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Re-Creating Home and Exploring Away in New Cities: Italian Migration and Football Codes Within Australian Urban Centres

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Re-Creating Home and Exploring Away in New Cities: Italian Migration and Football Codes Within Australian Urban ~~Center~~Centres

Abstract

Migrants are often characterized as in search of new homes, while spectator sports are frequently spoken of as providing homes for the followers of particular teams. However the particular kinds of ‘homes’ that spectator sports can provide for migrants is understudied. This paper explores the sporting ‘homes’ found by those who migrated from Italy to Australia after the Second World War. In particular it examines the different experiences of those who found a home in the mainstream sport of Australian Rules football with the more culturally peripheral sport of Association football (soccer). Drawing on 59 oral history interviews with first and second generation migrants to the Australian cities of Melbourne and Sydney, the paper provides a window into the meanings, passions, exclusion, inclusion, intergenerational tensions, and intergenerational bonding that these migrants found in, and created through, Australian Rules football and soccer. Both sports facilitated entry into particular territorial worlds in Melbourne and Sydney. Yet while those who followed Australian Rules football went to away games with throngs of Anglo-Australians, soccer provided access to a more hidden, peripheral, and more European parts of Melbourne and Sydney which were yet to be celebrated for their multicultural ethnic diversity.

Introduction

As a twelve-year old Marcello Baroni had what he described as a ‘quintessential second generation [migrant] experience’.¹ Born in Sydney, Australia, in the 1950s to parents who had migrated from Italy, ~~Mareello~~Baroni had come to feel Italian rather than Australian. The school that he attended was particularly unwelcoming, and later he would realize he had survived in part by surrounding himself with the children of other Italian migrants. Yet when ~~Mareello~~Baroni visited Italy at the age of twelve

with his parents, he felt like an alien there as well. He returned to Sydney confused, with a sense of being ‘in a limbo’, with no place to call home.² It was a typical experience for the children of Italians who migrated to Australia in the [postwarpost-war](#) period. While in Australia they grew up feeling as though they were considered as ‘the Italians’, their trip ‘back’ to their parents’ country of birth, a crucial rite of passage into adulthood, often made them [realiseize](#) that Italians instead considered them to be ‘the Australians’.³ And yet, even once back in the limbo of being in Australia, there was still a special time and place where [MareelloBaroni](#) could feel at home: the many Sunday afternoons spent with his father and friends watching their club Marconi play games of Association football or soccer as the sport was called in Australia.⁴ It was testament to the particular social and cultural meanings that can be facilitated by sport, that when attending these games [MareelloBaroni](#) somehow felt proudly Italian and Australian instead of his usual experience of feeling like neither. If the trip to Italy that was supposed to orient him had in fact left him disoriented, regular attendance at a mere game was the space in which he felt most at home.

The notion that forms of football – and especially particular football clubs – became a new home was brought up over and over again by the Italian migrants interviewed for this study. This is not surprising. The trope of ‘home’ circulates frequently through the narratives of both migration and spectator sports. Migrants are typically seen as searching for a new home, while football codes create home teams, home grounds, and home fans.⁵ But ‘What does it mean to be at home?’ asks Sara Ahmed.⁶ Although ‘there has been a proliferation of writing on the meaning of home’ in many disciplines, the particular forms of home which migrants find and create through sport have generally been neglected by historians.⁷

Stephen Fielding has observed that ‘Ethnic sport offers an important and understudied lens into how newcomers – a key population on the social peripheries – negotiate their entry into host societies’.⁸ Fielding’s history of the relationship that European immigrants had with soccer in post-war Toronto provides a rare sense of the forms of home which these immigrants, found and created through a particular sport. Not only did their involvement in soccer as participants and fans allow for the construction of ‘new identities and relationships’, the game both ‘accentuated rivalries between ethnic communities’ and showed different groups of European immigrants ‘how much’ they ‘had in common as newcomers, sport fans, and speakers of non-official languages’.⁹ Yet Fielding spent more time exploring the politics of leisure and social diversity within post-war Toronto, along with the creation of teams and the failure of leagues, than on the particular meaning that the game came to hold for these immigrants. In addition, a broader question remains unaddressed – what were the similarities and differences between the homes immigrants found in the peripheral sport of soccer, and the homes immigrants found in mainstream sports such as ice-hockey?

Like in Canada, soccer in Australia has remained a game on the margins of popular culture with its legitimacy being continually questioned from the 1860s onwards.¹⁰ The post-war migration of millions of people from Europe and Britain to Australia led to a golden age of Australian soccer from the 1960s through to the 1980s as many of the new migrants became involved in the game as players, administrators, and supporters.¹¹ Yet the increasing involvement of people from Europe led to the sport being characterized – and frequently derided – as ethnic. As Fielding notes, Australian scholars have largely focused on the ensuing efforts to ‘de-ethnicize’

soccer.¹² In contrast, historians of the mainstream sport of Australian Rules football have noted that in cities like Melbourne many European migrants became involved in the mainstream sport of Australian Rules football, but references to these migrants are fleeting.¹³ The most notable exception is Ciannon Cazaly's PhD thesis on the migrants who have played Australian Rules football at an elite level, however the focus of this work is on the racism players experienced, rather than the place the game came to hold in their lives and those of the many migrants who became supporters.¹⁴ Moreover, historians have not compared the experiences of people involved with soccer in Australia with those involved in Australian Rules football.

This paper seeks to redress this and build on the work of Fielding by looking at the homes that post-war Italian migrants to Australia found and created in (and through) the peripheral sport of soccer compared to the mainstream sport of Australian Rules football. In so-doing, this paper also builds on Charles Little's work complicating what constitutes peripheral and mainstream sport and recreation, and by extension the place of migrants in this liminal arrangement.¹⁵ Did the two sports provide the same kinds of home for this group of European migrants? And what effects did these homes have on their lives? These questions are informed by a concern with the transcultural experiences and relationships created and nurtured by migrants.¹⁶ In recent years the field of migration studies has shown a growing interest in the spatial dimension of migrants lives, and in understanding not only the relations that migrants had with the specific places that they have developed, inhabited and transformed – such as Little Italies and China Towns – but also, and more specifically, the location and movement of migrants into new spaces, and how these may have influenced their ability to adjust to the new contexts, to negotiate with local

communities, and to respond to instances of inclusion and exclusion.¹⁷ As Francesco Ricatti has shown in his study of the history of Italian migration to Australia, a transcultural approach allows scholars to consider the various cultural relationships and exchanges that migrants engage in.¹⁸ Sports then becomes not only a space in which certain ethnic identities can be constructed, in opposition to the ‘mainstream’ or to other, separated ethnic identities; but also the space in and through which complex cultural relationships to home and away can be developed.

