear a blue shirt. When Manchester City-fans bring the British Union flag to matches, the red crosses of Saint George and Saint Patrick are traditionally exchanged for light blue ones (Hand in Andrews, ed. 2004: 191). In this case, belonging through colour is so strong that the Manchester City supporters choose to alter the Union flag, making it more a marker of the Manchester City community, rather than of the United Kingdom.

Aspects of geography are also important for clubs all over England. The situation for the three London clubs studied in this essay is that their geographical boundaries and the placing of their respective home grounds are situated within the boundaries of London. In other parts of England this is not always the case, fortifying an inclusive/exclusive dichotomy. In the case of Manchester, supporters of Manchester City often point to the fact that Manchester United is not actually situated in Manchester. The City of Manchester Stadium, housing Manchester City since 2003 is situated in central Manchester, while Old Trafford, housing Manchester United is situated in neighbouring Stretford (Hand in Andrews, ed. 2004: 193). Manchester City's supporters use this fact as a way of distancing themselves from Manchester United and excluding them, by stating that they (Manchester United) are not really from Manchester.

2.2.4 Ethnicity

Ethnicity, as opposed to nationalism, is concerned with creating a sense of belonging and pride within a smaller community, often as part of a larger community. Nationalism is the gathering of a nation as a whole, and is intended to cover all of the citizens. In that instance, nationalism could be claimed to set the rules, and let the followers obey. Ethnicity on the other hand, is created out of the context of its followers and relates more to things like a common descent or a shared religion (Joseph 2004: 162). Ethnicity requires no specific territory to work within (although that is often the case). Ethnicity can be identified over many boundaries, such as geographical, political and nationalistic (Pieterse in May, Modood and Squires, ed. 2004: 30). An ethnic group is created as a means for its followers to distance

themselves from other people. This is done not necessarily to create a new nation (although that has been the case, as in e.g. former Yugoslavia). It is rather done to show that the ethnic group in question is not just e.g. citizens of a nation, but also draws a lot of pride from their various backgrounds and smaller communities. In essence, it can be stated that ethnicity is the minorities' form of nationalism (Pieterse in May, Modood and Squires, ed. 2004: 31).

Nationalism is created as a nation's tool to gain unity and pride amongst its citizens in opposition to other nations. Nationalism evolves on its own and is not thoroughly dependent on the act of other nations creating distance. Ethnicity works in the opposite way, since it gains its momentum only from the relational disputes it creates (Dwyer 1996; Eriksen 1993; Panayi 2000; Pieterse in May, Modood and Squires, ed. 2004). An ethnic minority forms an ethnic group when its members have something to relate to (e.g. another ethnic minority or the nationalistic majority of the nation).

The dilemma of ethnicity is its differentiation of people into 'Us' and 'Them'. This inclusive/exclusive dichotomy (e.g. as in the case of Manchester noted above) is both the problem with, and the condition for, ethnicity as ideology to work. This categorisation has sometimes led to the mixing of ideas between ethnicity and race. Ethnic groups are in many cases situated in specific racial groups, but there is no explicit necessity thereof (Banton 1983: 106; Jenkins 1986: 177). Religion, however, is in many instances a strong factor in the creation of ethnic groups (Eriksen 1993: 68; Panayi 2000: 103) and one of the religions most divided into ethnic groups is Judaism, which becomes very visible in the case of Israel, where the ethnic group has transformed into a nationalistic community.

Ethnicity draws very much upon stereotyping. Members of an ethnic group create positive stereotypes which one should possess in order to gain membership in the group and people outside the ethnic group make negative stereotypes about it. The inclusion of people within an ethnic group rests on the exclusion of other people in order to win momentum and justify its existence, and divide people into various kinds, e.g. by religion (Eriksen 1993: 24).

This simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of people has been, and to some extent still is, very visible in American society, especially in larger cities. Upon arriving in America, immigrants settled in communities already populated by their fellow countrymen. Enclaves such as 'Little Italy' (Italian) in New York rested on the inclusion of immigrants from Italy and exclusion of others, who were restricted to other similar areas, e.g. China Town (also in New York) in the case of Chinese immigrants.

