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# “I’m a Greek Kiwi”: Constructing *Greekness* in Discourse

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## Abstract

The article reports on the preliminary findings of a project on the constructions of Greekness in modern diasporas. The discussion draws on data from the self-identified Greek community of Wellington, New Zealand. Interview data, ethnographic diaries, and everyday real-life spoken interactions were collected. The analysis of the data shows that the interactants move away from a “teleology of return” (Clifford, 1997) and reconceptualise the host/minority dimension, highlighting the dynamics and complexities of Greek identity. Special attention is paid in the analysis to the role of institutions, particularly the Greek Orthodox community, in constructing a Greek identity in this context. The standpoint taken considers identity not to be a stable, predefined entity but an ongoing dynamic process that is constantly negotiated and co-constructed between the interactants (De Fina, Schiffrin, & Bamberg, 2006). Identity is not something interactants are or have but rather something they actively do in discourse. The article closes by arguing that diasporas are not static “definable” communities, but dynamic systems shaping and being shaped in the discourse of

their self-affiliated members.

Keywords: [Greek diaspora](#) [New Zealand](#) [Greekness](#) [homeland](#) [identity](#)



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