The 330,000 Italians who migrated to Australia in the post-war period did so for many different reasons. Some came as impoverished young men in search of adventure and upward socio-economic mobility, others followed family members who had already journeyed to Australia.¹⁹ Most settled in Melbourne and Sydney, where they experienced a hostile reception.²⁰ Anglo-Australians tended to think of themselves as superior to the recent migrants from Italy who were demeaned as darker and less civilized.²¹

This paper explores the homes that many of these migrants – and their children – found and created in two sports that had very different cultural places in Australia. It adopts an oral history approach, drawing on interviews with 31 Italian migrants living in Sydney and 28 from Melbourne, all of whom had a long-standing involvement with Association football and/or Australian Rules football.²² Almost all had migrated to Australia in the post war period (1945-1971), or were the children (or in a couple of instances also grandchildren) of these migrants. On most occasions first generation and second generation members from the same family were interviewed (postwar migrants and their children). The focus of all the interviews was of the post-war period, although the memories of some participants then extended into

later periods. Yet while this was a targeted (and thus not necessarily representative) sample of Italian migrants to Australia, all of these migrants had a complex relationship with these football codes. The methodology of oral history provides an entry point into these complex relationships by allowing for a focus on the meanings that forms of football came to hold – and still often hold – for these migrants. At issue is not the factual recall of particular events (such as what happened during a specific game), but rather the memories and recollections of migrants, and the stories and narratives this leads to.²³ More specifically, discussions with these migrants provided a window into the rich cultural, social and geographical spaces that the homes provided by spectator sports can facilitate – spaces of meaning and passion, but also exclusion as well as inclusion, and of potential intergenerational tensions as well as intergenerational bonding.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to tell the complete history of Italian migrant's relation with soccer and Australian Rules football in Australia, or to provide an extended discussion of the growth of particular soccer and Australian Rules football leagues and clubs during this period. Nor does this paper seek to chart how these relationships have changed over time. Instead, it begins the process of exploring the particular forms of home that Italian migrants found and made as supporters of two very different football codes in the post war period. The concern of this paper lies in the links between the memories of different migrants, rather than the collective memory produced by these migrants.²⁴ By exploring the opportunities that forms of football provided for engendering complex processes of orientation and transculturation in the Italian Australian communities of Sydney and Melbourne, this

paper argues for the importance of sport in migrants histories, and migration in sporting histories.

New Homes, New Cities, New Spaces of Belonging

Marcello Baroni was by no means alone in likening the space created by the football club he loved to a home – expressions and sentiments of home, family, and community flowed through the comments of the migrants who participated in this study. Toni de Bolfo for example, a third generation migrant who grew up in the Melbourne suburb of Carlton during the 1960s and 1970s, felt that the Carlton Australian Rules football club created ‘this sense of local community’ for the recent Italian migrants who in turn ‘lived, breathed, and ate’ the Carlton Football Club.²⁵ In a similar way the first generation migrant to Sydney’s suburb of Leichardt, Claudio Barbato, spoke about the way the APIA club ‘was like a little Italy in a foreign land; and from this it also created a soccer team... a bit like feeling at home’.²⁶ The centring, stabilising and nurturing role that APIA had in his life also emerged when he argued that APIA ‘is in our roots’.²⁷ Likewise, Giancarlo Contini and his son Alan Contini placed Association football at the center of their ‘cultural and multicultural’ life in Brunswick, a neighboring suburb to Carlton in Melbourne.²⁸ Gianfranco had played and refereed games in his hometown of Sondrio in the Lombardy region of Italy, but after journeying to Melbourne in 1955, Association football came to mean even more to him, giving him friends, a sense of community, and even coming to stand in for the extended family that he had left behind. They were, to use his words, part of ‘La grande famiglia del calcio’ (the grand family of football).²⁹ Yet, here it is important to emphasize that these feelings of home and

family were not induced emotions, but rather were produced. It is not as if migrants like Barbato, de Bolfo and the Contini's finally found themselves at home, but rather they *created* homes and associated communities through forms of football and the memories that they nurtured.

The soccer and Australian Rules football clubs discussed by these migrants acted as mnemonic and emotional sites that ~~center~~centre their identities, narratives, and stories and at the same time acted as spatial coordinates and references to places, real and metaphoric, that point to the importance of sport in the urban settlement of migrants. The homes facilitated by forms of football were located, in other words, within the cultural, social and geographical dimensions of Melbourne and Sydney. And for many of these migrants they provided an entry into the life of the city, a foothold from which they could orient themselves and come to know the new city that they were living in. But while notions of 'home' and related sentiments were used by participants for both soccer and Australian Rules football, the two sports provided quite different forms of home.

Going to school in Melbourne during the 1960s Dominic and Ralph Bonadio were faced with a question synonymous with the prevailing social, cultural and emotional life of the city: '~~W~~Who do you barrack for?'.³⁰ Those asking the question wanted to know which Australian Rules football team they supported. The sons of two recent migrants from Italy, Dominic and Ralph quickly learned that the only acceptable answer was to name one of the teams.³¹ So the brothers chose to follow Fitzroy, the closest Victorian Football League team to their home.~~the closest Victorian Football League team, Fitzroy.~~

It was a choice that shaped the rhythm of their daily lives and gave them a place not just in the local school-yard but also to the broader city of Melbourne. For much of the year football was the subject of play and conversations before, during and after school, as well as a major focus of the weekend. Soon Ralph and Dominic were attending Fitzroy's home games at the Lions nearby Brunswick Oval as well as venturing to see them play away in initially unfamiliar suburbs like Hawthorn, Essendon and Footscray. Indeed as Dominic remembers it, Australian Rules football gave the two brothers an entree into Melbourne's suburbs, through which they travelled on trains, trams and sometimes busses every second Saturday to see Fitzroy play.³² The Lions were notably unsuccessful – in 1964 they failed to win a game – and the continual losses were hard to bear. Yet like many other supporters, a stubborn hope continued to arise even after the grimmest defeats, and Dominic looks back nostalgically at the sense of belonging, at the 'tribalism' and the seasonal meaning that following Fitzroy gave him and his brother as the children of recent migrants in a big new city. Indeed, there are strong parallels between their accounts, and Tony Birch's memories of following Fitzroy in the 1960s and 1970s.³³

But if Australian Rules football provided Dominic and Ralph Bonadio with an entry point into the mainstream cultural, if also intimate, life of Melbourne, those who made a home through soccer were able to discover a different, less known, though still passionate, territorial life in Sydney and Melbourne. Post-war migrants to Sydney, Vincenzina and Ernesto Calderan recalled that 'back then there were many teams we went everywhere near Hakoah, Moore Park, then APIA, we played at Wollongong, then the Greeks, all these teams, all Sundays, was fantastic'.³⁴ The discovery here was of other migrant communities that had also created home,

communities and extended families through Association football. Gianfranco and Alan Contini spoke warmly, for example, of all the friends they had made from the different migrant communities to Melbourne, while Gioia Bottalico of Leichardt in Sydney fondly remembers that after each match the team and supporters would often go to the clubrooms and restaurants linked to the team they had travelled to play.³⁵ In this way she became close friends with people from Scotland, South Africa, Greece and the former Yugoslavia. ‘Through soccer we mixed with all kind of people, we were [ethnically] mixed, and learnt about different cultures, and English culture, if we did not go to APIA club we went to restaurants of different races [sic] learning different cultures ... [it] was very social’.³⁶

