

Ethnic Minorities and the Built Environment in Rural and Regional Australia

Sites of Segregation or Inter-Cultural Exchange?

Kirrily Jordan, University of Technology, Australia

Branka Krivokapic-Skoko, Charles Sturt University, Australia

Jock Collins, University of Technology, Australia

Abstract: Australia has one of the highest proportions of migrants of any country in the world. One aspect of this migration that is still poorly understood is the impact of different ethnic groups on the built environment of Australian cities and towns. Recent arrivals often seek to create a home by modifying their new landscape, transforming public spaces by building monuments, religious buildings, social clubs and community centres. These sites have often been overlooked in studies of Australia's built environment heritage. However, they often hold enormous significance not only for migrant communities but also in reflecting contestation over space and the contribution of migrants to the Australian political economy. Crucially, in a time of increasing concern over inter-cultural relations in Australia, these places can also be sites of inter-cultural exchange. Based on preliminary fieldwork in Griffith in New South Wales, the paper will explore the social, political and economic significance of one place built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants to Australia: the Griffith Italian Museum and Cultural Centre. Using the concepts of inter-cultural dialogue and bonding and bridging social capital, the paper explores the role of the Museum in facilitating social networks and improved relations within and between Griffith's ethnic communities.

Keywords: Built Environment, Ethnicity, Social capital, Bonding and Bridging

Introduction

IMMIGRATION AND CULTURAL diversity have become issues of major significance in Australia in recent years. In the few short decades since the official demise of the 'White Australia Policy', Australia has become one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. In terms of the proportion of the population born overseas, Australia ranks third internationally, behind only Israel and Luxembourg (OECD, 2003). Today, there are Australian residents from 180 of the world's 193 countries (Collins and Kunz, 2006). This rapid influx of migrants has had far-reaching consequences. In politics and law, immigration and multiculturalism have featured regularly on the national agenda. In education and employment, the global movement of people has raised questions about equality of access and directed energies to securing the best 'human resources' from across the world. In popular culture, the coexistence of peoples from diverse cultural backgrounds has inspired both cultural exchange and occasionally violent conflicts.

However, immigration in Australia has had yet another profound effect. This is the impact of migrants on the built environment. Since the first Europeans arrived over two-hundred years ago, successive waves of migrants have transformed the landscape through the construction of public and

private spaces, expressing their cultural heritage by continually altering the built form. Over the last few decades, the buildings constructed by the first European arrivals have been studied and documented as valuable examples of Australia's early heritage. However, the places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants have remained largely unrecognised as part and parcel of this heritage.

Several recent studies have argued that this lack of recognition is a result of official definitions of heritage that prioritise 'elite' or 'western' heritage at the expense of places significant to marginalised cultural groups. Hartfield (2001), for example, has argued strongly for the expansion of prevailing definitions of 'heritage' away from the age of structures to include places that are identified as significant by local communities, particularly focusing on the inclusion of ethnic minority groups.

Establishing the significance of sites can only be determined through community engagement. But it can also be informed by a growing body of literature about the meaning of place. In recent years researchers have begun to explore the meaning of particular 'cultural landscapes', including landscapes built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants. The changes migrants make to the built environment are often seen as part of a process of 'home building' or claiming space in an unfamiliar environment (Hage, 1997). This



claiming of space is not always uncontested. For example, geographer Kevin Dunn (2001, 2003, 2004) has documented the vocal opposition from non-Muslim residents to proposals to build mosques in several Sydney suburbs. Kay Anderson (1990) has highlighted the conflicts that have arisen over symbols of ethnicity in the built environments of public spaces such as Sydney and Melbourne's Chinatowns. Hence, it can be argued that places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants also have political significance as reflective of power relations and the struggle of cultural minorities for control over the use and design of space.

Significance can also refer to the economic importance of place. While there may be opposition to the building of facilities for ethnic and religious minorities, these facilities further the economic development of the broader community. For example, Walter Lulich (2003) has found that the construction of physical infrastructure by ethnic community organisations in Sydney has contributed an estimated \$1.5 billion to the city's economic resources. Perhaps more importantly, he also posited that places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants play a role in facilitating cultural exchange between ethnic groups. In an increasingly culturally diverse nation such as Australia, this is a key concept that warrants further exploration.