2.2.5 Critical Discourse Analysis

When doing a critical analysis of discourse, one is essentially interested in displaying ideological manifestations of unequal power relations and how these are upheld in language and interaction between people (Fairclough 2010; Weiss and Wodak 2003; Wodak in Wodak and Meyer 2001). Critical discourse analysis investigates the relationship between any form of language and social interaction. It is important to highlight that critical discourse analysis analyses any form of language (Fairclough 2003: 3). This can mean language that is both written and spoken, such as books, newspapers, etc. and interaction between two or more people. It can, however, also indicate language such as facial expressions and the context in which the interaction takes place. All aspects must be taken into consideration in analyzing the message delivered.

2.2.5.1 Ideology

Ideology is realised through language and how people use it to interact with, and distance themselves, from others. Language is both part of society and also created out of the context of the society in which it is used (Fairclough 2001; Thompson 1984; van Dijk 1998). In the creation of communities and standardized languages, users of the language are those considered to be legitimate members of that community. By distancing themselves from others, who are then excluded by not gaining membership through language to that specific group, a special sense of belonging is created (Kamusella 2009: 26). The dominant language of a specific group, e.g. a nation, can be used in many varying ways. Just as it is constructed to include every citizen and give a sense of belonging through the usage of a unified means of communication, it can also do just the opposite.

Although ideology is created from language, it is not upheld by it (Fairclough 2010; Halliday 1978, 1994). Rather, ideology is upheld by the social practice in which language is used. In a society with a dominant language, the people speaking the dominant language constitute, per se, the dominant group. In their daily interaction between themselves, they uphold the uneven power relations created by differences in ideology through language (Fairclough 2010: 57).

Supporters of football clubs do this by singing taunting chants, especially when the opposing team is down by one or more goals or have just lost the match at hand. Not only has the club and the community suffered a blow by loosing the match, the opposing supporters are put in a dominion of power as winners of the contest.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

3.1 Analysis

To show how local identity and ethnicity are manifested in terrace chants of three football clubs from London, and how these aspects are connected to the forming of ideologies in various communities, this study aims to conduct a critical discourse analysis of the language in the terrace chants of West Ham United Football Club, Millwall Football Club and Tottenham Hotspur Football Club.

The aspects of critical discourse analysis considered for this essay is the displaying of how ideologies of ethnicity and local identity is manufactured through the language used in the terrace chants of the selected clubs. The featured chants will show examples of how aspects of ethnicity and community are created, maintained and used to create relational disputes between rivaling groups of supporters.

3.2 Choosing Clubs

The three clubs which this essay focuses upon have been chosen from personal commitment and geographical connections. The choice of West Ham United Football Club stems from my personal connections with the club, since it is the club I support in the British Premier League. Since West Ham is situated in London, it was decided that the essay should focus on clubs only from London. When selecting the other clubs to analyze, aspects of rivalry, a sense of the importance of local connection (to where clubs are situated), ethnic identity and language variation were focused upon.

In the case of choosing the actual clubs to analyze chants from, apart from West Ham who feel a strong connection to their part of London, the choice fell upon Millwall, since it is a club with a long history of rivalry with West Ham, and Tottenham being one of the clubs in Britain (and especially London) most coloured by their ethnic (Jewish) heritage.

3.3 Terrace Chants

The terrace chants of West Ham[2], Millwall[3] and Tottenham[4] have been collected from the internet resource Fan Chants,[5] containing terrace chants from all major football clubs in Britain. By analyzing the language in each of the clubs' terrace chants available at Fan Chants, the chants were selected according to their inclusion of aspects of ethnicity,

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[2] http://fanchants.com/football-team/west_ham/
[3] http://fanchants.com/football-team/millwall/
[4] http://fanchants.com/football-team/tottenham_hotspur/
[5] http://www.fanchants.com

geography, language variation and references to the names of the clubs and the clubs' home grounds.