These findings extend Fielding’s observation that groups of European migrants in Toronto found commonalities (as well as differences) with other European migrant groups through soccer.³⁷ For Italian migrants in both Melbourne and Sydney the kinds of home that they found and created in soccer involved the development of cultural relationships and exchanges with other migrant groups, many of which were positive. Thus soccer provided not only an opportunity for a display of ethnic tribalism, but also an opportunity for transculturation, that is, for interaction, contacts and reciprocal influences amongst different groups.³⁸

From a geographical as well as emotional point of view, these football codes enabled migrants to participate in a form of ‘internal tourism’, travelling to parts of their new cities.³⁹ Here they behaved like other internal tourists who visit new places to attend sporting events, meeting new people, dining out, and exploring these hitherto unfamiliar areas.⁴⁰ But they did this before Sydney and Melbourne had become renowned for their ‘multicultural’ neighborhoods and cuisine – and thus

before such internal tourism had become popular. The orientation for these migrants was therefore not only metaphorical, it was geographical, physical, social and cultural, allowing them to move in space and discover new places. More specifically, both football codes became the reason that legitimated and encouraged migrants' movement beyond the reassuring boundaries of home and community, because the football club was itself a home. As Alan Contini described it, the football club was 'a happy meeting place that allowed you to forget everything, to forget that you had left your country and were now in a strange country; we felt at home and football really helped us'.⁴¹

Yet homes, like sports, are never as simple as they might at first appear. Neither are families and communities. And when all four intersect they can provide a rich insight into the tensions and limitations, as well as opportunities, that sport can provide spaces for re-orientation and exploration, as well as the possible differences and affects of the sporting cultures of Sydney and Melbourne. It is to these tensions, limitations, opportunities and differences, that ~~are we now~~ turn considered.

Exclusion, Inclusion and Urban Differences

Like many other modern cities – although perhaps to an even greater extent than is usual – the cultural, social and geographic life of Melbourne has become renowned for its focus on sport in general, and Australian Rules football in particular.⁴² Even migrants from other 'sports-mad' cities like New York, Edinburgh and Manchester have expressed surprise at the centrality of Australian Rules football to casual conversations in Melbourne.⁴³ The writer Peter Temple, another migrant to Melbourne, came to understand Australian Rules football as Melbourne's 'lingua

franca – it transcended class, transcended gender, you could talk about football to anyone'.⁴⁴ Becoming fluent in the 'footy talk' assisted Temple's orientation into Melbourne's culture, and he marvelled at this 'common language' whereby 'if you have nothing else to talk about, you can at least talk about football.'⁴⁵ This is again, an example of transculturation at work.

In a similar way Australian Rules football had provided Dominic and Ralph Bonadio with a positive entry point into the social and cultural geography of Melbourne. The same was true for many, but by no means all, young Italian migrants in the post-war years. As Tony de Bolfo noted, this form of football 'gave Italians that grew up in Melbourne a chance to be accepted and to compete'.⁴⁶ But such chances could be double-edged, as de Bolfo hinted when noting that the game provided a powerful 'form of assimilation'.⁴⁷ Assimilation policies and discourse had gradually developed in the ~~postwar~~post-war period in Australia, when it became clear that an increasing number of migrants from non-English speaking background had to be not only admitted into Australia, but encouraged to do so, as part of the so-called 'populate or perish' agenda. As Elder argues, the rhetoric of assimilation in fact fostered racism and exclusion, as 'large groups of migrants remained economically, socially and politically disadvantaged'.⁴⁸ Assimilation policies and practices often focused on the second generation of 'new Australians', which it was assumed would have more easily assimilated into Australian society; for instance Italian children were strongly encouraged to only speak English at school and even at home, and it wasn't uncommon for children of Italian migrants to feel ashamed of their own parents and cultural background.⁴⁹ It is within such context that Australian Rules football, being a sport unique to Australia and extremely popular in Melbourne, provided opportunities

for cultural and social negotiation for Italian children, while also being a powerful tool for assimilation. A good example of how the ideology of assimilation was imposed on migrant children through football is provided by Giancarlo Contini:

One of the thing that made me most sad happened on the ship to come to Australia. There was somebody from the Government that was helping us learning English. But he used to say: ‘you must forget about your football here!’... It made me feel so bad, so sad.⁵⁰

Dominic and Ralph Bonadio experienced some of these problems themselves. While they loved following Australian Rules football, the game became a site of intergenerational tensions at home. To put it bluntly, their parents hated it.⁵¹ Dominic and Ralph’s mother thought it was too rough, their father thought it unimportant and neither parent knew how to explain it to relatives back at home. Indeed for these first generation migrants Australian Rules football, and the endless conversations that flowed round it, was often not a site of inclusion but an alienating presence, an obstacle to be navigated around, and it was distressing – embarrassing even – that their two sons followed it so closely. In these tensions, one should recognize not just the intergenerational gap that is typical of migrants families and communities, but also the different forms of resistance and adaptation to assimilation, through which transculturation profoundly changes not just the migrant communities but also the broader society around them.⁵²

However, Australian Rules football should not be perceived only as a tool of assimilation, and some first generation Italian migrants used the game to facilitate cultural exchange. For instance, for Mario Fini, the game was initially not so

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important as a site of passion, but for the conversations and comradeship it enabled more generally.⁵³ [Mario-Fini](#) had migrated to Australia in the 1960s and moved to the west of Melbourne soon after. He went along to the games of the local elite league team the Footscray Bulldogs in the [1970s](#), but was not a [highly invested supporter/fan](#). Still, there was significant agency in his choice as most of the Italians he knew followed Carlton. Affiliating himself with the Bulldogs was a point of difference, and this could also be a site of tension when his boss – another Italian migrant who was one of the sponsors of Carlton – took [Mario-Fini](#) ‘to see Carlton thrash the Bulldogs’.⁵⁴ Then in 1989 when his local community battled the (then) Victorian Football League to save the Footscray Bulldogs from a forced merger, [Mario-Fini](#) and his family responded to this ‘slap in the face to the people of the Western suburbs’ by ‘rallying around the team and becoming *big* Bulldogs supporters.’⁵⁵ Indeed, such was the energy and passion that [Mario-Fini](#) brought to the Bulldogs that he became synonymous in his neighborhood with the team. ‘In Footscray everyone knows I am for Bulldogs’ he noted proudly.⁵⁶ Not only would [Mario-Fini](#) devour every bit of news printed in the local and Melbourne papers, but he also attended training sessions week after week for over two decades; only when he was in hospital would he miss the chance to show his support for the team. This was not assimilation, rather it was supporting his local community when it was in need, and in turn becoming part of that community without renouncing his own Italian identity. Though the Footscray (later Western) Bulldogs were not seen as the Italian team, [Mario-Fini](#) in fact did not deny or relinquish his Italian roots. When a player of Italian heritage, Tony Liberatore, became a Bulldogs star, he quickly became a

favourite of the Fini family, as did Tony's son Tom who now also plays for the Bulldogs.