This paper first outlines the movement within heritage studies to include 'significance' in the determination of heritage sites. It then briefly addresses the literature on migrant 'home building' in the built environment and the contestations within and between ethnic groups over the use of public space. The paper then outlines recent research into the economic significance of places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants before turning to a discussion of the role of place in inter-cultural relations. The paper concludes with a practical application of these concepts to one site built by Italian migrants to Griffith, a regional city in south-western New South Wales (NSW)¹. Based on preliminary fieldwork involving surveys and informal interviews, it investigates the significance of the recently built Italian Museum and Cultural Centre to Italian migrants to Griffith and their descendants. In addition to the Museum's significance to the community, economy and politics of public space, the paper begins to explore the significance of the Museum in inter-cultural relations.

Migration and Heritage Places

Recent decades have seen a burgeoning interest in heritage sites, so much so that renowned geographer David Lowenthal has dubbed it a 'heritage crusade' (1998: ix). Interest groups regularly lobby to have particular buildings, towns or natural spaces listed on the numerous heritage registers that now exist at local, state, national and even international levels. What explains this growing interest in heritage? Lowenthal suggests several possibilities: 'nostalgia for things old', a quest 'for enshrined symbols of identity' or the consolation of tradition in difficult times (1998: 1). Moreover, heritage listings have significant practical implications. They not only confer status on heritage sites, but can attract privilege in resource allocation and wield significant political influence in development decisions.

In Australia, as in many other Western nations, heritage studies and registers have fostered the preservation of many sites of Anglo-Celtic built heritage. However, the physical heritage of non-Anglo-Celtic migrant communities has, to date, been largely overlooked. This may be due to dominant definitions of 'heritage' that identify the age of structures as a key feature in heritage determination. In Australia, the privileging of age over significance of structures has meant that many highly significant places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants have struggled for recognition. Lulich (2003) suggests that this is an element in Australia's continued Anglo-centricism and the concentration of cultural, political and economic power amongst Anglo-Celtic Australians. Similarly, Winnikoff (1992) argues that 'the material evidence of ethnic minority settlement is rarely celebrated' and that there is 'an obvious bias in favour of British influence' in research on the Australian built environment (in Lulich, 2003: 3). This, Winnikoff asserts, is 'a demonstration of the prevailing attitude of myopia' (Winnikoff, in Lulich, 2003: 3).

The exclusion of many non-Anglo-Celtic sites from heritage registers is common across Western countries. Studies in Australia (Armstrong, 1994a), the United States (Hayden, 1995) and New Zealand (Hartfield, 2001) have suggested that the dominant definitions of heritage prioritise 'elite' or 'western' heritage and overlook places important to socially and politically marginalised groups. Hartfield (2001) has argued that the prevailing definitions of 'heritage' should therefore move away from the focus on age of structures to include places that are identified as significant by local communities, particularly focus-

¹ This research is part of a broader study into places of significance to non-Anglo-Celtic migrants in seven cities or towns across urban, regional and rural NSW and Western Australia (WA). The cities and towns chosen have a strong history of non-Anglo-Celtic migration and the specific sites selected have been built or used extensively by those migrant populations. Griffith is an outstanding example of a regional city characterised by a high degree of cultural diversity. The most obvious non-Anglo-Celtic impact on Griffith's built environment is that of Italian migrants and their descendants. The full study will also explore places used by more recent migrant groups including the local Mosque and Sikh Gurdwara. This study is financially supported by the Australian Research Council.

ing on the inclusion of ethnic minority groups. This approach recognises that what constitutes 'heritage' is socially constructed and gives equal value to both places deemed significant by academic experts and those felt to be heritage by local communities.

To their credit, a number of local governments and state heritage bodies in Australia have recently begun to redress the lack of attention given to places built by ethnic minorities. In the late 1980s a partnership between the State Government and local governments in NSW funded local heritage studies as precursors to Local Environment Plans (Armstrong, no date: 2). In recent years, some local governments have built on this tradition by commissioning studies of local multicultural sites (see, for example, Kabaila, 2005). In addition, the National Trusts (non-governmental heritage agencies) in NSW and Western Australia have recently commissioned research into places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants, consciously prioritising the significance of buildings to the local community over their age. The significance of a site can only be established through adequate consultations with the local community. However, a consideration of the significance of places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants can also be informed by existing literature on the importance of place to a sense of belonging and the politics involved in the design of neighbourhoods and public space. It is to these considerations that the paper now turns.

Place and 'Belonging'

In spite of the lack of attention by official heritage bodies, the impact of immigration on Australia's built environment has been a recurrent theme in academic research over recent decades. Cultural and social geographers as well as academic architects and planners have developed a growing literature on 'cultural landscapes', including landscapes built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants. Helen Armstrong (1994a, 1994b, 1997, 2002), for example, has conducted several studies of multicultural suburbs and migrant heritage places in Australia. The cultural landscapes tradition within social geography has explored the ways in which landscapes can be read as 'texts', based on the 'proposition that places/landscapes are physical representations of public history awaiting interpretation' (Armstrong 2002: 206).

