

UEFA EURO 2012™ in the Polish Sociopolitical Narration

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ABSTRACT

Sport constitutes an increasingly popular language of discourse in modern societies, providing a (formal) system of signs, which is easily used by, among others, businesses, media, public persons, and, particularly willingly, politicians. Thus, sport as a system of meanings can transfer any values, being at the same time a pragmatic way of arguing in the practice of social life. An example we analyze, are the events that took place after Poland (and Ukraine) had been chosen to be host countries of UEFA EURO 2012™, as well as those which took place during the tournament itself. In these analyses, we use the concept of semiotics and, in particular, pragmatism as well as Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic sign relation.

KEYWORDS

UEFA EURO 2012, sport, values, semiotics, Peirce

Introduction

In free and democratic Poland, member of the European Union since 2004, a tournament of the size and importance of the European Championship was organized for the first time in 2012. In April 2007, UEFA¹ chose Poland and Ukraine (non-EU member) as host countries of UEFA EURO 2012™. This measurably influenced a whole body of political, economic, and social processes that took place within the country. After five years of preparation, the tournament took place in June 2012 in sports facilities the majority of which were built or renovated especially for this purpose; and the final match was played in the stadium in Kiev, Ukraine, on 1 July 2012. The processes that were initiated in 2007 by giving Poland and Ukraine the right to organize the European Championship, will be felt in the social and economic lives of the host countries long after June 2012.

However, the question could be asked: why does a football tournament whose main beneficiary is the international sports organization UEFA/FIFA² cause such nationally important results, which in the times of global crisis, among others, spends significant sums of money from the Polish national budget³?

¹Union of European Football Associations. Retrieved from <http://www.uefa.com>.

²Fédération Internationale de Football Association. Retrieved from <http://www.fifa.com>.

³For instance, the National Stadium in Warsaw was built from scratch, dedicated especially for the European Championship. It cost, according to the Polish minister of sport and tourism, Joanna Mucha, 1.752 billion zloty,

It is known that football is an especially valued sport in Europe, although it is not a sport grounded in the tradition of ancient or modern Olympism. Is its popularity the result of features immanent to football, such as its being an exceptionally spectacular sport, or autotelic values present in this sport, or else instrumental values connected with it, e.g., ethical and moral ones⁴? In our opinion, the example of Poland confirms the thesis that the social interest in football, evidenced by investment and initiatives⁵, does not result from the sport successes of the national team or achievements of Polish club teams in international league championships. Hence, the shameful defeat of the Poland national team during UEFA EURO 2012™ (last place in elimination group A and no matches won) did not really surprise anyone and was just another one in a series of defeats, as the Polish national team has not left its own elimination group in any significant European or world tournament since 1986 (Mexico World Cup)⁶. In such a situation, why did Polish society, aware of the sporting abilities of their national football team, spend more than a billion dollars on the construction of sporting facilities for the tournament, the income from which has not gone to the national budget, while the national team did not even realize the basic plan of leaving its elimination group?

We believe that the reasons for such engagement of Polish society into the organization of UEFA EURO 2012™ tournament are rooted first of all not in sport values, but in the narration falling outside sport, created, among others, by the government, sporting organizations, cultural institutions, and producers of consumer goods. According to this narration, it is football that is the dominant sport in Europe. Hence, politicians, artists, and managers willingly and easily use the meanings associated with football in order to achieve a pragmatic effect, usually quite unconnected with sport. Thus, Polish politicians used symbols connected with UEFA EURO 2012™ to build their popularity with the promise of the development of the country and the improvement in standard of living of society. Thus, the main economic argument for the importance of organizing this tournament was the modernization of the transport infrastructure of the country. Several hundred motorways and other expressways were constructed or renovated. New flight terminals were built in the cities where tournament matches were to take place; railway stations in these cities were built or renovated. In the socio-cultural sphere, the goal was to “captivate” Europeans with Polish hospitality, architecture, art, and nature, and as a consequence, increase the number of tourists visiting Poland in the future. Thus, in the image-related sphere, the tournament was presented as a great chance for Poland, a chance that was allegedly well used, although we do not yet have measurable proof, such as an increase in tourism or in foreign direct investments. In a similar, as far as image is concerned, way, UEFA EURO 2012™ was usually evaluated in the narrations of representatives of the government, which essentially justified the decisions taken by them (including changes in the law that raised certain doubts)⁷,

approximately 566 million USD. During the championship, five matches were played at the National Stadium. In addition, the stadiums in Wrocław (around 857 million zloty, i.e., 265 million USD, three matches played) and Gdańsk (775 million zloty, i.e., 240 million USD, four matches played) were built especially for the European Championship. The quoted sums are approximated, although the differences in the available sources are not bigger than several percent of the given sums. This means that the construction of the stadiums alone cost Polish taxpayers more than 1 billion USD. The costs presented here do not include the thorough modernization of the stadium in Poznań.

