
This is a post-print version, with page numbers adjusted to match those of the publication.
Music and migration is a magnificent and far-reaching theme, and contemporary ethnomusicology is showing considerable interest in migrant musics and diasporic traditions.¹ This volume brings together a collection of chapters centring on the musical experiences of Italians, one of the world’s most migratory peoples, in the physically and culturally distant society of Australia over the course of the last century. In 2011, the Italian born and their descendants numbered almost a million people, nearly 5 percent of the Australian population. As Donna Gabaccia has commented from a global perspective:

Overall, no other people migrated in so many directions and in such impressive numbers—relatively and absolutely—as from Italy. And few showed such firm attachment to their home regions, or returned in such large proportions.²

In Australia, too, a transnational perspective is needed to understand not only the nature and development of the migratory flow of Italian people to Australia, but also the ongoing interactions of Italians in Australia with families in Italy and elsewhere in the diaspora.³

This volume addresses many different dimensions of the musical role of Italian immigrants in Australia. Contributions by Australian-based scholars (including the editors) range from the reception of travelling Italian opera companies in 1920s Australia (chapter 2), to histories of individual performers and groups

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¹ Amongst many other publications, we might mention a number of recent special issues of relevant journals on the theme of music and migration: Michael Collyer and John Baily, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 23.2 (Special Issue: Music and Migration) (2006); Tina Rammarine, *Ethnomusicology Forum* 16.1 (Special Issue: Musical Performance in the Diaspora) (2007); Kay Dreyfus and Joel Crotty, *Victoria Historical Journal* 78.2 (Special Issue: Music, Migration and Multiculturalism) (2007); Maria de São José Corte-Real, *Migrações: Journal of the Portuguese Immigration Observatory* 7.2 (Special Issue: Music and Migration) (2010), http://www.oai.acidi.gov.pt/docs/Revista_7EN/Migracoes7_EN.pdf.
(chapters 3, 4 and 8), the trajectories of particular instruments (the fisarmonica, chapter 6, and the Viggiano harp, chapter 8) and performance occasions (song festivals, chapter 7), through to speculations on the reasons behind the persistence (or otherwise) of particular musical phenomena amongst Australia’s immigrants of Italian origin (chapters 5 and 9). A transnational counterpoint to these Australian perspectives is provided by an innovative feature of this volume, namely the inclusion of a few short interventions by scholars from Italy or the Italian diaspora who have no connection with Australia. There is no question that the essays in this volume present some intriguing facts about Italian regional traditions brought to Australia, facts that are little known in Italy or in other countries in the Italian diaspora.\textsuperscript{4} The Italian-Canadian scholar Luisa Del Giudice provides some parallel observations from elsewhere in the Italian diaspora (chapter 10), while two Italian scholars offer different perspectives on the broader phenomenon of Italian music in the world. In chapter 11, Franco Fabbri examines some musical and sociological aspects of the reversal of the traditional migratory flow that has brought many foreign immigrants to Italy itself in recent decades; while Paolo Prato’s commentary in chapter 12 views the phenomena of Italian music in Australia from the broader perspective of the role of music in defining the Italian nation in the 150 years or so since unification, and discusses the different trajectories of certain genres as they have developed in Italian society, as opposed to their development in the very different social milieu of Anglophone Australia. Needless to say, this volume cannot contain all that has been written in this country or elsewhere about the musical traditions, outlooks and attitudes of Italian Australians, although our bibliography lists many contributions that have informed the work of our contributors.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{4} Thiele’s story of the emigration of Viggianese harp-players to Melbourne (chapter 8) is just one of them. With the exception of some ethnomusicologists and folklorists, very few Italians (outside of Viggiano, of course) have ever heard about Viggiano and the Viggiano harp.

