



**VICTORIA UNIVERSITY**  
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

*Diaspora as aesthetic formation: community sports events and the making of a Somali diaspora*

This is the Published version of the following publication

Spaaij, Ramon and Broerse, Jora (2018) Diaspora as aesthetic formation: community sports events and the making of a Somali diaspora. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. ISSN 1369-183X

The publisher's official version can be found at  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1427052>  
Note that access to this version may require subscription.

Downloaded from VU Research Repository <https://vuir.vu.edu.au/37427/>



# Diaspora as aesthetic formation: community sports events and the making of a Somali diaspora

Ramón Spaaij & Jora Broerse

To cite this article: Ramón Spaaij & Jora Broerse (2018): Diaspora as aesthetic formation: community sports events and the making of a Somali diaspora, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, DOI: [10.1080/1369183X.2018.1427052](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1427052)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1427052>



© 2018 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 19 Jan 2018.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 484




View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Citing articles: 1 View citing articles [↗](#)

# Diaspora as aesthetic formation: community sports events and the making of a Somali diaspora

Ramón Spaaij <sup>a,b</sup> and Jora Broerse<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Institute of Sport, Exercise and Active Living, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia; <sup>b</sup>Department of Sociology, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands

## ABSTRACT

This paper uses the concept of aesthetic formation to examine the practices through which diasporic imaginations become tangible and experienced as 'real'. The authors interpret sport as an embodied aesthetic practice through which diasporas materialise, with important implications for identification and belonging. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork on a transnational community-based sports event, the Amsterdam Futsal Tournament, the paper discusses how articulations of Somali diasporism become tangible and embodied in subjects who participate in this event. The authors conclude that these materialisation practices can simultaneously elicit multiple forms and levels of belonging that also foster a sense of integration and belonging to the nation.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 26 September 2017

Accepted 8 January 2018

## KEYWORDS

Diaspora; aesthetic formation; sport; forced migration; Somali

## Introduction

Contemporary policy and academic debates draw attention to immigrants' negotiation of identity, belonging and integration in relation to the receiving community. This process is shaped by an interplay between the aspirations and resources of migrants on the one hand, and structural forces, social norms and normative discourses on the other hand (Bhatia and Ram 2009; Strang and Ager 2010). Diasporic analyses suggest important trajectories of social identity construction and resource mobilisation beyond, or parallel to, the mould of narrowly defined national identities. The focus of such analyses on transnational relationships and practices presents possibilities for 'unfixing' identities, particularly nation-derived ones (Vertovec 2001), and potentially creates space for more hybrid and fluid forms of identity and belonging (Hall 1990; Werbner 2004).

These debates are closely reflected in contemporary research on Somali refugees and diaspora (Kusow and Bjork 2007; Kleist 2008; Roble and Rutledge 2008; Hammond 2013). Between 1990 and 2015, the total number of people born in Somalia but living outside the country more than doubled, from about 850,000 to two million (Connor and Krogstad 2016). An estimated 1.5 million people are internally displaced in Somalia and nearly 900,000 are refugees in the near region, including in Kenya, Yemen

**CONTACT** Ramón Spaaij  [ramon.spaij@vu.edu.au](mailto:ramon.spaij@vu.edu.au)

© 2018 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

and Ethiopia (UNHCR 2017). The European Union, Norway and Switzerland are home to 14% of the world's Somali migrant population, the United States is home to about 7% of the world's Somali migrant population (Connor and Krogstad 2016). Many Somalis in the West describe themselves as a diaspora in relation to affective ties, identity, political mobilisation and activism (van Liempt 2011a; Hammond 2013). This is revealed in their claims and expectations regarding diaspora as a community of potential resources and solidarity (Kleist 2008). For example, the Global Somali Diaspora (2016), a non-profit organisation that aims to promote and connect Somali diaspora communities globally, argues that 'the contribution and support of the Somali Diaspora is vital to the Somali society and they are active in different sectors including education, healthcare and politics'.

The reference to diaspora is not without its problems. Diasporas are not static or monolithic, but dynamic, changing and ongoing constructions. Brubaker (2005) invites us to think of diaspora not as a bounded entity, but rather as an idiom, stance and claim. As a category of practice, diaspora is 'used to make claims, to articulate projects, to formulate expectations, to mobilize energies, to appeal to loyalties. ... It does not so much *describe* the world as seek to *remake* it' (Brubaker 2005, 12; original emphasis). In a similar vein, Baumann posits that diasporic identities can be understood as acts of identification that are 'frozen in time ... not an identity given by nature, but an identification created through social action' (1999, 21).

In this paper, we adopt this theoretical perspective to focus on the performative processes from which diasporas are created and reproduced. At stake here are the embodied practices through which diasporic imaginations become tangible, which we will explore through the concept of 'aesthetic formation' (Meyer 2009a, 2009b). We will analyse such aesthetic formation within the context of a transnational community-based sports event: the Amsterdam Futsal Tournament (AFT) held in the Netherlands. This event was established in 2005 with the explicit purpose of building and connecting the Somali diaspora across Europe. The research question we seek to address is how 'articulations of diasporism' (Clifford 1994, 302), such as the vision articulated by the Global Somali Diaspora (2016), become tangible in community sports spaces like AFT and embodied in subjects who participate in these spaces. We thus interpret sport as an embodied aesthetic practice through which diasporas materialise, with important implications for diasporic identity and belonging (Werbner 1996; Burdsey 2006, 2008; Joseph 2011; Spaaij 2012, 2015).

This paper is structured as follows. The next section outlines the concept of aesthetic formation and discusses its applicability in diaspora studies. This is followed by an overview of the research methods used to address the research question. We then present our main findings by focusing on three dimensions of aesthetic formation: the AFT as a diasporic meeting place; tangible expressions of diaspora; and diasporic binding and belonging.

### *Diasporic practices, aesthetic formation and sport*

A diaspora approach draws analytical attention to socio-cultural formations and performances that generate a collective consciousness which binds dispersed people to a homeland and to each other (Butler 2001). In Clifford's (1997, 255) classic definition, diasporas are composed of 'displaced peoples who feel (maintain, revive, invent) a connection with a prior home'. Diasporas are thus viewed as people who are physically dispersed across

the globe, yet are linked by ‘important allegiances and practical connections’ to a common homeland’ (Clifford 1994, 307). As Clifford’s reference to the active verbs ‘maintain, revive, invent’ suggests, diaspora formation involves agency and action in terms of, *inter alia*, the provision of transnational care and support, the maintenance of culture and language (Ben-Moshe, Pyke, and Kirpitchenko 2016), and the production of a shared sense of identity through transnational connections to other places (Vertovec 2001; Joseph 2014).