A major theme within this literature is the sense of place individuals and communities engender through enacting their cultural traditions or ways of life in the spaces they inhabit (Armstrong, 2002; Babacan, 2005/6). Anthropologist Ghassan Hage (1997) has described this as part of a process of 'home building' which may involve changes to the physical landscape as well as changes to the social landscape through language, food and cultural prac-

tices in an attempt to build a comfortable and familiar space in which migrants feel they can belong.

Place and Citizenship

Attempts of migrant communities to alter the built environment are not always uncontested, particularly when they are cultural minorities. As urban historian and architect Dolores Hayden (1995) has noted, all spaces are contested terrains. In Australia, this has been played out recently in attempts by non-Muslim residents of a number of Sydney suburbs to prevent mosques being built in their neighbourhoods. Kevin Dunn (2001, 2003, 2004) has documented this opposition, noting attempts by non-Muslim residents to cast themselves as the legitimate arbiters of the use of neighbourhood space as opposed to the Muslim 'outsiders'. He argues that these contests are reflective of broader tensions around what constitutes 'Australianess', diminishing the notion of citizenship by challenging the rights of cultural minorities to 'participate in the making and use of space' (Dunn, 2003: 162).

Some of the places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants to Australia have become iconic landscapes in their own right. These include 'ethnic precincts' such as Sydney's Chinatown, 'Little Italy' (Leichhardt) and Cabramatta. While the development of ethnic precincts is largely generated by the activities of 'ethnic entrepreneurs' (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003; Collins, *et al.*, 1995; Collins, 2005), it is also regulated and promoted by local and state government officials and place marketers (Collins and Kunz, 2005). In Sydney, for example, the State tourism authority (Tourism NSW) has begun promoting ethnic precincts as attractions to potential visitors (Collins and Kunz, 2006). Similarly, local governments have invested considerable resources in marketing ethnic precincts through regular festivals and community events. Fairfield City Council, in Sydney's south west, promotes the ethnic diversity of Cabramatta as a key attraction, its website enticing the reader to enjoy a 'day trip to Asia' (Fairfield City Council, 2006).

However, a number of studies have highlighted the complexities associated with the representation of ethnicity in the built environment of ethnic precincts. For example, Anderson (1990) has noted the opposition of local Chinese Australians to the development of Melbourne's Chinatown. In Sydney, while there was more support for a Chinatown from within the Chinese community, there was competition amongst Chinese Australians over how Chinese culture should be represented. In a more recent study of four Sydney precincts, Collins and Kunz (2005) have argued that the 'ethnicity' of these areas is often symbolised in an aestheticised way that is presumed

to appeal to Western visitors but which the local ethnic community may experience as fake and 'kitschy'. Similarly, Sharon Zukin (1995) has noted the politics involved in who defines what is an 'ethnic' area and how that is represented. While this may be directed or constrained by the dominant culture, ethnic minority communities, or at least elements within them, often have agency in this process. In research on Cabramatta, Dunn (2003) has argued that although symbols of 'Indo-Chinese-ness' in the built environment reflect an 'Orientalist' view of Indo-Chinese culture, they are actually the result of a deliberate effort from within the Indo-Chinese community to challenge negative public perceptions and media representations of Asian migrants in Cabramatta.

Place in the Economy

Places such as ethnic precincts have an obvious economic significance. Indeed, while they may be cultural or symbolic centres for migrant communities, their primary functions are as commercial spaces. This commercial function may undermine the potential of control over space to empower ethnic minorities since, as described above, in order to attract visitors precincts may be designed to conform to dominant Orientalist views of the ethnic 'other'. However, the contribution of these ethnic precincts to the broader economy can be significant. Since the early 1990s, a number of authors have argued that the 'culture industries', including tourism, entertainment and the arts, have replaced material production as the engine of economic growth in global cities (Lash and Urry, 1994; Zukin, 1995). Increasingly, research has drawn links between vibrant culture industries and ethnic diversity. For example, in 1995, Zukin argued that cultural diversity in cities, and particularly the presence of a diversity of restaurants and other sites of cultural consumption, was important not only in attracting large numbers of tourists but also in the locational decisions of large global companies seeking to attract the best executives by offering a 'cosmopolitan' home base. More recently, Florida (2002) has argued that in order to be competitive, cities must attract the most creative people. And these people, he suggests, 'enjoy a mix of influences. They want to hear different kinds of music and try different kinds of food' (Florida, 2002: 227). Drawing on Florida's work, Collins and Kunz (2006) have argued that vibrant ethnic precincts can be central in generating urban economic growth.