3.3.1 West Ham United Football Club

In the case of West Ham, supporting chants have been collected that show how aspects of the locality of the club (East London), references to the vernacular 'cockney' and references to the club's name and nickname (West Ham/Hammers) are upheld in language and creates ideologies of local identity and ethnicity.

Opposing chants collected, directed against Tottenham, show aspects of the ethnic (Jewish) tradition to circumcise (to surgically remove the foreskin on) boys that creates ideologies of ethnicity.

Also West Ham's club anthem 'I'm forever blowing bubbles' has been collected, even though it does not contain any direct reference to West Ham, its locality or its fans' heritage. The chant, however, is one of the most central in the terrace chants of West Ham supporter tradition and is the most influential chant in the West Ham community.

3.3.2 Millwall Football Club

In the case of Millwall, supporting chants have been collected that show how aspects of the locality of the club (South London) and references to the club's name (Millwall) and home ground (The Den[6]) are upheld in language and create ideologies of local identity.

Opposing chants collected, directed against West Ham show how examples of the name of the club (West Ham), its home ground (Upton Park[7]) and its supporters (Hammers[8]) are included to investigate ideologies of local identity.

In the case of West Ham, the chant 'I'm forever blowing bubbles' was collected due to its paramount importance on the terrace stands of West Ham's home ground the Boleyn Ground. Therefore, the chant 'You can shove your bubbles up your arse' is also included, to show how Millwall distance themselves from West Ham.

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[6] The Den refers to a passage in the Holy Bible (Old Testament, Book of Daniel, 6:1-28).
[7] The Boleyn Ground is sometimes referred to as Upton Park, which in fact is the area where The Boleyn Ground is situated.
[8] West Ham and its supporters are often related to as either 'Hammers' or 'Irons'.

3.3.3 Tottenham Hotspur Football Club

In the case of Tottenham, supporting chants have been collected that show how ethnicity (the epithet 'Yids', referring to Jews) and the club's locality by the home ground's name (White Hart Lane/The Lane) are upheld in language and create ideologies of identity and ethnicity.

Opposing chants collected, directed against West Ham show how examples of the vernacular 'cockney', references to Gypsies[9] and the name of the club (West Ham) are used to create ideologies of ethnicity and local identity.

In the case of West Ham, the chant 'I'm forever blowing bubbles' was included due to its paramount importance on the terrace stands of West Ham's home ground the Boleyn Ground. Therefore, the chant 'I'm forever throwing bottles' has also been collected, to show how Millwall distance themselves from West Ham.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Identity by Supporting Chants

Since London is one of the world's largest cities, it is not strange that people are divided into many different communities. West Ham is deeply rooted in the working class and their belonging to their working class heritage is clearly marked in their terrace chants. Especially for West Ham, connections to the cockney vernacular, spoken by large parts of working class people in London are mentioned repeatedly, e.g. in the chants '1-0 to the Cockney Boys' and 'If you are proud to be a Cockney, clap your hands'.

All clubs have their own unique chants with regards to textual content, but many of the chants have similar structures or melodies (Hagström, Johansson & Jurell 2010: 281). This phenomenon is exemplified by the song 'Oh South/East London' (Millwall/West Ham). The melody of the song remains the same as does the textual structure. Furthermore, in this case, much of the textual content remains the same:

Ex. 1

>Oh South/East London
>Oh South/East London
>Is wonderful
>Is wonderful
>Oh South/East London is wonderful
>It's full of tits, fanny and Millwall/West Ham
>Oh South/East London is wonderful

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[9] Gypsies are generally treated as second class citizens and are frowned upon as being unclean and thieves. They have also been persecuted by European states since the Middle Ages, due to their way of living and acting. (Panayi 2000: 88a, 104b).

The differentiating between the clubs in this particular chant is narrowed down to the name of the club and the geographical area in which it is situated, but the sense of geographical identity is nonetheless evident.