Diasporas are best understood as a category of practice (Brubaker 2005). Diaspora formation often involves strategies of cultural identity and resistance, and new solidarities and exclusions. Any simple diaspora/host binary is likely to be flawed. As Hall (1990, 235) points out, the diaspora experience is not defined by essence or purity, but by the ‘recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of “identity” which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*’ (emphasis in original). The relationship with a homeland and ‘hostland’ may take diverse forms simultaneously (Butler 2001).

Cultural forms such as sport, music and literature are critical aspects of diaspora formation (Werbner 1996; Burdsey 2006, 2008; Joseph 2011; Burdsey, Thangaraj, and Dudrah 2013). Joseph (2011) shows how sports spaces can act as sites for the maintenance of both a homeland (e.g. nation of origin) and a homespace (e.g. diasporic belonging) that unites dispersed people. Specifically, she frames the Caribbean sporting diaspora, and especially Caribbean cricket tourism, as a transnational leisure practice that is comprised of potent ‘diasporic resources’ (Nassy Brown 1998), that is, ‘symbols, materials, events, and ideas that represent cultural heritage and connect migrants simultaneously to their broadly defined homeland or nation of origin and to their racial and ethnic group within and outside their host nation’ (Joseph 2011, 147). In a similar vein, Werbner (1996, 93) has argued that British Pakistani immigrants create transnational cultural or ‘fun’ spaces, such as sport, ‘in which particular symbolic discourses and practices are created, negotiated, and elaborated’ which do not neatly align or coincide with the nation state. Joseph’s (2014) notion of homespace similarly refers to situations that have the capacity to produce diasporic identities. Her emphasis is on the creation of a sense of home and belonging in a transnational context and stresses the ‘homing desire’ of diasporic populations (Joseph 2014, 678).

Brubaker’s (2005) conception of diaspora as a category of practice and Joseph’s (2011) focus on diasporic resources resonate with the concept of aesthetic formation (Meyer 2009a, 2009b), which similarly focuses on the making of communities as a dynamic and performative process. This concept, coined by Meyer with reference to religious environments, stresses the processes of forming through embodied aesthetic forms such as architecture, artwork, ritual performance and bodily sensations. Building on and critiquing Anderson’s (1991) notion of imagined communities, Meyer (2009a, 5) explains that ‘in order to become experienced as real, imagined communities are required to become tangible outside the realm of the mind’; that is, they need to materialise in concrete spaces and objects. Imagined belonging needs to ‘be felt in the bones’, through visceral experiences of all five senses. This embodied understanding of aesthetics recognises the affective power of images, sounds, tastes, smells and texts over their beholders (Meyer 2009a).

The concept of aesthetic formation has direct applicability to community-based sports practices. As an embodied, sensory aesthetic experience, sports practices are ‘eminently successful in providing high points of ritual experience’ (Collins 2004, 59) which facilitate a way of (re-)creating or strengthening social and emotional bonds and a sense of belonging (Spaaij 2015). These bonds are based on a shared interest in sport and especially football. This shared interest has a history in the Somali context, where some participants used to play football on the streets, at school or subsequently in refugee camps. We view AFT as a diasporic homespace and explore materialisation practices that fashion diasporic identity and belonging. Whereas diasporic imagined communities are mostly mental constructs, detached from physical practices, AFT creates a physical space where European Somalis can establish social and emotional bonds through their sensory experience of playing futsal (i.e. indoor, five-a-side football) and attendant diasporic embodied practices. Through this process, the Somali diaspora becomes ‘real’ and ‘felt in the bones’, which simultaneously strengthens the ‘imagined’ collective and personal diasporic identity and belonging. In the next section, we discuss the research context and the methods used to elicit these issues.

### *Diaspora formation in context: Somalis in the Netherlands*

The AFT is a transnational leisure event that is maintained by Dutch and European Somalis to foster ties with countries and communities of origin and destination. The tournament is organised by the Himilo Relief and Development Association (HIRDA) and receives some financial assistance from the Municipality of Amsterdam. Through AFT, HIRDA (2016a) aims to ‘empower and improve the integration of young Somali diaspora in Europe through sports, dialogue and network building’. More specifically, the event seeks to ‘convey to young immigrants in and around Amsterdam the importance and value of sports. To highlight the social, cultural and sporting sides in a community that has not yet made sport their daily routine’ (HIRDA 2016b). It further aims to give young people a chance to network and share experiences with other young people. AFT is currently held twice a year – a 32-team winter event and a smaller, 16-team summer tournament. Its focus on (indoor) football reflects the game’s popularity among Somali people (Abdullahi 2001). Many Somali men regard football with fondness and associate it with connection to life in both the homeland and the diaspora (Spaaij and Broerse 2018). As shown below, they express this connection in aesthetic ways during AFT, for example by wearing Somali football uniforms and logos, and through their interaction with (former) elite Somali football players.

The identified community demand for this event should be understood within the wider context of Somali migrants living in the Netherlands. The Netherlands became a popular destination for Somali asylum seekers fleeing persecution from the late 1980s onwards. Current there are 39,465 Somalis officially registered in the Netherlands, 26,803 (or 68%) of whom are first-generation immigrants (CBS Statline 2016). This number fluctuates due in part to subsequent onward migration to cities in the United Kingdom with much higher concentrations of Somalis. For example, it is estimated that since 2000 up to 20,000 Somali migrants have left the Netherlands for the UK (van Liempt 2011b). At the same time, the Somali community in the Netherlands is scattered across the country as a result of the Dutch policy of dispersal of asylum seekers. While over

time many Somalis regrouped and moved to Dutch cities such as Rotterdam, The Hague, Amsterdam and Tilburg, as shown below there is still a perception among Dutch Somalis that their community is fragmented and lacks cohesion.