\textsuperscript{5} Other contributions that might have been included here were unfortunately not available for one reason or another.
Italians and Australians

Australia and Italy were formed as nation states within forty years of each other (Italy in 1861 and Australia in 1901). In 1770, seafarers originating from what would later come to be the nation of Italy were amongst the crew of the first British ship to survey the continent that would later come to be called Australia. The numbers of Italian immigrants to Australia were negligible up until the period between the First and Second World Wars, when traditional labour migration flows to the United States were impeded by the introduction of quotas. A small part of this flow found an alternative Anglophone outlet in Australia, with more than 25,000 Italians emigrating to Australia in the period 1922–1930 (between 1916 and 1945, fewer than 1 percent of Italy’s 140 million international emigrants came to Australia). At this time there was significant immigration from the northern provinces such as the Veneto, which had been particularly badly affected by the First World War, but the huge wave of immigration that arrived after the Second World War (over 300,000 in total between 1945 and 1973) comprised mainly Southerners. During this post-War boom, Australia became proportionally a much more significant destination for Italy’s international emigrants, accepting some 5% of Italy’s 7.3 million international emigrants in the period 1946-1975.

Following the economic resurgence of Italy’s manufacturing sector (which led to greater employment opportunities within its national borders and therefore less incentive for emigration), since the early 1970s there has been a

6 A Venetian named Antonio Ponto was one of the crew on Captain Cook’s boat Endeavour, which reached Australia in 1770 (see James Jupp, *The Australian People: An Encyclopaedia of the Nation, Its People and their Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 486. Indeed, given the multinational labour force that crewed European ships, it is possible that sailors from the Italian seafaring states may have been part of the crews of the Dutch and Portuguese ships that in the seventeenth century were the first European ships to visit and map the Australian coastline. Jan Lucassen, *Migrant Labour in Europe, 1600–1900* (London: Croom Helm, 1987); Jan Lucassen, “A Multinational and Its Labor Force: The Dutch East India Company, 1595–1795”, *International Labor and Working-Class History* 66 (2004): 12–39.


9 Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* [4].

10 Cresciani, *The Italians in Australia* 125.


12 Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*.

13 Castles, “Italian Migration and Settlement Since 1945” 35.
gradual net loss of the Italian-born in Australia, with return migration and natural attrition outweighing new immigration. Italians in Australia are a well-established group amongst the approximately 27 percent of the Australian population born overseas. Italians are the fifth most common group of the overseas-born (after England, New Zealand, China and India), comprising an estimated 185,400, or 3.5 percent of overseas-born in 2011. Approximately 730,000 second and subsequent generations now vastly outnumber these first-generation immigrants: the 2011 census shows that Italian was the fifth most identified ancestry, behind “English”, “Australian”, “Irish” and “Scottish”. Over 916,100 people (or 4.6 percent of the total population) identified Italian ancestry. The second and third generations have a higher than average rate of marriage to others of Italian ancestry, a higher than average retention of their language in the home.

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14 The 2006 Australian census shows that 165,971 of the 199,000 Italian-born then resident in Australia had arrived before 1971. Department of Immigration and Citizenship.
17 Because this was an optional question in the census, and only two ancestries could be nominated, it is likely that there are more Australians of Italian descent than reflected in this statistic. Australian Bureau of Statistics, “Cultural Diversity in Australia”. This represents a significant growth from the estimated population of Italian ethnicity in Australia in 1998 was over half a million (estimated by Price at 660,800 people or 3.55 percent of the population in 1998). C.A. Price, “Post-war immigration: 1947–98”, Journal of the Australian Population Association 15.2 (1998): 115–29.
and consequent ability and interest to maintain links with family in Italy. After English only and Mandarin Chinese, Italian was the third most utilised language at home, with 295,000 speakers, of whom 43.2 percent were born in Australia. Australians of Italian descent are not only numerically strong—they have also demonstrated significant commitment to maintenance of their ancestral linguistic and cultural identity.