As noted above in the Previous Research section, national anthems play a significant role in the aspect of forming the imagined community of a nation. The sense of belonging is created by the singing of the same words at the same time, and that the song is displaying national pride. Although national anthems play a vital part of sport events, this is mostly the case during international matches between nations. In the national series, national anthems are replaced by the clubs' own anthems. The singing of these club anthems creates the same sense of belonging as that experienced by supporters of the national teams as the players enter the pitch to play a match (Anderson 1991: 145).

The difference with the club anthems, as opposed to the national anthems is that they do not have to display pride about a nation. In the case of West Ham, their club anthem is an old song from the musical *The Passing Show of 1918,* although here displayed as it is being sung by West Ham's supporters*:*

Ex. 2

> I'm forever blowing bubbles,
> Pretty bubbles in the air,
> They fly so high,
> They reach the sky,
> And like my dreams they fade and die!
> Fortunes always hiding,
> I've looked everywhere,
> I'm forever blowing bubbles,
> Pretty bubbles in the air!
> United! (Clapping),
> United! (Clapping).

The song: 'I'm forever blowing bubbles', does not contain any direct reference to West Ham, but still the song is regarded as the chant of chants in West Ham tradition. This is also evident in opposing supporters' chants, where for example Millwall contribute with the song: 'You can shove your bubbles up your arse' and Tottenham has adopted the melody of the song, but changed the title to: 'I'm forever throwing (original: blowing) bottles (original: bubbles)'.

As noted above, the geographical area in which a person lives is a strong marker of the sense of belonging. Although West Ham's supporters identify themselves as East

Londoners and Millwall as South Londoners, the most evident markers of geographical belonging are constructed by the deep reverence that is shown for each club's home ground, much in the same way as some nations pay a deep respect to the graves of Unknown Soldiers. Chants are used to portray the supporters' great respect for their home ground and how they identify their place of belonging within its terraces. Millwall's home ground is known as The Den, situated in the south of London. The Den is featured in many of Millwall's supporting chants, although 'Let 'em come' is the most popular one:

Ex. 3

Let 'em come, Let 'em come, Let 'em come
Let 'em all come down to The Den
Let 'em come, Let 'em come, Let 'em come
We'll only have to beat 'em again
We're the best team in London
No, the best team of all
Everybody knows us
We're called Millwall

Although the Boleyn Ground is important for West Ham's supporters and The Den is important to Millwall and its supporters' sense of belonging, neither club expresses this allegiance as severely as Tottenham. The home grounds are important to all clubs, but for Millwall and West Ham, it is rather the geographical area where respective club is active that is of paramount importance. For Tottenham, whose home ground is White Hart Lane, the home ground is more important than the geographical area where it is situated:

Ex. 4

We are Tottenham
We are Tottenham
Super Tottenham
From the Lane
We are Tottenham
Super Tottenham
We are Tottenham
From the Lane

In the case of Tottenham, many chants about White Hart Lane are also about the name itself, separated from the geographical area in which it is situated. This stems from Tottenham's attempts to build a new home ground, and the supporters' pleas through the terrace chants to

the board that they should not change the name, even though the ground will not be situated at the same geographical area as the original White Hart Lane:

Ex. 5

> We are Tottenham
> Super Tottenham
> Super Tottenham
> From the Lane
> And when we get our,
> New Stadium
> Please don't go and
> Change the name
>
> This is our home
> Always has been
> We all live at
> White Hart Lane
> So when we get our
> New stadium
> Please don't go and
> Change the name
>
> We are Tottenham
> Super Tottenham
> Super Tottenham
> From the Lane
> It's where we come from
> It's where we belong,
> So please don't go and
> Change the name

By singing chants with reference to various geographical parts of London and the locality of their home ground, each club creates an ideology of local identity by the language in respective chant. Also, West Ham creates an ideology of ethnicity by calling themselves 'the Cockney boys', referring to the vernacular Cockney, that is spoken in their part of London and to which many of their supporters acknowledge their heritage as part of the working class.