This perception is also related to a distinctive characteristic of the Somali population in the Netherlands, namely its internal diversity in terms of the period of arrival. The first ‘group’, which arrived in the late 1980s and in the 1990s, consists mainly of people with relatively high levels of educational attainment that are more likely to have migrated onward to countries such as the United Kingdom to pursue economic and educational opportunities. The second ‘group’, so-called *nieuwkomers* (new arrivals), arrived after 2007 and have relatively low educational attainment due to the prolonged armed conflict in Somalia. A relatively large proportion of these newcomers are minors. As a result, Somalis in the Netherlands are relatively young compared to other asylum seeker groups, and have become increasingly so in the past six years (CBS Statline 2016). Two-thirds are below the age of 30. In 2010, 58% of Somali asylum seekers were below the age of 18, and 48% were under the age of 15 (van Liempt and Nijenhuis 2014). Associated challenges to integration and wellbeing are well documented, including the Dutch Somali population’s vulnerable socioeconomic status, including low educational attainment and a high unemployment rate at over 30% (van Liempt and Nijenhuis 2014). It is against this backdrop that AFT seeks to support the integration of Somalis in the Netherlands and beyond.

## Methods

This paper builds on multi-sited ethnographic research that commenced in 2008 in Australia. The research initially sought to explore Australian Somalis’ experiences of sport participation. The research approach in this project flowed from its objective to capture participant voices, experiences and meanings. The research initially focused on a single football club established in the 1990s to provide participation opportunities to refugees from Somalia and Eritrea who were settling in the area in growing numbers. Over time, this research developed into a multi-sited ethnography in order to follow participants, their relationships and their experiences across multiple sites in Australia, such as other sports clubs and events (Spaaij 2012, 2013, 2015).

In 2015, this research shifted to Europe. A number of Australian-based participants reported that they had previously lived, or had family or friends, in Europe. They described diasporic sports events organised in countries such as the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom that they or their family members had participated in. One event that featured in their narratives was the AFT. The authors decided to conduct qualitative research at this event. This research, which focused on the 2015 winter edition of the tournament, forms the basis for this paper. The study comprised semi-structured interviews with 49 participants who performed a range of roles: players, coaches, referees, volunteers, spectators, and representatives of Somali community organisations and local government departments. Forty-three of these individuals directly participated in the event as players, coaches, referees, volunteers or spectators. Multiple strategies were used to recruit participants for the study. Community-based information sessions were held before and during AFT to explain the purpose and nature of the research and to invite people to participate in the study. In addition, the researchers



directly approached team captains and coaches with a request to consider their teams' participation in the study.

The interview guide was developed in close consultation with a Dutch Somali community worker, who served as a research consultant on the project, as well as with HIRDA representatives to ensure cultural sensitivity. The interview questions were designed to capture the participants' perceptions and experiences of, and behaviours and interactions during, AFT. The interviews were held in the respondent's preferred language, which in most cases was Dutch (36 respondents) but also included English (10 respondents) and Somali (3 respondents). The interviews were conducted at two indoor sports facilities in Amsterdam, at local cafés, and at Somali community organisations located in different parts of Amsterdam. Interviews lasted between 30 and 90 minutes; they were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Another central aspect of the research was to gather data by means of observation and participation in the sporting lives of respondents, with a particular focus on their engagement with AFT. This method involved watching, observing and talking with participants in order to discover aspects of aesthetic formation as they unfolded on the ground. The nature of the event (two full days only) limited the opportunity to conduct more sustained observation over a longer period of time. To overcome this limitation, in addition to two days of full-time observation during AFT, we conducted preliminary observations of teams' training and preparatory sessions in the weeks leading up to the tournament. Initial access to these sites was gained through the research consultant, who introduced us to players, coaches and volunteers, and who provided guidance and positive recommendation throughout the fieldwork. The observation protocol, designed in consultation with HIRDA, sought to capture participants' behaviours, interactions, language use, rituals, as well as other indicators of aesthetic formation.

In addition to interviews and observations, we analysed the social media activity that was produced specifically in relation to AFT, which offered another important mode of aesthetic formation (Meyer 2009b). The two main social media platforms for the event are Facebook and YouTube, where organisers, participants and the general public can post and consume text, images and videos. Examples include messages posted on the HIRDA and AFT Facebook sites to express opinions or feelings about the event, photographs of the event, and video footage produced by HIRDA volunteers which features both match coverage and vox pop interviews with participants.

The interview transcripts, field notes and social media products were analysed using thematic analysis techniques. Both authors independently read the transcripts, field notes and social media messages, and coded passages of text firstly using an open (or initial meaning code) and secondly an axial (or categorisation of open codes) coding scheme. For example, the statement

You know it's just, as my friend said, the support is not coming from the parents, and it's not coming from the community we are living in. The community is not expecting you to become a footballer or an athlete,

would initially be coded as 'Barriers to sport participation'. After similar statements related to the theme Barriers were open coded, all the statements under this code would then be coded a second time to further categorise the statement. In this example, the statement



would be further coded under the axial code 'Lack of parental/community support'. Dialogue among both authors and the research consultant resulted in intersubjective agreement on the interpretation of the identified passages and codes. The first author then coded the transcripts line by line and the second author reviewed the coding.

In the next sections, we use the data elicited via these methods to examine three dimensions of aesthetic formation: AFT as a diasporic meeting place; tangible expressions of diaspora; and diasporic binding and belonging.

### *The AFT as a diasporic meeting place*

A dominant theme in the narratives of research participants is how the AFT provides a tangible, albeit temporary, meeting place for Dutch and European Somalis. The event is one of very few moments where they meet and interact intensively with other Dutch and European Somalis. Having the opportunity to physically interact, build social relationships with other Somalis and *feel* Somali is important in the context of the aforementioned sense of community fragmentation. Ahmed, a British Somali coach in his 60s, explains: 'So what's happening is, like, sport is being used [as] the icebreaker for getting to know each other'. Isaaq, a player in his late teens, expresses the idea of a diasporic meeting place as follows:

I really enjoy it because it allows me to meet friends with whom I had lost contact, people who I hadn't seen for years. They are dispersed throughout the Netherlands. There isn't another moment where I see so many other Somalis come together.

In the same vein, Mo, a player in his 20s, reflects that 'It's one of those rare moments that you look forward to. It's also about meeting each other and a sense of community, and that's the great thing about it'. Hala, a female volunteer in her early 20s, similarly describes how her social interactions with other Dutch Somalis are shaped by their participation in the event:

We follow each other on Facebook but I don't see that as social contact. We don't message each other. We're Internet friends. It is cool to see each other again; we really look forward to it. In the lead-up to the AFT we contact each other to ask 'when are you coming?', 'Great that you are coming', and things like that.

For Hala, physically meeting others during the event is highly meaningful given the perceived dearth of everyday diasporic community activities in the Netherlands.