⁴Central values are those which constitute the main focal point for the interests and actions of an individual or a population, and which have an influence on their full functioning. Autotelic values in turn are those which are an aim in themselves and not a means to achieving an aim. This means that peripheral values are those which have small influence on the full functioning of an individual or population, and instrumental values are those which are used as a tool in achieving a set goal (Pezdek, 2011, p. 285).

⁵In Poland, among others, a governmental project of the popularization of football among children and young people, conducted by the Ministry of Sport and Tourism, is underway. It is called “My Football Pitch - Little Eagle 2012” (“Moje Boisko - Orlik 2012”). Retrieved November 14, 2012, from <http://orlik2012.pl/dev.php>. It is worth noticing that football in Europe is not considered a brutal sport, but rather the opposite of a brutal sport.

⁶In the years 1960-2004, Poland did not even qualify once for the European Championship; in 2008 it did not leave the group; in 2012 it qualified as one of the host countries, without taking part in the elimination matches. Regarding the World Cup, Poland has taken part in it seven times since 1938, occupying third position twice (1974 West Germany, 1982 Spain).

⁷In January 1, 2012, Poland amended the so-called special law (Polish: *specustawa*) concerning mass events (*Journal of Laws of 2009, 62/504*). Significant are the amendments dated August 31, 2011 (*Journal of Laws of 2011, 217/1280, 2011.11.12*), containing the following provision: “Art. 8a. 1. During a mass event, with the exception of a mass event of an increased risk, it is allowed to sell, serve and consume alcoholic drinks containing no more than 3.5% of alcohol.

and which increased the burden on the taxpayers, e.g., the agreement to grant additional financial means for safeguarding sports facilities and additional hours of the work of the police. Consequently, UEFA EURO 2012™ from the moment Poland and Ukraine were chosen as host countries (2007), was more a narration realized by the government in the public discourse with society than a purely competitive sporting event.

If we agree with the thesis above, it becomes necessary to admit that sporting events of this type are significant, as they serve as signs of something other than themselves. Semiotics has already been used as a tool of analysis of the phenomenon of sport in the social and cultural context⁸, but it has not been done in the way we propose⁹. Consequently, it is desirable to conduct an analysis of the processes leading to the state of things delineated by us, using for this purpose the semiotic methodology founded in C.S. Peirce's propositions, and especially in his triadic sign relation connected with pragmatism.

Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic method¹⁰

According to Peirce's semiotics, a sign is a relation of three correlates: a sign (representamen, Firstness), the subject of a sign - i.e., an object (Secondness), and an interpretant (Thirdness). Let us stress that a triadic sign relation does not reify a sign as an existing entity in the perceptible world - an interpretant might be imaginary, or *in futuro* (CP 2.92)¹¹. Thus, everything can be a sign or be interpreted as being in a sign relation.

"A Sign, or Representamen, is a First which stands in such a genuine triadic relation to a Second, called its Object, as to be capable of determining a Third, called its Interpretant, to assume the same triadic relation to its Object in which it stands itself to the same Object. The triadic relation is genuine, that is its three members are bound together by it in a way that does not consist in any complexus of dyadic relations. That is the reason the Interpretant, or Third, cannot stand in a mere dyadic relation to the Object, but must stand in such a relation to it as the Representamen itself does. Nor can the triadic relation in which the Third stands be merely similar to that in which the First stands, for this would make the relation of the Third to the First a degenerate Secondness merely. The Third must indeed stand in such a relation, and thus must be capable of determining a Third of its own; but besides that, it must have a second triadic relation in which the Representamen, or rather the relation thereof to its Object, shall be its own (the Third's) Object, and must be capable of determining a Third to this relation. All this must equally be true of the Third's Thirds and so on endlessly; and this, and more, is involved in the familiar idea of a Sign; and as the term Representamen is here used, nothing more is implied. A Sign is a Representamen with a mental Interpretant. Possibly there may be Representamens that are not Signs. Thus, if a sunflower, in turning towards the sun, becomes by that very act fully capable, without further condition, of reproducing a sunflower which turns in precisely corresponding ways toward the sun, and of doing so with the same reproductive power, the sunflower would become a Representamen of the sun. But thought is the chief, if not the only, mode of representation" (CP 2.274).