4.2 Identity by Opposing Chants

Apart from above mentioned aspects of opposing elements towards other clubs in chants of a supportive character, such as Millwall's 'Let 'em come' that says: 'Let 'em all come down to The Den…We'll only have to beat 'em again', terrace chants of a negative (against other clubs) character can be an equally important factor in the creation of identity for supporters.

The creation of an 'Us' and 'Them' dichotomy is very visible in the opposing chants. The supportive chants are about the greatness of one's own club, and can in that sense reinforce the inclusion of the supporters of that club, such as the song 'I'm Scunthorpe til' I die', which in essence means that the supporters singing that particular chant are supporters of Scunthorpe United, while the opposing supporters are not (Clark in Majumdar 2006: 500). This is as close as one comes to establishing an exclusive dichotomy in supportive chants: by the diffuse implication that what oneself is, the other is not.

The opposing chants, however, are often about one's own club and/or its supporters doing something against opposing supporters, due to the fact that they are supporters of a different club. The justification for these actions is the mere fact that the supporters are members of different communities. Both groups of supporters want to be part of their own community as well as exclude others who are not seen as worthy to join their community.

The paramount difference between supportive and opposing chants is the character of the message delivered. Apart from being negative in general, the opposing chants are in general delivering a more violent message. Not violent in the aspect that it encourages actual physical violence, but more figurative violence. Millwall's most popular anti-West Ham chant: 'Poor little Hammer', is about the sickening feeling coming from observing a West Ham supporter and how he or she would be beaten with a brick until: 'the 'Hammer' wasn't singing any more':

Ex. 6

> There once was a poor little Hammer,
> Who's face was all battered and torn,
> He made me feel sick,
> So I hit him with a brick,
> And the Hammer wasn't singing any more...

Similar treatment is described in the Tottenham chant: 'Bonfire', which encourages the building of a bonfire to: 'stick 'Hammers' in the middle, and burn the fucking lot':

Ex. 7

> Build a bonfire,
> Build a bonfire,

> Put Arsenal[10] on the top,
> Stick Hammers in the middle,
> And burn the fucking lot!

The opposing chant is by nature not showing identity as clear as the supportive chant. Exceptions do however occur. In the anti-Tottenham chant: 'Oh bring back my foreskin to me', West Ham supporters taunt Tottenham's supporters for being circumcised in accordance with their (Jewish) religion:

Ex. 8

> Singin' I've got foreskin haven't you
> Singin' I've got foreskin haven't you
> Singin' I've got foreskin
> I've got foreskin
> I've got foreskin haven't you
>
> My one skin goes over my two skin
> My two skin goes over my three
> My three skin goes over my foreskin
> Oh bring back my foreskin to me
>
> Bring back, bring back
> Oh, bring back my foreskin to me

The opposition lies mostly in the fact that according to Jewish tradition, boys should be circumcised (i.e. have their foreskin surgically removed) since it is an unclean part of the body. In this instance, Jews, represented by Tottenham, are excluded from the West Ham community, due to religious and ethnic heritage.

By singing the chant 'Oh bring back my foreskin to me' West Ham's supporters creates a stereotype about Tottenham and its supporters, fortifying an ideology of ethnicity that work in two ways. By using the language of the chant to point to a special feature of Jewish tradition (i.e. the circumcision of boys) West Ham's supporters both exclude Tottenham's supporters, as they (West Ham's supporters) have something in common that the Tottenham supporters lack (i.e. a foreskin) but they also manages to fortify the Tottenham supporters' pride of their ethnic heritage.

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[10] Arsenal (full name: Arsenal Football Club, also referred to as 'the Gunners') is another club, also situated in London.

4.3 Dialogical Features in the Terrace Chants

In identifying community among the smaller group within the larger group, dialogical features are in some cases common to the terrace chants.