While Collins and Kunz have focused on ethnic precincts, Lalich (2003) has examined the economic contribution of particular buildings owned and managed by ethnic community organisations. In a survey of 390 facilities including ethnic clubs, aged

care facilities and places of worship, Lalich found that their construction and the employment and services generated by their operations had contributed an estimated \$1.5 billion to Sydney's economic resources. Importantly, Lalich also posited that ethnic clubs provided an avenue of inter-cultural exchange, noting that they often had members from more than one ethnic group. However, he also found that some ethnic organisations with their own premises reported 'bad relations' with neighbours. This raises the question of the potential role of places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants in facilitating inter-cultural dialogue and social cohesion.

Place and Social Cohesion

Social cohesion amongst Australia's diverse ethnic and religious communities has become an issue of increasing concern in recent years. Hence, the relationship between places built by non-Anglo-Celtic migrants and inter-cultural exchange warrants further consideration. Phrases such as inter-cultural exchange are often used unquestioningly, with little consideration of the kinds of exchange and whether there are positive or lasting effects. This is an important concern since attempts to bring conflicting ethnic groups together may actually exacerbate tensions rather than leading to increased understanding and cooperation (Pedersen, *et al.*, 2005).

One useful way of understanding inter-ethnic relations is the notion of dialogue. To be effective in improving relations between ethnic groups this must mean "talking with" rather than "talking at" (Pedersen, *et al.*, 2005: 25). For example, discussing or actively engaging in anti-racism strategies has been shown to have a more lasting positive effect on attitudes than passive activities such as listening to lectures or watching films (Pedersen, *et al.*, 2005).

Another way to understand inter-ethnic relations is through the concept of social capital. Although there are debates about the definition of social capital, it is generally understood to involve social networks, norms of reciprocity and trust (Productivity Commission, 2003). Where these elements are present in relations between ethnic groups, it would suggest that inter-cultural relations are indeed characterised by cooperation rather than tension and competition.

The usefulness of the concept of social capital to a study of social cohesion is most obvious in the notions of 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital, where bonding social capital is understood as strong ties within a group and bridging social capital is understood as weaker ties between groups (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000; Onyx and Bullen, 2000; Putnam, 2000). Characteristics of bonding social capital include trust and networks of reciprocity within the

group, while characteristics of bridging social capital include trust of strangers (Putnam, 2000) and tolerance of difference (Onyx and Bullen, 2000).

The benefits of strong 'bonding' social capital have been much debated. Putnam (2000), for example, has noted that while networks and norms are usually good for those within the network, they can have negative effects on those outside. He suggests that while bonding social capital creates 'strong in-group loyalty', it 'may also create strong out-group antagonism' (Putnam, 2000: 23). That is, close communal ties may hinder interaction between groups. However, Onyx and Bullen (2000) argue that while strong bonding within communities *may* be associated with exclusivity and intolerance of others, this is not necessarily the case. In research conducted in several Australian communities, they found a 'small but positive' relationship between strong connections within communities and tolerance of diversity (Onyx and Bullen, 2000: 38). Hence, they argue that it is possible to have both strong bonding capital and bridging between communities, although 'we cannot... expect it to follow' (Onyx and Bullen, 2000: 38). Leonard and Onyx (2004) argue further that strong bonds within communities may actually facilitate stronger bonds between groups, with society being a 'mesh' of bonded communities with some strong ties between them. Interestingly, Onyx and Bullen (2000) suggest that while rural communities are likely to have strong bonding social capital, they are less likely than urban areas to have significant bridging social capital, so that minority groups in rural areas are less likely to receive support.

Studies of the relationship between social capital and the built environment have explored the social impacts of neighbourhood design (Leyden, 2003) and urban and regional museums (Burton and Griffin, 2006). As Burton and Griffin (2006) note, in positing a link between buildings and social capital a further conceptual point must be clarified. That is, unless the previous stock of social capital is known, it cannot be assumed that the current stock was entirely created by the presence of the building. Hence, rather than measuring the stock of social capital, a more productive approach is to examine how the 'programs, policies and activities' associated with the building lead to increases or decreases in social capital (Burton and Griffin, 2006: 4).