(...) 3. The selling and serving of alcoholic drinks can be conducted only by an entity licensed to do that (...) [source: <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20090620504> - accessed November 14, 2012, the official website of Polish Parliament]. The regulations above have ensured interests of so-called sponsors and beneficiaries of the European Championship tournament, among which were producers of alcoholic drinks, functioning officially as so called "brand owners".

⁸For example, compare Friedrich "Semiotics of Sport: A Symposium Held at Universitat-Marburg Germany November 5-7 1992", Friedrich & Hildenbrandt "Sport als Kultursegment aus der Sicht der Semiotik [Sports as a cultural segment from the viewpoint of semiotics]", Hietzge "Sport als Gegenstand der Semiotik [Sports as subject of semiotics]". (Krawczyk, 2005, pp. 92-98).

⁹In 1997 an issue of *Zeitschrift für Semiotik* 19(4) was published which was dedicated to sport. Only in one article by Dürr and Lenk "Diskussion: Funktionalität und Flexibilität der Zeichen: Zur Schematisierung von Bewegungen im Sport", however, was the concept of the multilevel interpretation of sign as proposed by Peirce used, and it was in the analysis of interaction between a competitor and a coach as a process of generating subsequent signs and their interpretants.

¹⁰For methodology based in C.S. Peirce's semiotics and its application in the sphere of sport, see Michaluk, "Basic research categories in the sem(e)iotics of sport", *Semiotyczne i pragmatyczne zagadnienia teorii sportu*.

¹¹CP is an acronym for *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*..., the most popular edition of fragments of this author's writings.

There are no entities that are “natural” signs *per se*, as the carrier of a sign is not simultaneously its own interpretant. “Of course, nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign” (CP 2.308). The process of constituting signs is called *semiosis*. Interpretation, or actual creation of a sign as a triadic relation, is a process made by an interpreter, i.e., a mind using signs.

“But a sign is not a sign unless it translates itself into another sign in which it is more fully developed. Thought requires achievement for its own development, and without this development it is nothing. Thought must live and grow in incessant new and higher translations, or it proves itself not to be genuine thought” (CP 5.594).

Firstness of a sign relation is a sign or a *representamen*¹²,

*“As it is in itself, a sign is either of the nature of an appearance, when I call it a **qualisign**; or secondly, it is an individual object or event, when I call it a **sinsign** (...); or thirdly, it is of the nature of a general type, when I call it a **legisign**”* (CP 8.334).

As an effect, *legisignum* is embodied by so-called *replicas* that are individual specimens of a sign, or *sinsignum* signs.

Secondness, or the object of a sign, can be any entity, including an element of extra-sign (empirical) reality, and is then a *dynamic object*, or an *object in itself*. This type of object exists autonomously with no regard to any knowledge about it expressed in signs. The knowledge of the existence of a dynamic object results from the existence of the sign that refers to it - it is also an assumption of the existence of extra-sign reality, which is a generator of certain classes of signs. The dynamic object is available to cognition only through a *direct object*. It determines signs and is not subject to shaping by signs relating to it. A *direct object*, on the other hand, is an *object as it is represented* and is entirely dependent on the dynamic object. A dynamic object is not entirely and finally represented in every respect by a sign or signs. Therefore, there is an indefinite number of signs, which can have the same dynamic (real) object, as there are not a finite number of signs fully representing their dynamic object. In a methodological sense, this means that each possible representation of extra-sign reality can be infinitely developed through further signs relating to it. This gives a clear basis for creating the category of *semiotic chains*, which, while having the same object, develop parallel and independent interpretations.

Thirdness, or an interpretant, is another sign, and the whole process of semiosis attempts to establish increasingly more general interpretants binding a sign (*representamen*) to its object, which results in the constitution of a triadic relation. The possibility of interpretation is a necessary condition of an object being a sign. An interpretant is in a similar relationship to the Second as the First, and by this reason can become the First of a different triadic relation for the same Second. An important differentiation made by Peirce in the context of the person of an interpreter or a real semiosis is the distinction between *immediate interpretant*, *dynamic interpretant* and *final interpretant*¹³. It is interesting that, in the broad understanding of the notion of a sign, an interpretation appearing at a given moment, or, more precisely, an interpretant, does not have to be another sign. An interpretation can be made on the level of action, experience or emotion. It does not mean, however, that a sign (*representamen*) that evoked a basically random effect on an interpreter, was called because of this effect an authentic sign (a triadic relation was made with a logically necessary interpretant). The name of an authentic sign refers only to the objects that constitute it and are in a triadic relation with it.