As Vince Marrotta has argued, it is important not to underestimate the imbalance of power that is inherent in processes of transculturation.⁵⁷ Although Australian Rules football in Melbourne could provide a welcoming space for migrants, it could also be a site of hostility. This was especially true for migrants like Giancarlo and Alan Contini, who became involved with soccer. For although soccer had been played in Melbourne for ~~almost as many decades before they migrated, long as Australian Rules football, it~~ the sport had remained largely on the margins of popular and sporting culture and was continually maligned as a 'foreign' game.⁵⁸ Indeed, most of Italian migrants who had moved to Melbourne recalled significant experiences when they were demeaned due to their interest in soccer. Paolo Mirabella, for instance, recalls how 'if you'd talk about Association football in the 1950s and 1960s they would tease you, they would tell you that you were a woman, one couldn't speak openly about it, they used to call it "the sissy game", they would swear at you if they found out you were going to a football match'.⁵⁹ Many involved with Australian Rules football sought to keep the round ball code of football on the margins. Giancarlo Contini and then later Alan Contini experienced significant 'prejudice towards soccer'. 'Aussies called it wogball' noted Giancarlo, and 'everytime councils gave [Association football] teams grounds the Australian Rules football teams and leagues would protest'.⁶⁰ For Alan it seemed that 'Australians feared the "world game" may destroy Aussie Rules'.⁶¹

The racism and xenophobia experienced by Italians in and through the football game were consistent with those experience by ~~postwar~~ post-war migrants in schools,

workplaces and pubs. At the time of Italian migration to Australia in the postwarpost-war period, many Australians struggled to quickly adapt to the new social reality imposed by mass migration programs that were being implemented by the government. Their resulting hostility and xenophobia combined with forms of racism towards Italians that had much older roots, and that had been reinforced by the Second World War.⁶² Soccer, and in particular its contradictory characterisation as a feminine sport loved by violent supporters, became one of the areas in which Australian hostility towards Italian and other postwarpost-war migrant groups was more frequently and easily expressed.⁶³

The terms used by Giancarlo and Alan are instructive. ‘Australians’ or ‘Aussies’, were ‘hostile’ and ‘prejudiced’ towards the game they loved and devoted much of their life to. They were thus excluded in some ways, from being Australian due to a matter of sporting culture.⁶⁴ This finding is consistent with the extended literature on the ‘foreign’ position of soccer in Australia.⁶⁵ And yet, as previously noted, Melbourne’s ‘cultural and multicultural’ community around soccer provided a space for them that came to feel as-like home and they both felt they ‘contributed to the growth of the game’ in Australia.⁶⁶ Indeed, part of the strength of this community was that the considerable antipathy to soccer in broader Melbourne helped bind together more tightly those who were passionate about the game – the ‘us against them’ feeling meant that the particular form of homes provided by soccer were strengthened.

The social, cultural and geographic homes that Italian migrants found *and* made through memory work, tourism, engagement and negotiation around soccer and Australian Rules football in Melbourne differed significantly. Australian Rules

football was a site of popular passions and conversation, an entry-point into long-standing [centercentres](#) of meaning and rivalrous identifications, a place to feel part of the local community, the new city, and the nation more broadly. In contrast, those who entered into the worlds of Association football came to know a city of marginal but vibrant grounds and [centercentres](#), of strong non-Anglo Australian spaces that were somehow hidden from popular view or consciousness. That much of the surrounding city felt hostile to these spaces, bound those within them more tightly together. It was a place to be Italian in Australia, and to have a new identity of being European in Australia while forging relationships with other non-Italian migrants.

The Italian migrants to Sydney who participated in this study did not speak so much of the more popular football codes of the city, Rugby League and Rugby Union. Though these two codes dominated much of Sydney's sporting landscape, their culture does not seem to have been as all-pervading as that of Australian Rules football in Melbourne. Nevertheless the Rugby [Ccodes](#) – the more popular Rugby League in particular – could also be an entry point into Sydney's social, cultural and geographic life. Guido Tresoldi for example, deemed the rest of his family 'assimilationist' in the way that they quickly became Rugby League followers and had little to do with the local Italian clubs.⁶⁷ 'My father was very interested in rugby league, saying look we're Australian now, we have to be Australian'.⁶⁸ [TresoldiGuide](#) himself was initially antagonistic to both the local Rugby and soccer, though he and his father watched the English soccer shown weekly by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. [TresoldiGuide](#) also had no interest in trying to keep playing soccer either. Arriving Australia in 1974 as he entered his teenage years, [TresoldiGuide](#), in his words, was 'never good at sport', and back in Italy he had been the last child

picked on soccer teams and had grown sick of the way ‘every single day’ all people wanted to talk about ‘was soccer, soccer, soccer... I just thought it was just too much’. (It was only as an adult having moved to Melbourne that [Tresoldi](#) turned to sport as a source of passion and meaning, coming to love Australian Rules football – and the Carlton Football Club in particular – while also developing a passion for soccer).

Tresoldi had ‘reacted to’ the central place that soccer had for many in Italy, yet this was part of its critical importance for lots of other Italian migrants to Sydney. Gaetano la Greca remembers crying and crying as a new kid in Sydney until he found some people with whom to play soccer.⁶⁹ Not only could soccer be a space in Sydney that gave children like [Gaetano La Greca](#) a thing to do other than cry, it also became ‘like a language’ as Lisa la Macchia put it – a key focus of discussion and community life.⁷⁰ As in Melbourne, the speaking of this language was shaped by geography. Anthony Franze, in explaining why he was crazy for APIA, [emphasized](#) that he ‘grew up in Haberfield, 2 minutes from Lambert Park’ where the team used to play their home matches.⁷¹ For migrants playing soccer and living within an Italian local community, the orienting function of soccer came also to be about being [recognized](#) and respected by their community, and more in general by the neighbours. Memories of this kind are not abstract recollections of support by unknown fans; rather, they are grounded in specific urban contexts and communities. So Alex Bottalico, talking about his father’s popularity as a player for the APIA team, remembered that:

Dad used to take me around Leichhardt and Haberfield, and every single person knew him, talked to him; ... you know at school everybody knew dad

even now people my vintage or older would know him; I was at a funeral last year somebody came up: 'I used to see you playing I used to know your dad'.⁷²

This is not to say that the communities around Association football in Melbourne and Sydney were united without tensions. Ricatti and Klugman have provided a detailed exploration of the considerable tensions and animosity at times between the two main Italian soccer clubs in Sydney – Marconi and APIA – that reflected and re-worked the regional and socio-economic differences of the Italy migrants had journeyed from.⁷³ Meanwhile in Melbourne the biggest Italian Association football club, Brunswick Juventus, split a number of times and remains a site of contested histories and loyalties. Adam Treninni, a third generation migrant who is proud to speak Italian and loves both soccer and Australian Rules football, has been actively involved in a number of Italian soccer clubs around the north and west of Melbourne, enjoying the sense of community but sometimes 'falling out' with particular clubs and 'moving on' to find a home in another Italian soccer club.⁷⁴ The second generation migrant Nadja Edwards happily proclaims that (Association) 'football is my life' but also spoke of the tensions and political differences between those with heritage and links to the Triestini and Dalmatian/Istrian, which could be played out within and between clubs.⁷⁵ In these examples transculturation becomes apparent as being part of the way the Italian community in Australia developed. Profound differences *within* the Italian communities, in terms of class, politics, geographic provenience, regional identity and dialect were played out in the football field and in the football stands.