Because of the distances involved, lower proportions of return migration of Italian Australians are reported than from elsewhere in the Italian diaspora, where the average figure is estimated to be closer to 50 percent. Demographers estimate that approximately 25 percent of the postwar Italian migrants to Australia returned to Italy (as against 42.5 percent of emigrants in the period 1922–1940). Historically, Northern Italian immigrants have been more likely to return than those who originally emigrated from Southern Italy. According to Baldassar, “of those who chose to settle in Australia, almost all—including their Australian-born children—returned to their homeland for visits, or at least planned to”. The generation that arrived as young adults in the 1950s and 1960s reached retirement age in the 1990s, at the same time that international travel became much more affordable for those who wished to return for extended visits or to resettle.

Despite the convenience of the label “Italian”, it may cover a multitude of different local and regional cultures and dialects especially for the first generation of

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19 Baldassar, *Visits Home*; Baldassar and Gabaccia, *Intimacy and Italian Migration*.
21 Although statistics on the total numbers of returnees to Italy worldwide will never be certain, the proportion is estimated at about 50 percent. Gabaccia, *Italy’s Many Diasporas 7*.
immigrants.\textsuperscript{26} When Italy was made into a nation in 1861, only a tiny fraction of the population outside Rome and Tuscany spoke Italian (the rest spoke the regional dialects that survive in part even today, and other languages such as Albanian, Greek, Cimbrian, Franco-Provençal, and Slovenian that have almost disappeared today).\textsuperscript{27} Rather than constituting a pan-Italian “community”, Italians in Australia initially tended to form social networks centred around region of origin (thus, the Tuscany Association or the Sicilia Club).\textsuperscript{28}

Most Italian emigrants, whether Northerners or Southerners, came from rural areas, especially in regions where small-holdings predominated and where emigration provided an opportunity for savings to purchase land in the \textit{paese} (home village).\textsuperscript{29} The foundations and social precedents for the widely reported patterns of chain migration to Australia had been laid long before by patterns of seasonal local migrations of rural labour common in Italian peasant societies,\textsuperscript{30} and were fostered in Australia from the 1920s by government attempts to regulate the labour flow by imposing requirements for financial sponsorship of new immigrants.\textsuperscript{31} This had the effect of further strengthening the traditional social ties of family and village-based loyalties underlying traditional social structure in Italian peasant societies.\textsuperscript{32} Such historical patterns of chain migration led to

\textsuperscript{26} From the beginning the perception was that it was going to be difficult to make a nation out of the previous small states that had very different history and traditions. To this day, Sorce Keller has argued, Italy is a nation with a weak sense of national identity. Marcello Sorce Keller, “L’Italia in musica: ricostruzione ad ampi squarci (e un po’ temeraria) di un’identità problematica”, \textit{Musica/Realtà} 89.Luglio 2009 (2009): 115–30. The observation that once Italians migrate, their regional identity takes over seems to prove it. Intriguingly, in emigrant communities originating in Switzerland, another nation whose identity is complex and problematic (though very different from Italy), precisely the same phenomenon occurs. When the Swiss migrate, their language affiliation takes over. Marcello Sorce Keller, “Transplanting Multiculturalism: Swiss Musical Traditions Reconfigured in Multicultural Victoria”, \textit{Victorian Historical Journal} (special issue on “Music, Migration and Multiculturalism”, guest editors Kay Dreyfus and Joel Crotty) 78.2 (2007): 187–205.


\textsuperscript{28} Cresciani, \textit{The Italians in Australia} 139.

\textsuperscript{29} Dino Cinel, \textit{The National Integration of Italian Return Migration, 1870–1929} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); MacDonald and MacDonald: 249–76.


\textsuperscript{31} MacDonald and MacDonald: 249–76.

\textsuperscript{32} Rudolph M. Bell, \textit{Fate and Honor, Family and Village. Demographic and Cultural Change in Rural Italy since 1800} (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1979).
the formation of neighbourhoods in Australian cities that are clearly marked as “Italian”.
Some suburbs, such as Sydney’s Haberfield and Leichhardt, Perth’s Fremantle or
Melbourne’s Carlton, developed an Italian ambience, with Italian (or dialect) spoken in the
shops and by doctors and other services.