Peirce's semiotic propositions are located in the field of logic (theory of relations) and scientific methodology, whereas de Saussure's semiological propositions are found in linguistics and psychology. Characteristic for semiotics is the assumption that a sign is a *triadic relation*, which means that nothing is a sign unless it enters into a relation with its *interpretant*, i.e., until it is interpreted as a sign. Each of the elements of a sign can be a self-standing sign in itself, demanding further interpretation. The process

¹²Depending on the context, Peirce used the name “sign” for the whole triadic relation or for its first element.

¹³For a more precise elucidation on the types of interpretants, see Peirce, 1977, pp. 109-111.

of interpretation is continuous, as an *interpretant* of a given sign is also a sign, or another triadic relation that can undergo further interpretation. This type of relational construction of a sign ensures interpretative continuity (synechism), which is clearly shown in the rational thinking processes where, for example, terms (signs) are defined (developed through other signs) and their definitions undergo further clarification or are changed under the influence of new facts that are *represented* by subsequent signs. A sign relation is divided triadically, which as a consequence leads to the generation of a series of formal classes of signs. A basic differentiation divides signs into icons, indexes, and symbols, i.e., signs, the interpretation of which is based on the similarity of a sign to its object, an existential bond with it, or a quasi-necessary relation created through reasoning (interpretation). For the philosophy and semiotics of sport it is significant that Peirce allows not only conceptual or intellectual interpretation, but also emotional and energetic interpretation¹⁴, which is primary and in this sense necessary before a further interpretative process can take place. This means that all reactions, such as commotion, joy, clapping, and cheering are in the semiotic sense an interpretation of a given sporting event.

Adopting a semiotic research perspective in the sphere of philosophical reflection on sport enables the preservation of interpretative continuity, from interpretants in the form of emotional and energetic reaction, to interpretants as intellectual notions represented by professional comments and analyses, as well as the speeches of fans, politicians, clergymen, etc. The pleasure and entertainment provided by sport, which appear whilst taking part in or watching a sports competitions, do not exhaust the sense and meaning of modern sport, which means that depriving a sports event of its cultural context may prevent its deeper interpretation.

Sport as a carrier of meanings and values from outside sport

Taking into account the methodological considerations above, we are convinced that the interpretation of sport does not have to and does not usually follow the rules of logical reasoning, thanks to which sport can represent any values, or undergo interpretation by the observers of various levels of competence. It is the extraordinary power of sport, which makes it one of the most significant constituents of modern culture. However, does always using the language of sport result from the fascination with sport; is it at all necessary to be familiar with players, teams, system of matches, and even the rules of the games themselves? Has the discussion conducted in Poland since 2007 about UEFA EURO 2012™ been focused on sport, on football? The answer may seem surprising as - in our opinion - it is “no”.

Sport in sign processes, in the stages of intellectual interpretation, may become semiotically cut off from its subject, which is the material side of a given sporting event, i.e., the real course of the competition/agon. The signs appearing as a direct effect of the observation of a sporting event have the elements of the competition itself as First and Second, and the first generation of Thirds (interpretants) are energetic and emotional reactions, namely gestures, exclamations, cheering, etc. Subsequent interpretations bind into a meaningful relation a competitor or a team with the achieved result, points, a victory, and events from the course of the game. Victory in turn may become First of signs, the subject (Second) of which is the nationality of the player, a record-setting result or, for instance, any value whatsoever. From the moment of closure of the competition, sign relations are also intensively created by interpreters, who did not have to see even fragments of the competition itself or do not have any idea about the rules of a given sport. They operate on already constituted signs, developing existing or creating new interpretations. In this sense we can speak, for example, of the victory or the defeat of a competitor or a team in the context (interpretation) of means invested in the training of the sportsmen or look for the source of the defeat in the general quality of governance in a given country. Up to now, sport victories can be a sign of the good condition of the political and economic system, and in Poland in 2012, the efficient organization and conducting of UEFA EURO 2012™ is interpreted as a clear sign of the success of the government in the difficult years of economic crisis, which has lasted in Europe since 2008.