These rivalries and tensions can also be understood as a key form of orientation and re-orientation for Italian migrants to Sydney and Melbourne. Neither cities, communities, homes or families are monocultural, and sport was a vital space wherein these migrants carved out their intricate, nuanced relationships with those living and working around them. Even the act of ‘assimilation’, as some deemed the adoption of the mainstream (more) Anglo-Australian football codes, was itself an act of re-orientation and transculturation – and a complex one at that, for a diverse Italian community gathered around a club like Carlton, while the Fini’s defined themselves in part against that community and yet still celebrated the Italian players of their own team with particular gusto. In a similar way a diverse set of Italian migrants formed around both APIA and Marconi while at the same time defining themselves as a better sort of Italian than those at the opposing club.⁷⁶

Territorial Games – Belonging, Meaning and Magic

When asked about the importance of the Brunswick Juventus soccer club for Italian migrants, Sam Listro explained that the club was ‘the Italian migrants’ mum’ and that many migrants who would usually stay home most of the time, would only go out to watch the club play football.⁷⁷ Interestingly, Listro also added that Brunswick Juventus was jokingly called for many years the ‘the football whore’ due to the fact that the club often had to change its home ground.⁷⁸ That of course also meant that the supporters had to travel to different parts of the city, depending on the home ground their team had in a given season.

Yet if Brunswick Juventus could seem like a ‘mum’ who provided an inclusive home for many Italian migrants in Melbourne, those who followed other

soccer clubs in Melbourne were generally excluded from this maternal home. The interplay between exclusion and inclusion can be ambiguous, contradictory and at times paradoxical. It is even more so when sporting competitions intersect with matters of ethnic difference, rejection, othering and assimilation. It can be argued in a structural sense that all notions of community are founded on the exclusion of those outside the bounds of the community in question.⁷⁹ But while general descriptions of communities, homes and families tend to focus on inclusion, the languages and explicit practices of sporting clubs are based on territorial contestation. To become aligned with one sporting club is to set oneself in opposition to the many others that the club competes against. So the orientation is combative – an immersion in struggles and encounters with the other in which one either conquers or is conquered. And yet within this dynamic interplay there were further liminal spaces as illustrated by Claudio Barbato’s memory of Paul, a teammate from their school soccer team who used to discriminate and bully him. When a player from an opposition team called Barbato a ‘dago’, the same Paul defended him, saying: ‘this dago is one of us, leave him alone’.⁸⁰ The paradoxical nature of being simultaneously the Other (a dago) and ‘one of us’ exemplifies not only the positioning of the migrant as the outsider *within*, but also the opportunity offered by sporting codes to create liminal and ambiguous spaces of agency, orientation and negotiation.

The act of going to games, for many Italian migrants, was also an act *and* enactment of belonging. Tony de Bolfo recalls how many Italian migrants, young and old, would walk to the local Princes Park ground to see Carlton battle visiting opponents. ‘The game was tribal and territorial’, it was a classic case of ‘us against them’, and ‘the walk to the ground was magical’.⁸¹ One might well argue that such

experiences are typical of all football fans, and not just migrants.⁸² Yet it is ~~important~~ necessary to reflect on the importance that such feelings may acquire when they are experienced and performed by migrants within an assimilationist context. These migrants often did not feel at home in Melbourne, but they had created a home at the heart of the dominant sporting culture of Australian Rules football where they could be both Italian and Australian.

Giuseppe Cincotta describes the stadium at Sydney's Lambert Park, for a match between a Greek soccer team and APIA, in these terms:

APIA stadium at Lambert Park used to contain up to 30,000 people; ... people were everywhere climbing roofs of surrounding factories, the railway walls, walls disappeared, the atmosphere was *white hot*, APIA was followed by Italians and Panhellenic by Greeks.⁸³

~~Yet the atmosphere of intense heat at Association football matches could be read as threatening – as with soccer in Toronto – because the game was deemed foreign, and the behaviour of the people who attended was heavily scrutinized~~
~~Yet the atmosphere of intense heat at Association football matches could be read as threatening – as with soccer in Toronto – because the game was deemed foreign, the behaviour of the people who attended was heavily scrutinised.~~ Indeed, there is a history of fear in Australia concerning crowds gathering to watch soccer, and when this intersected with the fear of migrants resisting assimilation by gathering to watch a 'foreign' spectacle, the fear expressed by the media, police, and politicians could be heightened.⁸⁴ Here was a group of migrants 'appropriating' a public space (physically and symbolically) for their own enjoyment. Perhaps it was this fear which played a role in the Australian media's fascination with the possibilities and often minor

examples of so-called ‘ethnic’ soccer violence. For as a number of scholars have noted, soccer violence (and the potential for violence) was ‘played up’ by Australian newspapers, radio stations and commercial ~~television~~^{TV} news coverage, while similar acts of violence with regards to Australian Rules football and Rugby League crowds were downplayed and often ignored.⁸⁵ A newspaper report from 1953, for example, speaks of ‘several thousand yelling Italians’ who ‘swarmed’ onto an oval in Melbourne after a game, with reinforcements of police rushing to the area in order ‘to control the excited Italians’.⁸⁶ Supporters of Australian Rules football were not depicted in a similar manner as threatening the peace in post-war Melbourne.