Tottenham, as has already been noted, is one of the clubs with the strongest connection to their home ground (White Hart Lane). During Tottenham's home matches it is not uncommon to hear the chant: 'Park Lane vs. Shelf Side', relating to the two largest terraces of White Hart Lane. The chant is constructed so that the supporters on the Park Lane terrace start singing and are answered by the supporters on the Shelf Side terrace:

Ex. 9

> We're the Park Lane,
> We're the Park Lane,
> We're the Park Lane Tottenham
>
> We're the Shelf Side,
> We're the Shelf Side,
> We're the Shelf Side Tottenham

Both groups of supporters sing in support of Tottenham, but at the same time, they both manifest their identity as inhabitants of different parts of the ground, forming a smaller community within the larger community of Tottenham supporters, which in turn is a community of its own within the larger Jewish community of London.

4.4 Ethnic Features on the Terrace Stands

As noted in the Previous Research section, ethnicity can be seen as a minority's nationalism. The terrace chant is extremely bound by tradition and is influenced by severe codification. The chants contain numerous examples of history, tradition and pride that are connected to the club and the area in which the club is situated, as well as shared heritages. The supporters who inhabit the terrace stands share a feeling of being connected, by their love for the same team, but also by shared experiences of living and interacting socially in the specific place the club inhabits. Just as they might be citizens of the same country and inhabitants of the same city, they share a common sense that they belong more closely to this smaller group than the larger. These connections can derive from geography, religion, colour, etc.

A striking example of ethnic belonging in terms of religion is Tottenham's connections to their Jewish heritage. The club and its supporters experience a lot of taunting from opposing supporters because of their religion, e.g. West Ham's chant 'Oh bring back

my foreskin to me' and the history of oppressing Jews. The epithet 'Yids' is frequently used when addressing supporters of Tottenham, not only from West Ham and Millwall, but from clubs all over England in general, and from London specifically. The difference in the case of Tottenham, however, is that instead of taking offence at their negative epithet, the Tottenham supporters have adopted it and they often refer to themselves as The Yiddo Army, exemplified in the chants 'Yiddo!' and 'Yid Army'. In this sense, the negative epithet has been adopted to identify Tottenham as differentiated from other clubs outside the Jewish community of London.

Other forms of ethnic connotations in terrace chants are based on ascribing features to opposing supporters and taunting them for that. In Tottenham's anti-West Ham chant 'A Canvey Island tour', this is achieved as West Ham supporters are acclaimed to be white trash and go to Canvey Island is Essex, a small town infamous for its working class population[11]. In the chant 'No noise from the pikey boys', relating to West Ham's song '1-0 to the Cockney Boys', Tottenham taunt West Ham, both by claiming that West Ham's supporters are not singing and also that they are 'pikeys', which is slang for Romanies[12].

5. DISCUSSION

The terrace chants of the three studied football clubs, West Ham United Football Club, Millwall Football Club and Tottenham Hotspur Football Club, are all filled with references to history, pride and other features that, through the language in the chants, help establish ideologies of ethnicity and local identity within the group of supporters on the terrace stand.

The singing of the chants is the most influential part of establishing the various communities and sense of belonging that is so vital for the supporters of the terrace stands. Each club has different aspects of what is important to their identity and this becomes very evident in the terrace chants.

5.1 Tottenham

Tottenham's supporters form their identity very much around their ethnic (Jewish) heritage which is evident in songs where they appropriate and refer to themselves with the negative epithet for Jews, 'Yids', as in the supporters referring to themselves as The Yiddo Army.

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[11] http://www.urbandictionary.com

[12] Romanies (or gypsies/pikeys) are generally treated as second class citizens and are frowned upon as being unclean and thieves. They have also been persecuted by European states since the Middle Ages, due to their way of living and acting. (Panayi 2000: 88a, 104b).

Also, for The Yiddo Army, much of their identity is connected to the home ground White Hart Lane, and specifically the name, since even though they seem likely to accept moving to a new stadium, they are not willing to let go of the name White Hart Lane.