¹⁴Peirce, *The Essential Peirce*, 2, pp. 421-433.

There is also a process opposite to the described above and concerning sports events that are yet to take place. The signs pertaining to them have as their subject (Second) any entities or previously constituted signs, as the event has not really existed so far; thanks to this, binding UEFA EURO 2012™ into sign relation was only limited by the imagination of the interpreters creating signs. Consequently, constructing highways and other expressways was interpreted in Poland as a necessity and at the same time a benefit of organizing the tournament, as otherwise there would be no necessity to use the taxpayers' money or, even worse, putting the state into debt in a situation where there are equally important demands on the budget, such as, for example, rescuing the public health system. Sign relations bound highways (First) with the tournament (Second) as an organizational demand (Third). As a consequence, endowing UEFA EURO 2012™ with extra importance and a whole range of meanings caused signs (First) created by it to become a carrier of discourse between politicians and Polish society, concerning matters essential for its present and future functioning. Unfortunately, the construction of the network of highways and other expressways which were supposed to connect four the Polish host cities of UEFA EURO 2012™ and the rest of Europe, was only partially realized, leading to the bankruptcy of around 85 Polish construction companies in the first four months of 2012¹⁵.

We think that sign processes using sport are also very clear in the sphere of commercials. Only a few licensed companies (so called official sponsors) can bind into sign relations their brand and the championship organized by UEFA/ FIFA, e.g., through the relation: the logo of a UEFA/ FIFA championship - a product - fantastically spent time/ success. In this type of signs, First and Second is a given product or a tournament, and Third, or an interpretant, depends on the creativity of the producers of a commercial; fairly popular are interpretations referring to patriotism (pride), national colors, meetings with friends, and the personal and professional success of an individual. On the basis of these sign relations, various goods, starting from beer through clothes of different types, up to various banks products, are distributed. Let us, however, focus our attention on a curious semiotic phenomenon, well used by some commercial companies. Namely, under the influence of the commercials referring to UEFA EURO 2012™ broadcast persistently for months on Polish television, signs using representamens (First) from the sphere of football (balls, goals, stadiums, players, cheering audience, etc.) changed their customary interpretation in relation to the subject of the sign (Second), becoming the signs of UEFA EURO 2012™ (Third), instead of their traditional interpretation as signs of football. Consequently, just before the start of the tournament, commercials were broadcast which used signs connected with football symbols in the commercials of brands and products, which cannot be bound into relation with football for any other reason than the above described situation of interpreting everything from the sphere of football as connected with the concrete European Championship tournament. An example are commercials of the leading Polish petrol company Orlen™ or producer of drinks Tymbark™, which did not have a right to use the name of the tournament or official symbols of UEFA. In the time directly preceding the tournament, commercials of these products made use of semiotic transfer in the social awareness of Poles: the change in the subject of sign (Second) from football alone to UEFA EURO 2012™¹⁶. The process presented here makes it clear to what degree the European Championship has become a symbol of all positive values and actions, Polish society being the beneficiary of it, together with future generations.

¹⁵Apart from small and medium-sized Polish companies, financial problems (bankruptcies) also hit the big ones, among others DSS (<http://www.dss.pl/pl/>), PBG (<http://www.pbg-sa.pl/>), Hydrobudowa (<http://www.hydrobudowa.com.pl/>), which were engaged in the construction of the National Stadium in Warsaw.

¹⁶On the official website of Orlen™ (<http://www.orklen.pl/PL/CENTRUMPRASOWE/REKLAMYTV/Strony/default.aspx> - accessed November 14, 2012) a commercial spot "Catch the ball!" dated April 25, 2012 is available. In the context of spots broadcast by other companies (in commercial blocks) in the first half of 2012 and referring directly to the UEFA EURO 2012™, the spot of Orlen™ gained tournament interpretation. Tymbark™ presented the commercial spot of the campaign "From the yard to the stadium for the Cup of Tymbark" on March 20, 2012 (http://tymbark.com/aktualnosc,53,tymbark_oddaje_pilkarские_emocje.html - accessed November 14, 2012). Its message is connected with football (effort, joy, emotions, victory, cup) and is strengthened by using children in the role of future champions.