Perhaps in intentional contrast with the media representation of ethnic clashes ~~in~~^{on} Australian football fields, the memory of most Italian migrants, while not necessarily denying episodes of violence, ~~emphasize~~^{seized} the opportunities offered by football for social encounters between different communities of migrants, and friendships between migrants of different background. Going to football matches, and participating in parties, dancing, and dinners was an incredible opportunity to discover the world through the encounters with supporters of different ethnic background. As Alan Contini put it:

Our social life was ... above all [with] the friends we met through Association football, and the nice thing about these friendships was that there were Jews, Poles, Yugoslavs, Germans, Austrians, English, Scottish, Australians. ... Thus, the beautiful thing about Association football for us has been that ... it has showed us that the world is really beautiful.⁸⁷

In addition the Italian migrants who participated in this study frequently told stories of familial and intergenerational bonding at football games. The event of going

to the stadium with their fathers occupies an important place in the memories of many of the second generation male migrants that were interviewed for this project. This is consistent with the fact that Association football, as well as other football codes, have for a long time had a bonding function between fathers and sons.⁸⁸ However this element can become particularly important within an often hostile migratory context. The first memories that Anthony Franze has, for example, are of going to see APIA Leichhardt with his father.⁸⁹

Yet although the familial and intergenerational bonding was often between boys and men, there were some intriguing hints of the possibilities that football stadiums could also offer girls and women. Anna Calderan, having grown up in a largely Anglo-Saxon suburb in Southern Sydney, instead of an Italian neighbourhood, emphasise ized another important geo-emotional function of soccer. She suggested that many Italians, including her parents, were strict and would rarely allow her to go out, for instance to the cinema with other girlfriends. Calderan Anna recalls being 'stuck inside the house', because her parents 'kept thinking Australian values were different'.⁹⁰ Here the house paradoxically plays the uncanny function of being the home in which one is shut in, the home in which a second generation migrant cannot really 'feel at home'. The walls that gave a home to her parents, that protected them and their daughter from an unfamiliar environment, paradoxically limited Calderan Anna's ability to shape her own homely Australian space. Association football was then an essential opportunity to go out and not only watch the game with passion, but also walk around, and 'look at the boys'.⁹¹ The importance of soccer for migrant women certainly deserves much more research, yet even little anecdotes in

the stories we have collected illustrate the potential of soccer to offer women a space of self-affirmation and freedom. ~~Anna~~ Calderan also recalled how:

Mum [was a] passionate supporter, she enjoyed the game. She used to scream and scream. [When] we were playing against the Greeks ... this Greek man said 'You gotta shut up'. Mum replied 'What do you mean I have to shut up? You shut up'. He asked 'Where is your husband?' My mum replied 'Why?' The man said 'I don't want to hit a woman, I want to hit your husband instead'.⁹²

One may be tempted to read such an anecdote with references to the gendered violence of football fandom, which scholars have explored at length.⁹³ One may even interpret it as evidence of the masculinist and patriarchal nature of Southern European communities. Yet, one should also not lose sight of the agency that both the mother and the daughter demonstrate in experiencing and remembering such an episode, and the significant role that football passion played in it. The homes that at least these women found and created in soccer were liberatory.

Many of the social, cultural and physical spaces that Italian migrants found *and* made through soccer and Australian Rules football were otherwise rare in the daily lives of these migrants to Australia. The football codes were sites of large, active gathering, places of both socialisation and expressions of territorialism, where communities and families gathered publicly in big crowds where passions were experienced and performed for all around to see. The migrants who participated in this study sometimes made sense of these spaces by way of allusions to church, but their religious life was typically conducted and enacted indoors, away from the

broader public gaze, while restaurants and cafes did not allow for gatherings of the same size, nor for excursions into other territories within the city.

Perhaps it is not so surprising then, that soccer and Australian Rules football could provide such intense meaning and memories for many Italian migrants. For these migrants found and created a particular form of public belonging that was at once opposed to other forms of belonging, and at the same time provided a weekly and seasonal rhythm to their lives in the new cities and cultures that they were entering into and negotiating with. The intensity was reflected in comments such as ~~that~~those by Nadja Edwards that ‘football is my life’, and also by Tony de Bolfo’s memory that there was something magical about the walk through Carlton on the way to the football ground on game day.⁹⁴ But if it is true, as we have argued, that footballing passion came to play a central role in the emotional orientation of many Italian migrants, it is also not surprising that the real and metaphorical places signalling the end of such roles are represented as empty, disturbing, sad, and dangerous. Gaetano Barbato for instance, spoke of APIA’s eventual exclusion from the National League as a defining event, ‘*the black hole of my life*’.⁹⁵

~~Conclusion~~ Questions of Continuity and Further Research

When Jorge Knijnik migrated to Sydney from Brazil in 2009 he tried to follow the mainstream sports of Australian Rules football, cricket and the rugby codes, but they failed to capture his attention.⁹⁶ To his deep regret, it seemed Knijnik would ‘would never properly cheer for a team again’.⁹⁷ Then he began an ethnographic study of the Western Sydney Wanderers soccer club. When the game began and the crowd started chanting Knijnik’s ‘body started to shake’ and he ‘burst into tears’.⁹⁸ He didn’t know

anyone in the crowd, but suddenly felt a ‘sense of belonging’ that was so great that for ‘the first time in many years since my relocation, I felt at home’.⁹⁹ Knijnik’s new home gave him both an ‘us’ and a ‘them’, the Wanderers main rivals, Sydney FC. It also connected him to a set of other immigrants to Australia that became his friends, migrants like him who had found and created a new home through soccer.

This paper helps provide a historical context for Knijnik’s ethnographic and autoethnographic findings around the meaning that he and other immigrants have found in a particular football code. Many of the people who migrated from Italy to Australia in the post-war period told similar stories to Knijnik – soccer not only provided them with a vital new home, it was a site of transcultural exchange with other (non-Anglophone) migrant groups. Among other things, this shows how migrating to Australia did not only involve questions of integration and possibly assimilation, but also of building new relationships with people on the cultural periphery, as well as at the cultural centre. Unlike soccer, Australian Rules football provided Italian migrants to Melbourne with a home that linked into the dominant mainstream culture of the city. Yet even in this instance, becoming a supporter was not merely a question of assimilation but rather a transcultural process. Italians brought their own culture to teams like Carlton – they established a home in Australia in part by making an Australian Rules football team become linked to Italy. Moreover, some migrants asserted their own independence by choosing to follow other less-Italian teams. Both the Italian migrants who came to call soccer home and those who found and created homes in Australian Rules football also developed particular territorial and rivalrous relationships to other parts of the cities which they now lived in. Yet while those who followed Australian Rules football went to away

games with throngs of Anglo-Australians, soccer provided access to a more hidden, peripheral, and more European parts of Melbourne and Sydney which were yet to be celebrated for their multicultural ethnic diversity. Among other things, it enabled a form of interal tourism that was yet to become part of the mainstream culinary identities of both cities.

Further study is needed to explore which elements have changed, as well as those that have remained the same, in the relationship and meaning that migrants to Australia have found in sports like the football codes. A comparison of the experiences of different groups of migrants is also necessary, as are a deeper examination of the impact of gender and the different experiences of first and second (and later) generations. A broader comparison of the experiences of migrants to Australia and other countries is also warranted. More generally, however, this study helps confirm the need for continued engagement with the meanings that migrants can find and create in sport as they negotiate with the many different cultures of the new countries they have moved to.

¹ Interview with Marcello Baroni, January 31, 2012.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. See also Loretta Baldassar, *Visits Home: Migration Experiences Between Italy and Australia* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001); and Francesco Ricatti, *Embodying Migrants: Italians in Postwar Australia* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011).

⁴ Interview with Marcello Baroni, January 31, 2012. [To limit confusion between the two codes of football, We will refer to Association football is referred to](#) as soccer for the rest of this paper unless using a quote that refers to the game as football.