While national labels are convenient, they are only appropriate when there is a real
social space of interaction and public and private communication (which national
governments seek to foster through provision of transport, communication and education and
institutional infrastructure, as well as through support of cultural activities). The locally-
rooted cosmopolitan culture of Italy’s rural peasantry had been developed over decades to
strengthen the social networks that supported emigrants through chain migration abroad and
ensured that they returned benefits of their emigrant experience through remittances and
return migration. In Australia, as elsewhere at the other end of these chains, Italy’s diasporas
“evolved into global webs connected largely to an individual … paese rather than to each
other or to the Italian nation”. It was because of these global webs that back in the paese,
too, cultures of campanilismo (loyalty to one’s home village) were not just inward-looking,
but also aware of and tied into the cosmopolitan experiences of the emigrants and returnees.

Although campanilismo was vital in supporting rural emigrants in their early years in
Australia, in second and subsequent generations with their overwhelming concentration in
cities it has tended to give way to regionalism, nationalism and multiculturalism. Indeed,
many have argued that it was only abroad, in contrast to very different host societies, that a
sense of Italian nationality was able to develop. The different life experiences, needs and
aspirations of subsequent generations (not to mention changing government policies) have
naturally developed new social networks and cultural resources. As for Italian Americans,
regional and later national affiliations became increasingly important over time,

33 Roland Sarti, 'Long Live the Strong': A History of Rural Society in the Apennine Mountains
(Anmerst (USA): University of Massachusetts, 1985); Cinel, The National Integration; Adriano
Boncompagni, 'The World is Just like a Village': Globalization and Transnationalism of Italian
34 Gabaccia, Italy's Many Diasporas 36.
35 Sarti, Long Live the Strong.
36 Australia in general is highly urbanised, and Italian Australians are concentrated in the capital cities.
37 Vasta, “The Second Generation” 155–68. See also Gerardo Papalia, “From 'Terrone' to 'Wog': 'Post'
Colonial Perspectives on Italian Immigration into Australia”, Italian Historical Society Journal 11.2
leading to the formation of complex plural identities. A sense of Italian identity was also promoted in Australia from the 1970s, when Australian Government policies favouring multiculturalism and accords with the Italian Government fostered teaching of Italian language and culture in Australian schools and Universities.

Musical perspectives on Italy in Australia’s musical landscape

With some notable exceptions, the very diversified dialect-based oral traditions (including music) brought by the first generation immigrants to Australia largely ceased to be refreshed and developed because of lack of contact with the paese, perceived lack of relevance for immigrants and their children seeking to establish themselves in mainstream society, and not least a lack of interest or downright hostility from Anglophone Australian society. While some local musical traditions may have continued to be practised in community-specific domestic and religious spheres in Australia, before the implementation of multicultural policies by Australian governments in the 1970s the Anglophone majority had little tolerance for public demonstrations of cultural difference. When such expression of cultural difference began to be encouraged, however, the pressure was for displays of a unitary national identity, rather than the fragmented and locally specific cultural expressions of the various local and regional groups (see chapter 4 in this volume).