The meaning of UEFA EURO 2012 and the discourse between power and society

Ultimately, the commercial influence of the tournament has a significantly smaller social meaning than its political consequences, which make you fully realize the meaning of discourse based on the language of sport. Namely, the Independent Self-governing Trade Union "Solidarity" (Polish: Solidarność; <http://www.solidarnosc.org.pl/>), associated, through its first president Lech Wałęsa, with overthrowing the communistic system in Poland, directly before the tournament, intensified widespread protests against the raising of the retirement age to 67 years and making it equal for men and women, which had been pushed by the government (see <http://www.stop67.pl/>). As a consequence of the rising conflict, on May 11, 2012 the trade union members surrounded the houses of parliament and did not let the MPs that were inside out. This was a direct reaction against a decision of Ewa Kopacz, the Speaker of Sejm (lower house of the Polish Parliament), who denied the delegation of union members entrance into the gallery in the meeting room. After a few hours, the protest peacefully concluded, and in August 2012 prosecutors dropped the investigation in this matter. However, the Polish government was extremely worried at the time about the possibility of protests during the UEFA EURO 2012™, for example blocking access to the stadiums. There were then appeals to union members not to sabotage the actions of the entire society, for whom the championship was the crowning achievement of many years of investment and organizational effort. The president of Solidarity, Piotr Duda, in an interview for the newspaper *dziennik.pl*, published on May 22, 2012, perceived the meaning of this tournament in such a way:

"Are you happy that Poland is one of the host countries of Euro 2012?"

Piotr Duda: Definitely yes. Like each Pole, I will support the Poland team, crossing my fingers for their success.

Why then does Solidarity want to spoil the festival for the Poles with protests and blockades?

Piotr Duda: A question thus formulated has to have two recipients - not only the President of Solidarity, but also the Prime Minister, Donald Tusk. Why does the government want to spoil the EURO for Poles, striving at all costs to have the retirement regulations signed by the Polish president before the tournament?

It is a source of great conflict and a premeditated action. They want an unpopular law accepted before the Euro championship and they want to shift the blame on the trade union - to put the union under public criticism so that it does not protest during the tournament. Then there will be a holiday and it will go fast, and before we realize, the law will be already adopted.

Hence, the question whether there will be any protests during the European Championship should be asked to both parts, not only Solidarity, which has shown a lot of good will, consistently collecting since December signatures for a referendum initiative. The rejection of this initiative put us down. The stance of the government today is only for the sake of an image, nothing else. But Solidarity will not stop its activities for the time of the European Championship unless the government delegitimizes it"¹⁷.

Referring to our analyzed examples of meanings of narrations connected with UEFA EURO 2012™, we can undoubtedly admit that they exceeded (and still exceed) the sphere of sport values, adopting meanings of, among others, political, economic, and social values. Consequently, the tournament can often be used as an instrument for dealing with matters far from sport, for example, the introduction of controversial retirement regulations, increasing the sale of goods with the logo of the tournament, etc. Thus, we claim that sporting events as important as the European Championship influence the shaping of moods of societies in European countries in many spheres of their functioning. Nevertheless, we think that these moods are decreasingly shaped by the narration directed at sport values and increasingly by the narrations unconnected with sport.

¹⁷Błoński, "Szef 'Solidarności' o psuciu Polakom frajdy z Euro" /"The chairman of 'Solidarity' trade union on spoiling the fun from EURO for the Poles"/.

Conclusion

Organizing the European Championship tournament in Poland and in Ukraine gave the authorities additional tools to pursue their policy goals. In accordance with C.S. Peirce's semiotic propositions, such action construes appropriate sign relation binding values, with which the majority of citizens identifies, with the activities undertaken by the government through the interpretation of historic necessity. Clothing unpopular decisions in meanings relating to sport raises the efficiency of the narration of the authorities in comparison to communicating their plans openly to society.

To a lesser degree, however, the meanings of the UEFA EURO 2012™ influenced the economic, social, and cultural sphere. Although the investment that was made, especially in the area of transport infrastructure, will serve the Poles and Ukrainians for a long time, the debts of the countries will also be paid for a long time. The promotion of the countries during the UEFA EURO 2012™, in turn, should be supported with the actions aimed at increasing tourist traffic, e.g., renovating the monuments, enhancing the hospitality sector potential so that tourists visiting Poland and Ukraine will not only concentrate on the meanings connected with the football tournament, but can also admire the nature, culture, and hospitality of the nations who undertook this enormous organizational effort. In this way, new meanings can be formed, which will allow Poland and Ukraine to be seen from entirely different points of view, not only as host countries of UEFA EURO 2012™.

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