⁵ Baldassar, *Visits Home*.

⁶ Sara Ahmed, 'Home and Away: Narratives of Migration and Estrangement', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 2, no. 3 (1999): ~~329-347~~, 330.

⁷ Shelley Mallett, 'Understanding Home: A Critical Review of the Literature', *Sociological Review* 52, no. 1 (2004): ~~62-89~~, 62.

⁸ Stephen Fielding, 'Ethnicity as an Exercise in Sport: European Immigrants, Soccer Fandom, and the Making of Canadian Multiculturalism, 1945–1979', *International Journal of the History of Sport* [The International Journal of the History of Sport](#) 34, no.10 (2017): 970–991, 970.

⁹ Ibid, 984, 980.

¹⁰ Ian Syson, *The Game that Never Happened: The Vanishing History of Soccer in Australia* (Melbourne: Sports and Editorial Services Australia, 2018). For a broader history see Roy Hay and Bill Murray, *A History of Football in Australia: A Game of Two Halves* (Melbourne: Hardie Grant, 2016).

¹¹ Joe Gorman, *The Death and Life of Australian Soccer* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2017); Philip Mosely, *Ethnic Involvement in Australian Soccer: A History 1950–1990* (Belconnen: Australian Sports Commission, 1995).

¹² Fielding, 'Ethnicity as an Exercise in Sport', 974. See for example, Jessica Carniel, 'Sheilas, Wogs and Metrosexuals: Masculinity, Ethnicity and Australian Soccer', *Soccer and Society* 10, no. 1 (January 2009): 73–83; Chris Hallinan and John Hughson. 'The Beautiful Game in Howard's "Brutopia-Brutopia": Football, Ethnicity and Citizenship in Australia', *Soccer and Society* 10, no. 1 (January 2009): 1–8; and Roy Hay, 'Ethnicity, Structure and Globalization: An Argument about Association Football in Australia, 1958–2010', *Sport in Society*, 14, no. 6 (August 2011): 833–50. For an overview of this literature with regards to Italian migrants to Australia see Francesco Ricatti and Matthew Klugman, "'Connected to Something": Soccer and the Transnational Passions, Memories and Communities of Sydney's Italian Migrants', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 30, no. 5 (2013): 469–483.

¹³ See for example, Stephen Alomes, 'Tales of the Dreamtime: Australian Football as Secular Religion', in *Australian Popular Culture*, ed. Ian Craven with Martin Gray and Geraldine Stoneham (eds) *Australian Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 46–65; and Ian Andrews, 'The Transformation of 'Community' in the Australian Football League. Part Two: Redrawing "Community" Boundaries in the Post-War AFL', *Football Studies*, 2, no. 1 (1999): 106–24.

¹⁴ Ciannon Cazaly, 'Playing the Game: The Experiences of Migrant-Background Players in Australian Rules football', (PhD diss., thesis, The University of Melbourne, 2013). See also Phillip Mosely, Richard Cashman, John O'Hara, and Hilary Weatherburn, eds., *Sporting Immigrants: Sport and Ethnicity in Australia* (Sydney: Walla Walla Press, 1997), especially the chapter by Bob Stewart, Rob Hess, Chris Dixon on 'Australian Rules Football', 185–198.

¹⁵ Charles Little, 'The Forgotten Game? A Reassessment of the Place of Soccer within New Zealand Society, Sport and Historiography,' *Soccer & Society* 3, no. 2 (2002): 38–50.

¹⁶ On the concept of transculturation see in particular Paul Allatson, 'Transculturation', in *Key Terms in Latino/a Cultural and Literary Studies* (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 229–232; Vince Marotta, 'The Multicultural, Intercultural and Transcultural Subject', in *Global Perspectives on the Politics of Multiculturalism*, ed. Fethi Mansouri and Boulou Ebanda de B'éri (eds), *Global perspectives on the Politics of Multiculturalism*, (Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2014), 90–102; Ilaria Vanni, 'The Transcultural Edge', *Portal. Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies*, 13, no. 1 (2016): 1–8.

¹⁷ Jessica Carniel, *Understanding the Eurovision Song Contest in Multicultural Australia* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); Marina Richter, "'A Country Full of Snow": Spanish

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¹⁸ Francesco Ricatti, *Italians in Australia: History, Memory, Identity* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 1-15.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 17-31.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 53-62

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² 31 interviews were conducted by Antonella Biscaro in Sydney, and 28 by Carlo Carli in Melbourne. On most occasions first generation and second generation members from the same family were interviewed (~~postwar~~post-war migrants and their children). In a few instances, also the grandchildren. Participants chose whether the interviews were conducted in English or Italian, and some participants swapped between languages as the interviews proceeded, although the majority of first-generation migrants chose to be interviewed in Italian. All interviews were conducted between 31 August 2011 and 16 December 2012. The interviews in Italian have been translated into English by the lead author of this paper. Where actual names are used, permission was given to the researchers in writing. Participants were chosen who considered football (of one code or another) an important aspect of their lives in Australia. Interviews focused on different aspects of their relation with football, depending on the interviewees' personal histories (as supporters, players, trainers, etc.).~~The interviews in Italian have been translated into English by the lead of the author of this paper. Where actual names are used, permission was given to the researchers in writing. The interviewees were all people who considered football an important aspect of their lives in Australia. Interviews focused on different aspects of their relation with football, depending on the interviewees' personal histories (as supporters, players, trainers, etc.)~~

²³ See for example Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli, and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991); Miranda Miles and Jonathan Crush, 'Personal Narratives as Interactive Texts: Collecting and Interpreting Migrant Life-Histories', *Professional Geographer*, 45, no. 1 (1993), 84-94; and Mary Chamberlain and Selma Leydesdorff, 'Transnational Families: Memories and Narratives', *Global Networks* 4, no. 3 (2004): 227-241.

²⁴ For more on memory and sport see Alon Confino, 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method', *American Historical Review*, 102, no. 5 (December 1997): 1386-1403.

²⁵ Interview with Tony de Bolfo, May 20, 2012.

²⁶ Interview with Claudio Barbato, November 3 2011.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Interview with Giancarlo Contini May 12, 2012; and Interview with Alan Contini May 25, 2012.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

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³⁰ Interview with Dominic Bonadio and Ralph Bonadio, June 23, 2011. See for example Romana Koval, 'Thighs and Whispers', in *The Greatest Game*, ed. Ross Fitzgerald and Ken Spillman (eds), *The Greatest Game* (Melbourne: Heinemann, 1988), 89–94; and Matthew Klugman, "'Football is a Fever Disease Like Recurrent Malaria and Evidently Incurable': Passion, Place and the Emergence of an Australian Anti-football League", *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28, no. 10 (2011): 1426-1446.

³¹ Interview with Dominic Bonadio and Ralph Bonadio.

³² Ibid.

³³ Tony Birch, "'Your Heart Will Quicken": The Death and Birth of a Fan', in *From the Outer: Footy Like You've Never Heard It*, ed. Alicia Sometimes and Nicole Hays (eds), *From the Outer: Footy Like You've Never Heard It* (Melbourne: Black Inc., 2016), 40-55.