Unlike Mo and Hala, some experienced players, such as Abdi, also compete in comparable tournaments in other countries. AFT cannot be seen in isolation from these tournaments; collectively, they represent a series of transnational diasporic practices in which Somalis, and particularly young males, can participate. For example, a Swedish participant notes that in order to counteract the fragmented nature of the Somali community in Sweden, he has organised football tournaments involving teams from several cities: 'So when they meet each other, play against each other, they connect with them, make a connection. And this connection, after the tournament they connect each other, they contact each other, to make other games between themselves'. A number of AFT participants compete in transnational events, just as Somalis from across Europe participate in the AFT.

Belonging, social connection and playing football (including, for the most competitive players, an emphasis on winning) are primary reasons why participants attend the event. Harold, a Swiss Somali in his early 20s, states: 'Getting to know new people is the most important thing for me. And having the opportunity to see the Netherlands. I hadn't been to this country before'. A player from Finland, Musa (male, 20s), illustrates:

Last year I met so many people and still we are friends, and we are sitting here and hey, 'I remember you'. I think it's very important, because even though we have the same culture, but you see some difference when you talk to like another Somali who came from different country, like when you start to talking to him you see some little differences, so ... same language but different.

Musa uses his own team as an example: 'This is the only reason that we have all met. I didn't know those [others] before. When I saw that they were playing I started talking to them and then we made our own team'.

Somali youth worker Mohamed echoes this sentiment by highlighting the social interaction between young people from different cities that occurs during the event:

Getting to know different people, sharing news and experiences. Everyone has their own qualities. Maybe highly educated or not highly educated. Some are new arrivals, others were born in the Netherlands or elsewhere in Europe. That kind of information sharing is very important.

Mohamed's reference to 'different people' is instructive here. Several participants note how AFT facilitates social interaction and learning between established Dutch Somalis and recent arrivals (Spaaij and Broerse 2018), hence contributing to community cohesion. Elaborating on his earlier comments, Mohamed explains how 'this is valuable for new arrivals. They mainly speak Somali and some of them don't speak Dutch. Old and new arrivals mix at AFT and they get to know each other'. Enow, a player in his 20s, illustrates how this mix materialises within his own team, with the coach and one of the players having only recently arrived in the Netherlands and not yet mastering the Dutch language. Like Enow, a female volunteer Hala explains:

The past few years we have seen many new arrivals. They don't come here because they like it but because they were forced to flee their homeland. It's easier to help them when you speak the same language and when you understand where they come from. ... That can be an important source of support, that they feel safer and also to participate in sport and to get to know many people who can teach them the [Dutch] language and make friends. You simply feel better understood by someone who knows where you come from. I have many people in my environment who are new arrivals and I always try to motivate them.

The social interactions that Hala, Enow and Mohamed foreground can transcend AFT to become embedded in participants' everyday lives. For example, some players organise friendly football matches against teams from other Dutch cities which they had first met during AFT. Coach Ahmed describes the meaning of this experience as follows:

The Somali youth in Holland didn't know each other before then, so it opened the lines of communication. One of the benefits is any of these people playing, if he's going anywhere in Holland, he doesn't need a hotel ... You have a guide, a host. Even for me, I can travel to so many different countries; I don't need to go to a hotel. And they wouldn't accept if I go to hotel. So it opens your family. Yeah, it broadens your family, they get to know each

other, they you know care for each other, so it opens that aspect of trusting and having, yeah, dialogue and communication.

The event thus both functions as a diasporic meeting place and facilitates an environment for visitors to establish more enduring contact. This contact is also informed by participants' and organisers' political interests; most notably, their desire to be actively engaged in, and learn about, Somali politics and civil society, both in the homeland and in the European diaspora. In the next section, we discuss how these sporting encounters and their connection to Somali politics and civil society facilitate tangible acts of diaspora formation.

### *Materialisation of diaspora*

Feelings of belonging to a diaspora are often based on an imagined and intangible connection to other dispersed people with a shared national, cultural and/or ethnic background. The question is how diaspora, as an imagined feeling of belonging, comes to feel 'real' and 'in the bones' in the concrete lived environment (Meyer 2009a, 5). During the tournament, visitors draw on various diasporic recourses (Nassy Brown 1998) including Somali football uniforms, musical performances, traditional dress and dishes, and visiting prominent representatives (e.g. ambassador, former prime minister, mayor of Mogadishu) that together fashion a tangible and visceral experience of Somali diaspora.

The AFT provides an opportunity for visitors to perform and engage in aesthetic embodied practices such as football and cultural activities. Although the matches take place in two sports halls used daily for all sorts of sport activities and population groups, during the two event days the halls are transformed into Somali cultural spaces. At the tournament, 'you only see Somali culture', a female volunteer explains. The main language spoken is Somali, visitors and music performers wear traditional Somali clothing and physical appearances and sportswear of players, visitors and volunteers showcase their Somali heritage. A poet and a band perform during the day. The London-based Somali poet brings dozens of different books and displays and sells Somali poetry and novels at his stand. Some of the books have been translated into foreign languages such as Italian and German, making the poems and stories accessible to those who are less acquainted with the Somali language. Nonetheless, the dominant language is Somali and Salah illustrates how this enables interaction and binding between visitors from all over Europe:

Someone just asked me something, but I thought: I don't understand what you're saying, because it isn't Dutch or Somali. On such occasions it's great that we both speak Somali. Yes, he asked me where the toilet was. I cannot explain that in German or so. So it was handy that we are both Somali.

No matter where visitors currently live or which languages they speak, the Somali language forms the basis for interactions between visitors.

Before, after and between the matches, a Somali music band performed a combination of traditional and modern songs. At the dinner party on the eve of the tournament, they played a few songs and most of the visitors sang along. Before the award ceremony on the final day, they performed the Somali national anthem and most visitors again engaged in aesthetic embodied performance. A mother of one of the Dutch Somali players explained

that all their (cover) songs are on YouTube and consumed by Somalis all over the world. Aicha explains that she is ‘very, very, very into Somali culture, so I mainly listen to Somali music’. Hala illustrates her experiences with Somali music as follows:

At the AFT, it is great, it is our culture and they play Somali music, even though there are people who don’t listen to Somali music. People speak Somali with you, that’s great and it motivates me. It reminds people where they come from.