These aspects of being a supporter of Tottenham show that what is important for Tottenham's supporters is not the geographical area, but more the symbols of Tottenham's history and heritage: the name of the home ground and the connections to the Jewish heritage. To stand on the terraces of White Hart Lane and sing about the pride of being Jewish and feel at home on the White Hart Lane form the imagined community of being Tottenham, identifying oneself with the club and the ethnic community of Judaism.

5.2 Millwall

In the case of Millwall, as opposed to Tottenham, a stronger sense of belonging is associated with the geographical area (South London) in which they are situated. Millwall also identifies itself through much of what they are not, i.e. what West Ham is. The rivalry between Millwall and West Ham is a central part of the respective club's identity. Millwall's supporters sing a lot of their home ground, The Den, but it is not central to their sense of belonging. The Den is important, but since Millwall's terrace chants deal more with the geographical position in the south of London, it is likely that the Den is not vital to the Millwall supporters' sense of identity.

Although the sense of symbols is not that important to Millwall's supporters, what is interesting is their club emblem and the connections that are implied. Millwall's club emblem consists of a roaring, charging blue lion on white background. England's national team's emblem is three heraldic blue lions on white background. This would imply that Millwall feels a larger connection to their identity as English, as opposed to Tottenham that is more connected to the Jewish religion.

From the above mentioned aspects, it can be concluded that Millwall's supporters form their imagined community around aspects of geography (South London) and by identifying what they are not (i.e. what West Ham is). The home ground is not central to their identity and by looking at the club emblem a larger connection to England can be sensed, as opposed to Tottenham and West Ham.

5.3 West Ham

Just as with Millwall, West Ham feels a strong connection to the geographical area (East London) in which the club and its supporters are situated. This connection is somewhat more

clearly mentioned in their terrace chants, than in the case of Millwall, due to West Ham's supporters' constant references to themselves as 'cockneys', the vernacular associated with the working class of London. Reference to the clubs home ground, The Boleyn Ground is not mentioned to any large extent, signalling that the stadium itself is not vital to the sense of being a West Ham supporter.

One of the most important symbols of West Ham is the chant 'I'm forever blowing bubbles', since the chant fills the same function for West Ham's supporters as 'God save the Queen' does for England as a nation. Also, the other clubs' opposition against the chant, such as Tottenham's 'I'm forever throwing bottles' and Millwall's 'You can shove your bubbles up your arse', show the importance of the chant for West Ham, through the severe opposition to it from rivalling clubs.

The importance of 'I'm forever blowing bubbles' as the club's version of a national anthem and the sense of identity through connections to the cockney dialect of working class London are the two strongest markers of the West Ham community and forms the identity of being West Ham.

6. CONCLUSIONS

By featuring a critical discourse analysis of the language in the terrace chants of West Ham United Football Club, Millwall Football Club and Tottenham Hotspur Football Club, this essay has shown the manifestations of ethnicity and local identity in these clubs' terrace chants and how ideology is created from these features and maintained in various communities.

To further develop this study, one would gain a deeper understanding of identity around football in London, by including the other major clubs from London, such as Chelsea FC, Fulham FC and Arsenal FC. Although other clubs, from other parts of England could be included, a focus on clubs only from London makes an interesting study due to London being one of the world's largest melting pots of different ethnic minorities and could be called the 'capital of football'.

The chants included in this essay have been collected from the internet resource Fan Chants, containing textual samples of chants from all major English football clubs. In order to conduct a more thorough study, live recording of chants at the various grounds

would contribute to a deeper understanding of intonation and intensity in the terrace chants, especially at London derbies.[13]

By singing terrace chants, supporters of football clubs create a sense of belonging in their respective geographical and ethnic areas where they are situated. Via establishment and maintenance of an 'Us and Them' dichotomy and the creation of ideologies of ethnicity and local identity the rivalling areas of each group of supporters are becoming even more differentiated, making identity even more sought after, and more worthy of defence from outsiders.

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[13] A match between two teams from the same city is often referred to as a 'Derby'.