³⁴ Interview with Vincenzina Calderan and Ernesto Calderan, February 12, 2012.

³⁵ Interview with Giancarlo Contini; Interview with Alan Contini; and Interview with Gioia Bottalico, November 4, 2011.

³⁶ Interview with Gioia Bottalico.

³⁷ Fielding, 'Ethnicity as an Exercise in Sport', 980.

³⁸ For the use of this concept in the context of Italian migration to Australia, see in particular Francesco Ricatti, *Italians in Australia*, 1-15.

³⁹ Marjorie Esman, 'Tourism as Ethnic Preservation: The Cajuns of Louisiana', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 11, no. 3 (1984): 451-467.

⁴⁰ Heather Gibson, *Sport Tourism* (Oxon: Routledge, 2013).

⁴¹ Interview with Alan Contini.

⁴² Laura Misener and Daniel Mason, 'Fostering Community Development Through Sporting Events Strategies: An examination of Urban Regime Perceptions', *Journal of Sport Management*, 23 (2009): 770-794.

⁴³ Klugman, "'Football is a Fever Disease'".

⁴⁴ Adam Muyt, *Maroon and Blue: Recollections and Tales of the Fitzroy Football Club* (Melbourne: Vulgar Press, 2006), 176.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Interview with Tony de Bolfo.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Catherine Elder, 'Immigration History', in *Australia's History: Themes and Debate*, ed. Martyn Lyons and Penny Russell (eds), *Australia's History: Themes and Debate* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2005), 98-115, 110.

⁴⁹ Ricatti, *Italians in Australia*.

⁵⁰ Interview with Giancarlo Contini. For a history of anti-soccer acts and practices in Australia see Ian Syson, *The Game That Never Happened: The Vanishing History of Soccer in Australia* (Melbourne: SESA, 2018).

⁵¹ Interview with Dominic Bonadio and Ralph Bonadio.

⁵² Ricatti, *Italians in Australia*.

⁵³ Interview with Mario Fini, May 13, 2012.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Marotta, 'The multicultural, Intercultural and Transcultural Subject', 95.

⁵⁸ Syson, *The Game That Never Happened*; Joe Gorman, *The Death and Life of Australian Soccer* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2017); Ian Syson, 'Shadow of a Game: Locating Soccer in Australian Cultural Life', *Meanjin*, 68, no. 4 (2009), 136-44; Roy Hay, "'Our Wicked Foreign Game": Why has Association Football (Soccer) not Become the Main Code of Football in Australia?', *Soccer and Society*, 7, nos. 2-3 (2006), 165-86; and Chris Hallinan and John Hughson (eds), *The Containment of Soccer in Australia: Fencing off the World Game* (Oxon: Routledge, 2013).

⁵⁹ Interview with Paolo Mirabella, November 30, 2012.

⁶⁰ Interview with Giancarlo Contini. See also Johnny Warren, *Sheilas, Wogs and Poofers: An Incomplete Biography of Johnny and Soccer in Australia* (Sydney: Random House Australia, 2002). The word 'wog' is an insulting Australian term used to refer to people of Mediterranean heritage. See Carniel, 'Sheilas, Wogs and Metrosexuals'; and Hallinan and Hughson, 'The Beautiful Game in Howard's "Brutopia": Football, Ethnicity and Citizenship in Australia', *Soccer and Society*, 10, no. 1 (2009), 1-8.

⁶¹ Interview with Alan Contini.

⁶² Ricatti, *Italians in Australia*.

⁶³ For more on the contradictory relationship of mainstream Australia to soccer see Syson, *The Game That Never Happened*.

⁶⁴ Hallinan and Hughson, 'The Beautiful Game in Howard's "Brutopia"'.

⁶⁵ Syson, *The Game That Never Happened*.

⁶⁶ Roy Hay, 'Ethnicity, Structure and Globalization'. For a more recent study of the complexities of Australian multiculturalism and Association Football see Jorge Knijnik and Ramón Spaaij, 'No Harmony: Football Fandom and Everyday Multiculturalism in Western Sydney', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 38 no. 1 (2017), 36-53.

⁶⁷ Interview with Guido Tresoldi, December 10, 2012.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Interview with Gaetano La Greca, November 30, 2011.

⁷⁰ Interview with Lisa la Macchia, February 12, 2012.

⁷¹ Interview with Anthony Franze, December 19, 2011.

⁷² Interview with Alex Bottalico, November 4, 2011.

⁷³ Ricatti and Klugman, "'Connected to Something"'.

⁷⁴ Interview with Adam Treninni, October 29, 2012.

⁷⁵ These are two very regions where people who understood themselves as Italians lived. Trieste is in the north-east of Italy, while the Istrian peninsula goes below Trieste to what is now Croatia and Slovenia. Interview with Nadja Edwards, June 9, 2012.

⁷⁶ Ricatti and Klugman, "'Connected to Something"'.

⁷⁷ Interview with Sam Listro, June 10, 2011.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Jacques Derrida, *Points...: Interviews, 1974–1994*, ed. ~~ited by~~ Elisabeth Weber, trans. ~~lated by~~ Peggy Kamuf (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995).

⁸⁰ Interview with Claudio Barbato, November 3, 2011. Dago is another insulting term for people of Mediterranean heritage.

⁸¹ Interview with Tony de Bolfo.

⁸² See for example Chris Oakley, *Football Delirium* (London: Karnac, 2007).

⁸³ Interview with Giuseppe Cincotta, November 5, 2011, [his emphasis](#).

⁸⁴ Syson, *The Game That Never Happened*; Hallinan and Hughson, *The Containment of Soccer in Australia*.

⁸⁵ See for example Hallinan and Hughson, ‘The Beautiful Game in Howard’s “Brutopia”’; and Hay, ‘“Our Wicked Foreign Game”’.

⁸⁶ ‘Italian Crowd Ends Soccer Match in Violence’, *Canberra Times*, 13 July 1953, p4.

⁸⁷ Interview with Alan Contini.

⁸⁸ Ricatti and Klugman, ‘“Connected to Something”’.

⁸⁹ Interview with Anthony Franze.

⁹⁰ Interview with Anna Calderan, February 12, 2012.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ See for example, Carniel, ‘Sheilas, Wogs and Metrosexuals’.

⁹⁴ Interview with Nadja Edwards; and Interview with Tony de Bolfo.

⁹⁵ Interview with Gaetano Barbato, November 3, 2011, [his emphasis](#). For more on the loss of such clubs, see Gorman, *The Death and Life of Australian Soccer*; and Ricatti and Klugman, ‘“Connected to Something”’.

⁹⁶ Jorge Knijnik, ‘Feeling at Home: An Autoethnographic Account of an Immigrant Football Fan in Western Sydney’, *Leisure Studies*, 34:1 (2015), [34–41](#).

⁹⁷ Ibid, 38.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.