According to Hala, AFT represents Somali culture; it not only provides a tangible place for people to meet and (re)connect, but it also facilitates collective sensory engagement such as listening to Somali music and speaking Somali. Some participants are already familiar with the Somali music and literary artist; for others, encounters with such cultural aspects are less common. AFT thus forms a site for socialisation into and social learning of Somali cultural forms, especially for second-generation European Somalis who may have fewer opportunities for direct exposure to Somali culture.

A YouTube livestream enables participants to digitally connect with people who cannot physically attend the event, including those in Somalia and other countries. AFT co-founder Nadia explains how this visual connection speaks to the oral and storytelling traditions in Somali culture. A selection of matches and social events (e.g. political discussions and interviews with prominent visitors) are filmed and broadcast via the livestream. One such event that is organised as part of AFT is a panel discussion featuring prominent visitors such as an ambassador, the former vice-premier and the mayor of Mogadishu. Other attendees, including the poet, referees and some players, are also actively involved in the discussions. The panel debated the situation of Somali migrants in Western countries (e.g. Islamophobia, integration) and the role of the diaspora in improving the situation in Somalia. The president of a Swiss Somali community organisation explains: ‘Sport and discussion evenings are focused on sharing experiences and how to live in another culture. They need each other, you cannot do it alone. Together you can make it’.

Ties are fostered during the event, and afterwards some players stay in contact and visit each other. Whereas transnational ties with other dispersed Somalis are often based on an imagined belonging, the event allows these ties to materialise through the exchange of contact details and the establishment of face-to-face relationships. Moreover, the opportunity to collectively experience and perform sensory aesthetic Somali practices, such as smelling and tasting Somali dishes, speaking/singing and hearing the Somali language and songs, and ‘only seeing Somali culture’, as a female volunteer put it, fosters community formation. In the next section, we turn to the feelings of belonging these materialisation practices elicit.

### *Aesthetic formation as a source of diasporic belonging*

The forms of identification and belonging created or enacted through the materialisation of diaspora in AFT are best understood as situated and situational accomplishments (Kusow 2006; Valentine, Sporton, and Nielsen 2009). Below, we discuss three inter-related forms of belonging experienced and narrated by participants: being Somali, transnational belonging and belonging to the nation (see also Spaaij and Broerse 2018).

### *Being Somali*

Participants appear to be more consciously aware and proud of their Somali identity and heritage during the activities and events observed in this research. Their engagement with and experience within these practices increase their sense of belonging to, and 'roots' in, the homeland and Somali diasporic communities. Hala explains:

I am Dutch, I was born here, but it is still important to me to know where I come from. Because we are so dispersed it is difficult to find anyone who reminds you of your roots. I believe that is a very essential thing.

Her friend Aicha elaborates:

The mentality that I used to have was, like, Somali music and culture is annoying. No, I don't need any of that. And I see that now with my nieces and nephews who say, 'It's so boring.' But now I think: it's your culture. You have to know it. And I immerse myself in it. It's a part of yourself, it's a piece of your roots. It's important to know yourself, who you are.

Both women explain that they enjoy spending time and sharing space with fellow Somalis within the context of the sports activities. These activities offer a space where they can be with 'people like me', where they can speak Somali, eat Somali food and enjoy Somali cultural performances. Such interactions enable them to 'feel more Somali' and to 'get to know my heritage'. During the AFT, participants share stories and memories about Somali society, politics and sport. They also indulge in Somali music, poetry and food, and have the opportunity to participate in organised debates on the current situation and future of Somalia as well as the circumstances and experiences of Somalis in receiving communities. A female volunteer explains:

Well, for example, when I speak Somali, I know that the other will answer in Somali ... the communication is different when you're with Somalis than when it is mixed. I think it's because you understand each other better. I'm not sure ... it could be that when you have different backgrounds you can get misunderstandings. And when you're both Somali it's easier and smoother.

In a similar vein, a male referee Abdi notes that 'It makes me to feel more Somali. Yeah. And like I'm involved here ... with other people who also speak Somali as their first language. It makes me proud'. And Ahmed, a British Somali coach quoted earlier, explains: 'It broadens your family. They get to know each other, they care for each other, so it opens that aspect of trusting and having, yeah, dialogue and communication'.

### *Transnational belonging*

In addition to a sense of belonging to homeland, participants perform a strong sense of transnational belonging that is closely associated with diaspora formation. As Burdsey (2006) points out, sports clubs or events can act as cultural intermediaries or flows between the homeland and the dispersed diasporic community. He gives the example of a British Asian football player who spoke of 'how his federation intends to establish links, partnerships and exchanges with clubs in Bangladesh through actually entering a club in a tournament in that country' (Burdsey 2006, 490). We observe similar processes among both Dutch and European Somalis, to the point where these global sporting encounters are but one aspect of the transnational lives that many of them lead. Some young Dutch Somalis had participated in, or helped organise, diasporic sports events in

countries with sizeable Somali communities including Sweden, Finland, Norway, Germany, UK, Canada, United States, Switzerland and Turkey. Teams and individuals from six different European countries participated in the 2015 edition of the AFT. Musa, a Swedish participant, explains this transnational engagement as follows:

Because they connect each other ... I can tell you that when I am in Sweden I ... the nearest Somali community is like 30 minutes by car from my home. Sometimes I play with them, sometimes I arrange a big tournament who involve many teams ... from other cities [abroad]. So when they play each other, meet each other, play against each other, they connect with them, or connect, make a connection. And this connection, after the tournament they connect each other, they contact each other, to make another games between themselves.

Like Musa, Asad reflects positively on the meaning of such connections, and specifically how visitors remember each other from previous years and share life stories with each other. Asad explains that even though they are from the same culture, he can see small differences. Dutch Somali player Abdi shares a similar experience. He met a Swedish player in the dressing room, started talking and shared experiences about living in the Netherlands and Sweden as a Somali. Abdi asked him: 'How is it there? How is the nationality? How is life there?' And: 'What do you think of the Netherlands as an outsider?' Abdi concludes that he finds it very interesting to hear life experiences from other Somalis.

These kinds of transnational connection, whether fleeting or more durable, contribute to a sense of belonging to the global Somali diaspora. While for some participants such transnational belonging is primarily enacted within and through sports activities, others' transnational engagement extends well beyond sport into media, music, political engagement and transnational activism (Kleist 2008; Hammond 2013).

Transnational belonging and more place-based or nation-based forms of belonging are not mutually exclusive but, rather, intersect and co-exist in complementary ways (Spaaij 2015). As Hammond (2013) explains, transnational engagement can be a way to bridge Somali, diaspora and 'host' cultures. Her research suggests that transnational engagement may actually support belonging to the nation, and vice versa. It is to this issue of national belonging that we now turn.

