

Football Chants in Israel: Persistent Values and Changing Trends

Authors : Ilan Tamir

Abstract : Fans' chants in sports stadium have, over the years, become an integral part of the spectator experience. While chants add color, atmosphere, and a demonstration of fans' support for their team, chants also play a significant role in defining fans' perceptions of their team's identity and its differentiation from other teams. An analysis of football chants may therefore shed light on fans' deep-seated worldviews of their own role, their team, the sport in general, and even life itself. This study, based on an analysis of Israeli football chants over years, identifies key changing and stable perceptions of football fans. Overall 94 chants collected, over a period of five decades. After a pilot study, the chants organized in two groups (one covering 1970-1999 and the other 2000-2016). The chants analyzed through qualitative content analysis in order to understand fans values as a reflection of the society. Findings point to several values that have remained stable over years, including fans' attitudes toward their team and its rivals, and their attitude toward God. On the other hand, recently emerging phenomena such as radicalization of hatred toward the commercialization of sport reflect social and cultural changes, both in and outside the world of sport.

Keywords : sport, fans, chants, soccer

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