38 Cinel gives an interesting dissection of this phenomenon as it took place amongst San Francisco’s Italian immigrants in the period up to 1920. Dino Cinel, From Italy to San Francisco: The Immigrant Experience (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982).
40 Until the 1970s, that is, well after the establishment of Italian communities in Australia, costs of returning to Italy for holidays were prohibitive, as was the cost of international phonecalls. Camilla Bettoni, Tra lingua, dialetto e inglese: il trilinguismo degli Italiani in Australia (Sydney: Federazione Italiana di Lavoratori Emigrati e Famiglie (FILEF), 1985); Devoto and Giacomelli, I dialetti delle regioni d’Italia; Cinzia Campolo, “L’italiano in Australia”, Italiano LinguaDue 1 (2009): 128–41.
41 Papalia: 2–11.
43 Ellie Vasta and Stephen Castles, The Teeth are Smiling: The Persistence of Racism in Multicultural Australia (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1996); Papalia, “From 'Terrone' to 'Wog': 'Post' Colonial Perspectives on Italian Immigration into Australia”;
The young adults who arrived after World War II had very different musical interests and exposure from their compatriots of the pre-War period (see Comin’s chapter in this volume for a comment on the cultural differences). In addition to the locally specific oral traditional music styles of their paese, both the pre- and post-World War II generations of Italian immigrants to Australia were also influenced by the products of the increasingly globalised music recording industry as well as by opera (which had been spread to the most remote corners of Italy by travelling musicians and theatre groups, and circulation of operatic tunes in arrangements for locally-based brass bands).\textsuperscript{45} The Neapolitan songs popularised by the first recorded music industry boom on the east coast of the US in the 1920s soon spread into Italy and affected the local oral traditional styles as well.\textsuperscript{46} These repertoires became the “nostalgia music” for the post-World War II generations of Italian Australians (see Sorce Keller’s chapter in this volume). The burgeoning of the American popular music industry in the 1950s affected both Italy and Australia, with significant influence of Italian American musicians in both cases.\textsuperscript{47} The creation of a pan-Italian musical consciousness in Australia was also fostered by Italian-language broadcasting (dominated by the light classics, nostalgia music of the post-war generations, and Italian-American pop music).\textsuperscript{48} Associated activities, such as the piano-accordion schools discussed by in Whiteoak’s chapter in this volume (which trace complex lines of descent from the Italian diasporas of Northern and South America as well as Italy itself), like the song contests discussed by Scott-Maxwell in this volume, were promoted through the Italian-language Australian press and broadcasters, as well as through networks of personal acquaintance and social clubs.

The children of the post-war immigrants grew up in Australia as part of the baby boomer generation, influenced in their turn by the burgeoning British and

\textsuperscript{45} Dreyfus and Murphy’s chapter in this volume concerns the reception in Australia of visiting Italian opera companies sponsored by the Fascist Italian government, intended in part to rouse national sentiment amongst the growing numbers of Italian emigrants resident in Australia, most of whom had very little sense of loyalty to the Italian nation. See also Paolo Prato, La musica italiana: Una storia sociale dall’Unità a oggi (Roma: Donzelli, 2010).


\textsuperscript{47} Philip Bell and Roger Bell, eds., Americanization and Australia (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 1998); Prato, La musica italiana.

American global popular music of the 1970s and 1980s. At the same time, the increasing acceptance in mainstream Australian society of multiculturalism in general, and of Italians in particular as a longstanding immigrant group, freed the second generations to develop plural identities as Australians, Italians and global citizens. There are many interesting parallels to be drawn with the experiences of Italian immigrants to other Anglophone countries in this period, as suggested by Luisa Del Giudice’s chapter in this volume. The musical tastes and practices of the second and subsequent generations cannot be easily categorised. Some, like Adelaide’s Italian Folk Ensemble (see chapters 3 and 4) or Parallelo, have investigated traditional dialect-based songs and developed contemporary musical and theatrical performances that reflect on the role of Italians in Australia; others (like the composer Claudio Pompili or Lyndon Terracini, current director of Opera Australia) have pursued “classical” musical careers; and others, like Tina Arena, Vanessa Amorosi, Natalie Imbruglia and others have forged international careers in the global popular music industry. Any systematic study of the musical tastes and practices of the huge numbers of Australians of Italian ancestry would be methodologically challenging and is so far lacking, though some promising investigation of self-conscious musical reference to Italian “roots music” amongst young Sicilian DJs in Sydney has recently been undertaken by Cristoforo Garigliano. As Luisa Del Giudice (chapter 12) comments, scholarship on current transnational Italian musical practices amongst younger generations of Australians of Italian descent would fill an important gap and provide further points of comparison and contrast across the diaspora.

49 Cristoforo Garigliano, “‘L’ottava isola’: Studies on Music, Heritage and Cultural Identity between Sicily and Sydney” (PhD, Macquarie University, 2009).