### *Being Dutch: belonging to the nation*

The aesthetic formations discussed in the previous section centre around the materialisation of the Somali diaspora its strengthened embodiment in subjects. Our findings indicate that participants' engagement in AFT simultaneously elicits hybrid forms of belonging to both homeland and receiving communities. This is evident in, for example, the way AFT participants liken their affective experience of the event to *gezelligheid* (sociability) that is a central aspect of Dutch culture (de Wilde and Duyvendak 2016). For example, Dutch Somali volunteer Roble (male, 20s) argues that 'here they can feel safe and they have never had this much *gezelligheid* in Somalia. Because it is really difficult to be together with so many people in Somalia'. Isaaq similarly voices: 'For me personally, it's not about winning, it's about the *gezelligheid*'.

Emotional attachment to the nation is further reflected in participants' descriptions of how they represent their nation or city during the competition. Identification with their

country and city of residence is a source of pride for many of the participating teams. Two players from a team that represents a Dutch city reflect upon this as follows:

You have to put [your city] on the map [during the event]. Yes, you can just play for another team that represents a different city, but you have to represent your own city. You go back home and the people in your city are proud of you. They watch you on the livestream, our mothers and siblings. And they tell us that: 'Hey, great that you got that far [in the tournament].'

In a similar vein, two players representing one of the Finnish teams that participate in the AFT stated:

*Asad:* We are representing Finland and you can play against Norway, and there's always a little battle against each other ...

*Warsame:* And people in Finland also know that these guys are selected from Finland so they are here for representing a Finland team and also when we are posting something to Facebook and we are saying like we are the Finnish team coming to Netherlands playing for the futsal. So they are supporting us and watching the live[stream] on YouTube.

This is reflected in the team names, which refer to the players' city of residence. Examples include Team Amsterdam, Team Arnhem, Team Rotterdam, Team Manchester, Team Helsinki, Team Paris and Team Zürich. Emotional attachment to the nation is further evidenced by the use of language during AFT. Although the main language spoken is Somali, the event is multi-lingual and on-the-ground conversations features an eclectic mix of Somali, Dutch, English, German, French and Finnish. Moreover, some Dutch Somali participants express a strong preference for the Dutch language, for example: 'You're in the Netherlands, so just speak Dutch'; and '80 per cent of participants speak Dutch, so the official language should be Dutch. And for the guys from Finland, we'll mix in a bit of English'.

An important aspect of participants' sense of belonging to the nation is their adoption of sport as a cultural activity that is itself a powerful manifestation of Dutch culture. In addition to fun and sociability, an important meaning that participants associate with sport participation is the platform it provides for sanctioned character display; that is, an opportunity to 'exhibit attributes valued in the wider social world' (Goffman 1961, 68) and, specifically, in Western cultures. We see this play out in AFT in two inter-related ways.

First, sport and physical activity are important sites for the production, shaping and regulation of national identity and healthy bodies. As part of their negotiation of national belonging in and through community sports events such as the AFT, participants demonstrate a tacit understanding and adoption of healthism discourses important to Western cultures (Barker-Ruchti et al. 2013). Participants refer to healthism, within which sport is seen to provide a means to achieve good health for members of their community. For example, Ali, a Dutch Somali player in his 20s, notes that '[It helps you to] move a lot. They see that it's good for your health. I do it for health and for the social'. Another young man reflects: 'Well, Muslim families are not necessarily very healthy. Getting them involved in sport is really important for health outcomes'. In the same vein, Roble reports that



when I speak with [fellow Somalis] I tell them to exercise. I don't believe Somali youth do enough sport, no. They will tell you that sport is important but they don't actually do it. And older people even less so.

Their adoption of healthist ideas can be interpreted as a way to counter Dutch 'cultural narratives around the uncultured, and thus non-integrated, immigrant' (Barker-Ruchti et al. 2013, 759).

A second way in which dominant national cultural narratives are negotiated during the AFT is through athletic prowess. Participants and community leaders adopt the idea that athletes are significant social figures because they are capable of representing important social values, such as physical prowess, integrity and self-control (Goffman 1961; Birrell 1981). More specifically, they point out that public demonstrations of community members' character display in sport help counter negative political and media narratives of Somalis as uncivilised and non-integrated immigrants. Haji and Hasan, two young men who manage a Dutch Somali website, explain this as follows:

*Haji:* So much attention is given to negative topics about Somalis ... You only see us in the newspapers when there is a terrorist attack.

*Hasan:* Or piracy. And positive stories don't make the news, which really bothers me.

*Haji:* If you search for 'Dutch Somali' in Google, the first thing you see is that half of them are on the dole.

*Hasan:* We once posted a video of a well-known Dutch Somali footballer on our website. We received many reactions, very positive reactions. Many, many 'likes'. The video went viral. And so for Dutch Somalis, it is very important that someone breaks through. Not only in the Netherlands ... also abroad there is a real need for that type of [success] story.

During our fieldwork, we encountered many comments on and practical examples of such 'success stories'. For example, Warsame argues:

'I think it's very important, because, like, before we didn't have like some famous athletes, and when we start having ones they are like a role model. When you're young, you have something to idolise, like I want to be like him'.

In a similar vein, a Dutch Somali social worker expressed his desire to 'see more Somalis play in the *Eredivisie* [Dutch Premier League]. That can contribute to the acceptance of Somalis [in the Netherlands] and is good for the community'. Some perceived 'role models' actively participate in AFT, such as a young man who plays professional football in England and has played for the Somali national team, as well as other individuals who have been successful in Dutch football and athletics. These athletes feature centrally in the social media activity surrounding AFT as symbols of community pride and achievement.

## Discussion and conclusion

In this paper, we examine a transnational leisure activity, the AFT, as a window onto the process of diaspora formation. Building on the concept of aesthetic formation, we have explored how imaginations of the Somali diaspora become tangible by materialising in particular spaces and objects, and by being embodied in subjects (Meyer 2009a). While diasporas may be deterritorialised (Cohen 2008) or at least spatially decentred, the

aesthetic formations discussed in this paper suggest that they also involve place-making through glocal materialisation practices. Through participation in the tournament, visitors become aware of their ethnocultural background and ‘who they are’ in more tangible and reflective ways. AFT facilitates not only the performance of diasporic practices, such as Somali language, consumptive performances (e.g. food, poetry, music), and community-based discussions. As a space, AFT is in itself a materialisation of diaspora where members physically meet and actively take part in creating a diasporic space and thereby a sense of community that is felt in the bones. The materialisation practices performed in AFT produce and transform imagined feelings of belonging into a tangible form. The practice of football is highly significant in this regard, as a cultural activity that for many visitors produces feelings of nostalgia and an embodied connection to life in both the homeland and the diaspora, as well as a sense of continuity in their lives within the context of forced displacement and (re)settlement (Dukic, McDonald, and Spaaij 2017).