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8. APPENDICES

8.1 Chants of West Ham United Football Club

East London is wonderful
Oh East London, Oh East London
Is wonderful, is wonderful.
Oh East London is wonderful,
It's full of tits fanny and West Ham,
Oh East London is wonderful.

I'm forever blowing bubbles
I'm forever blowing bubbles,
Pretty bubbles in the air,
They fly so high,
They reach the sky,
And like my dreams they fade and die!
Fortunes always hiding,
I've looked every where,
I'm forever blowing bubbles,
Pretty bubbles in the air!
United! (Clapping),
United! (Clapping).

1-0 to the cockney boys
1-0 to the cockney boys,
1-0 to the cockney boys,
1-0 to the cockney boys…

If you are proud to be a cockney
If you are proud to be a cockney, clap your hands (clap, clap)
If you are proud to be a cockney, clap your hands (clap, clap)
If you are proud to be a cockney,
If you are proud to be a cockney,
If you are proud to be a cockney, clap your hands (clap, clap)

Oh, bring back my foreskin to me
Singin' I've got foreskin haven't you
Singin' I've got foreskin haven't you
Singin' I've got foreskin
I've got foreskin
I've got foreskin haven't you
My one skin goes over my two skin
My two skin goes over my three
My three skin goes over my foreskin
Oh bring back my foreskin to me
Bring back, bring back
Oh, bring back my foreskin to me

8.2 Chants of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club

I'm forever throwing bottles
I'm forever throwing bottles,
Pretty bottles in the air,
They fly so high, nearly reach the sky,
Then like West Ham,
They fade and die,
Arsenal's always running,
Chelsea running too,
And so's the Park Lane Tottenham,
Running after you!

No noise from the pikey boys
No noise from the pikey boys,
No noise from the pikey boys,
No noise from the pikey boys,
No noise from the pikey boys…

A Canvey Island tour
You're all going on a Canvey Island tour,
A Canvey Island tour,
A Canvey Island tour,
We're all going on a Canvey Island tour,
A Canvey Island tour,
A Canvey Island tour...

Bonfire
Build a bonfire,
Build a bonfire,
Put Arsenal on the top,
Stick Hammers in the middle,
And burn the fucking lot!

We are Tottenham
We are Tottenham,
We are Tottenham,
Super Tottenham,
From the Lane,
We are Tottenham,
Super Tottenham,
We are Tottenham,
From the Lane...

From the Lane, Don't change the name
We are Tottenham
Super Tottenham
Super Tottenham
From the Lane

And we get our new stadium
Please don't go and
Change the name

This is our home
Always has been
We all live at
White Heart Lane
So when get our
New stadium
Please don't go and
Change the name

We are Tottenham
Super Tottenham
Super Tottenham
From the Lane
It's where we come from
It's where we be-long
So please don't go and
Change the name

Park Lane vs. Shelf Side
We're the Park Lane,
We're the Park Lane,
We're the Park Lane Tottenham

We're the Shelf Side,
We're the Shelf Side,
We're the Shelf Side Tottenham

Yiddo!
Yiddo!
Yiddo!
Yiddo!
Yiddo!
Yiddo!
Yiddo!

Yid Army
Yid Army,
Yid Army,
Yid Army!

8.3 Chants of Millwall Football Club

You can shove your bubbles up your arse
Up your arse,
Up your arse,
You can shove your bubbles up your arse,
From the Den to Upton Park,
Shove your bubbles up your arse...

Poor little Hammer
There once was a poor little hammer,
Who's face was all battered and torn,
He made me feel sick,
So I hit him with a brick,
And the hammer wasn't singing any more...

Oh South London
Oh South London,
Oh South London,
It's wonderful
It's wonderful
Oh South London is wonderful its full of tits fanny and Millwall,
Oh South London is wonderful...

We are Millwall
We are Millwall
We are Millwall
We are Millwall. From the Den
We are Millwall, super Millwall
We are Millwall, from the Den
No one likes us, no one likes us,
No one likes us, we don't care
We are Millwall, super Millwall
We are Millwall, from the Den