This study was conducted in a particular social space – the AFT – to explore the aesthetic formation of a Somali diaspora. Considering the diverse trajectories and experiences of different migrant-background peoples who have settled in Western societies, our findings are not capable of generalisation to other aesthetic formations of diaspora in the Netherlands or elsewhere. Further research is needed to ascertain whether similar materialisation practices can be found elsewhere. Moreover, this paper has focused primarily on ethno-nationally grounded forms of belonging and has paid limited attention to other axes of differentiation including race, religion, gender and class. This is an important limitation because, echoing previous critiques of diaspora discourses (Anthias 1998; Brubaker 2005), it conceals internal divisions and inequities that are generated, reproduced and potentially challenged through aesthetic formation. Future research could develop a fully fledged intersectional approach to the study of aesthetic formations to better grasp the associated processes of boundary erosion and maintenance and their effects on belonging.

The conceptual lens of aesthetic formation enables a better understanding of diaspora as a category of practice, as being created and negotiated through social action (Brubaker 2005). The materialisation practices discussed in this paper suggest the salience of the homeland in the collective memory of dispersed Somalis (Cohen 2008), as well as the tangible diaspora-homeland relations that are enacted in the tournament. Moreover, they indicate the dynamic nature of diaspora-homeland-hostland relations (Butler 2001) through the articulation and materialisation of hybrid and situated forms of belonging. In this context, our findings reinforce important insights from previous research. First, they highlight the sense of security and emotional attachment that immigrants can derive from having their own place, which gives them the space to define and enact their own narratives of identity and diaspora beyond or alongside narrow prescriptions of national identity (Valentine, Sporton, and Nielsen 2009). Diasporic Somalis use the performative space of the futsal tournament as a vital site for self-expression, intersubjectivity and community formation, akin to the use of performative arts such as hip hop music in other diasporic contexts (Perry 2008; Betz 2014). In accordance with Valentine, Sporton, and Nielsen (2009), the aesthetic formations created in this space span local and transnational scales, yet also foster their sense of integration and belonging in the Netherlands and in Europe.

This study further confirms Hammond's (2013) conclusion that diasporic Somalis' transnational engagement fulfils a range of functions that relate not only to the homeland, but also to community formation in receiving countries. As such, their transnational engagement may actually support integration rather than challenge it. This is evident in, for instance, the ways in which established Dutch Somalis support new arrivals in their settlement during and beyond the tournament. This finding problematises the dominant policy assumption in the Netherlands and elsewhere that co-ethnic leisure activities promote cultural separatism and self-exclusion (Krouwel et al. 2006; Müller, van Zoonen, and de Roode 2008). Instead, such practices can simultaneously elicit multiple forms and levels of belonging that also foster a sense of integration and belonging to the nation.

## Acknowledgements

The authors thank the Himilo Relief and Development Association and the research participants for their generous contributions to this study. fundingText

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

## ORCID

Ramón Spaaij  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1260-3111>

## References

- Abdullahi, M. D. 2001. *Culture and Customs of Somalia*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflection on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed. London: Verso.
- Anthias, F. 1998. "Evaluating 'Diaspora': Beyond Ethnicity?" *Sociology* 32 (3): 557–580. doi:10.1177/0038038598032003009.
- Barker-Ruchti, N., D. Barker, S. Sattler, M. Gerber, and U. Pühse. 2013. "Sport – 'It's Just Healthy': Locating Healthism within Discourses of Social Integration." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39 (5): 759–772. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2013.756674.
- Baumann, G. 1999. *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities*. London: Routledge.
- Ben-Moshe, D., J. Pyke, and L. Kirpitchenko. 2016. "The Vietnamese Diaspora in Australia: Identity and Transnational Behaviour." *Diaspora Studies* 9 (2): 112–127. doi:10.1080/09739572.2016.1183891.
- Betz, E. 2014. "Polynesian Youth Hip Hop: Intersubjectivity and Australia's Multicultural Audience." *Ethnomusicology Forum* 23 (2): 247–265. doi:10.1080/17411912.2014.926630.
- Bhatia, S., and A. Ram. 2009. "Theorizing Identity in Transnational and Diaspora Cultures: A Critical Approach to Acculturation." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 33 (2): 140–149. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2008.12.009.
- Birrell, S. 1981. "Sport as Ritual: Interpretations from Durkheim to Goffman." *Social Forces* 60 (2): 354–376. doi:10.2307/2578440.
- Brubaker, R. 2005. "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28 (1): 1–19. doi:10.1080/0141987042000289997.

- Burdsey, D. 2006. "No Ball Games Allowed? A Socio-Historical Examination of the Development and Social Significance of British Asian Football Clubs." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32 (3): 477–496. doi:10.1080/13691830600554841.
- Burdsey, D. 2008. "Contested Conceptions of Identity, Community and Multiculturalism in the Staging of Alternative Sport Events: A Case Study of the Amsterdam World Cup Football Tournament." *Leisure Studies* 27 (3): 259–277. doi:10.1080/02614360802127235.
- Burdsey, D., S. Thangaraj, and R. Dudrah. 2013. "Playing Through Time and Space: Sport and South Asian Diasporas." *South Asian Popular Culture* 11 (3): 211–218. doi:10.1080/14746689.2013.820475.
- Butler, K. 2001. "Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse." *Diaspora* 10 (2): 189–219. doi:10.1353/dsp.2011.0014.
- CBS Statline. 2016. "Bevolking; generatie, geslacht, leeftijd en herkomstgroepering, 1 januari." Accessed August 10, 2016. <http://statline.cbs.nl/Statweb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=37325&D1=a&D2=a&D3=0&D4=a&D5=199&D6=17-20&VW=T>
- Clifford, J. 1994. "Diasporas." *Cultural Anthropology* 9: 302–338. doi:10.1525/can.1994.9.3.02a00040.
- Clifford, J. 1997. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cohen, R. 2008. *Global Diasporas*. London: Routledge.
- Collins, R. 2004. *Interaction Ritual Chains*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Connor, P., and J. Krogstad. 2016. "5 Facts about the Global Somali Diaspora." Pew Research Center, June 1. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/06/01/5-facts-about-the-global-somali-diaspora/>
- de Wilde, M., and J. W. Duyvendak. 2016. "Engineering Community Spirit: The Pre-figurative Politics of Affective Citizenship in Dutch Local Governance." *Citizenship Studies* 20 (8): 973–993. doi:10.1080/13621025.2016.1229194.
- Dukic, D., B. McDonald, and R. Spaaij. 2017. "Being Able to Play: Experiences of Social Inclusion and Exclusion within a Football Team of People Seeking Asylum." *Social Inclusion* 5 (2). doi:10.17645/si.v5i2.892.
- Global Somali Diaspora. 2016. "About Somali Diaspora." Accessed December 12, 2016. <http://gsd.so/about-somali-diaspora/>
- Goffman, E. 1961. *Encounters*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill.
- Hall, S. 1990. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." In *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, edited by J. Rutherford, 222–237. London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Hammond, L. 2013. "Somali Transnational Activism and Integration in the UK: Mutually Supporting Strategies." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39 (6): 1001–1017. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2013.765666.
- HIRDA. 2016a. "Amsterdam Futsal Tournament." Accessed August 10, 2016. <http://www.hirda.org/en/program/sport-peace-dev/hirda-aft/>
- HIRDA. 2016b. "Why Do We Want a Sporting Event?" Accessed August 10, 2016. <http://amsterdam-tournament.hirda.nl/english/index.php/ons-doel/>
- Joseph, J. 2011. "A Diaspora Approach to Sport Tourism." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 35 (2): 146–167. doi:10.1177/0193723511406130.
- Joseph, J. 2014. "Culture, Community, Consciousness: The Caribbean Sporting Diaspora." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 49 (6): 669–687. doi:10.1177/1012690212465735.
- Kleist, N. 2008. "In the Name of Diaspora: Between Struggles for Recognition and Political Aspirations." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 34 (7): 1127–1143. doi:10.1080/13691830802230448.
- Krouwel, A., N. Boonstra, J. W. Duyvendak, and L. Veldboer. 2006. "A Good Sport? Research into the Capacity of Recreational Sport to Integrate Dutch Minorities." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 41 (2): 165–180. doi:10.1177/1012690206075419.
- Kusow, A. 2006. "Migration and Racial Formations among Somali Immigrants in North America." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32 (3): 533–551. doi:10.1080/13691830600555079.

- Kusow, A., and S. Bjork, eds. 2007. *From Mogadishu to Dixon: The Somali Diaspora in a Global Context*. Trenton, NJ: The Red Sea Press.
- Meyer, B. 2009a. "From Imagined Communities to Aesthetic Formations: Religious Mediations, Sensational Forms, and Styles of Binding." In *Aesthetic Formations: Media, Religion, and the Senses*, edited by B. Meyer, 1–28. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Meyer, B. 2009b. *Aesthetic Formations: Media, Religion, and the Senses*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Müller, F., L. van Zoonen, and L. de Roode. 2008. "The Integrative Power of Sport: Imagined and Real Effects of Sport Events on Multicultural Integration." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 25 (3): 387–401. doi:10.1123/sj.25.3.387.
- Nassy Brown, J. 1998. "Black Liverpool, Black America, and the Gendering of Diasporic Space." *Cultural Anthropology* 13: 291–325. doi:10.1525/can.1998.13.3.291.
- Perry, M. D. 2008. "Global Black Self-Fashionings: Hip Hop as Diasporic Space." *Identities* 15 (6): 635–664. doi:10.1080/10702890802470660.
- Roble, A., and D. Rutledge. 2008. *The Somali Diaspora: A Journey Away*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Spaaij, R. 2012. "Beyond the Playing Field: Experiences of Sport, Social Capital and Integration among Somalis in Australia." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35 (9): 1519–1538. doi:10.1080/01419870.2011.592205.
- Spaaij, R. 2013. "Cultural Diversity in Community Sport: An Ethnographic Inquiry of Somali Australians' Experiences." *Sport Management Review* 16 (1): 29–40. doi:10.1016/j.smr.2012.06.003.
- Spaaij, R. 2015. "Refugee Youth, Belonging and Community Sport." *Leisure Studies* 34 (3): 303–318. doi:10.1080/02614367.2014.893006.
- Spaaij, R., and J. Broerse. 2018. "Sport and the Politics of Belonging: The Experiences of Australian and Dutch Somalis." In *Places of Privilege*, edited by C. Sonn, and N. Oke. Rotterdam: SENSE.
- Strang, A., and A. Ager. 2010. "Refugee Integration: Emerging Trends and Remaining Agendas." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 23 (4): 589–607. doi:10.1093/jrs/feq046.
- UNHCR. 2017. *Somalia Situation 2017*. Geneva: UNHCR.
- Valentine, G., D. Sporton, and K. B. Nielsen. 2009. "Identities and Belonging: A Study of Somali Refugees and Asylum Seekers Living in the UK and Denmark." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27: 234–250. doi:10.1068/d3407.
- van Liempt, I. 2011a. "Young Dutch Somalis in the UK: Citizenship, Identities and Belonging in a Transnational Triangle." *Mobilities* 6 (4): 569–583. doi:10.1080/17450101.2011.603948.
- van Liempt, I. 2011b. "'And Then One Day They All Moved to Leicester': The Relocation of Somalis from the Netherlands to the UK Explained." *Population, Space and Place* 17 (3): 254–266. doi:10.1002/psp.605.
- van Liempt, I., and G. Nijenhuis. 2014. *Somaliërs in Amsterdam [Somalis in Amsterdam]*. New York: Open Society Foundations.
- Vertovec, S. 2001. "Transnationalism and Identity." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27 (4): 573–582. doi:10.1080/13691830120090386.
- Werbner, P. 1996. "'Our Blood is Green': Cricket, Identity and Social Empowerment among British Pakistanis." In *Sport, Identity and Ethnicity*, edited by J. MacClancy, 87–112. Oxford: Berg.
- Werbner, P. 2004. "Theorising Complex Diasporas: Purity and Hybridity in the South Asian Public Sphere in Britain." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30 (5): 895–911. doi:10.1080/1369183042000245606.