Migration and Place in Griffith, NSW

Most research into the economic and social impacts of Australian immigration has focussed on the metropolis. However, despite the smaller numbers, immigration has had a significant impact on regional and rural Australia for a long period. Research on immigrant groups in rural and regional Australia has focused on historical accounts (Hempel 1960; Burnely 2001; Borrie 1953; Lancashire 2000; Frost 2000), community studies (Huber, 1977; Kelly, 1983) and studies of settlement needs (Gray, *et al.*, 1991; Anscombe and Doyle 1997). Huber (1977) and Kelly (1983) analysed the social interaction and integration of Italian migrants to Griffith. They found that Italian immigrants formed close-knit communities which had a strong capacity for internal social and economic support. However, they did not examine the impact of Italian migrants on Griffith's built environment.

For this study, preliminary fieldwork in Griffith has involved informal interviews with local residents born in Italy and their Australian-born descendants and identification of sites built and used by them. The following discussion will focus on one of those sites: the Italian Museum and Cultural Centre. Ten scoping surveys of users of the Italian Museum have also been carried out and inform the following discussion.

Griffith's Migrant History

Griffith has a long history of multiculturalism, with the Wiradjuri, the traditional owners of the land, joined by Anglo-Celtic migrants in the early nineteenth century and southern European migrants (particularly Italians²) since the early 1900s. The last two decades have seen further migration from South and Central Asia, the Pacific Islands, the Middle East and, most recently, Africa. Recent estimates put the proportion of the population in Griffith with Italian ancestry at up to 60 per cent of the total population and some 'Italian' families are now into their fifth generation in Australia.

Griffith has often been seen as a 'success story' of multiculturalism. For example, Kabaila (2005) argues that the early arrival of Italians to the region has meant that more recent waves of migrants have been well-accepted, with townspeople being well accustomed to cultural diversity and the more established Italian migrants knowing well the difficulties of adjusting to a new country as a cultural minority.

However, there are also some ongoing tensions between Griffith's ethnic populations. In recent months, relatively isolated incidents of violence

² The first Italian migrants to Griffith were mainly Trevisani from the Veneto region (Huber, 1977). Subsequent migrants came from many other Italian regions.

amongst youth have threatened to boil over into racialised conflicts. There is also a long history of exploitation of newly arrived migrants in employment³.

The influence of Italian migrants on Griffith's built environment is evident in the Italian clubs, the Italian Museum and Cultural Centre, several Italian cafés and restaurants, the Capella Della Pieta mausoleum and the Our Lady of Pompeii Church. In addition, many of the town's public buildings were built by Italian migrants and their descendants.

Italian Museum and Cultural Centre

Place and Belonging: Construction of the Griffith Italian Museum and Cultural Centre was completed in 2003. A 2005 study of local history recommended the Museum be listed on local and state heritage registers for its 'high significance to the Italian community' (Kabaila, 2005). The Museum traces the history of Italian migrants to Griffith and the surrounding region. Photographs and artefacts point to the central role of Italian migrants in the economic and cultural development of the town. They are a clear illustration that Italian migrants and their des-

cendants not only belong in Griffith but were an integral part of its growth.

Place and Citizenship: Early Italian migrants to Griffith were excluded from places built by the local Anglo-Celtic community such as the Jondaryan Club, opened in 1928 as a club house for the town's 'distinguished gentlemen'⁴. When the Italian Museum was built some seventy-five years later, the changing attitude towards Italian Australians and their increasing influence in political processes was apparent. The Museum has been supported by both the local and state governments. It was built on land made available by Griffith City Council for the purposes of building the Museum within a pre-existing Council park. Although it is run by an organising committee from within the Italian-origin community⁵, the day to day management is carried out by Council staff and local volunteers. In 2003 the Museum was officially opened by the then Premier of NSW, Bob Carr. The design of the building was deliberately inclusive, reflecting symbols of both Italian and Australian architecture: a tin 'shearing shed' with Italian columns and arches at the entrance.



Figure 1: The Griffith Italian Museum and Cultural Centre

Place in the Economy: The Museum was built largely with community funds, voluntary labour and gratis materials to an estimated value of \$500,000. A major event that occurs in the grounds adjacent to the museum is the annual *Festa Delle Salsicce* (Salami Festival), organised by the Italian Museum Committee. The festival is a fundraiser for the museum and was originally conceived as a way to showcase the Museum to the public. The first festival, in approx-

imately 2003, was held inside the Museum before the display was installed. It has grown steadily, now attracting around 300 people including locals of both Italian and Anglo-Celtic heritage, as well as groups from Victoria (this year Melbourne, Cobram and Geelong). While some come for the day many stay in Griffith overnight, bringing tourist dollars into the town.

³ As a corollary, there is also resentment amongst some of the Australian-born workforce who feel that they are being discriminated against in preference for non-unionised migrant workers in some industries.

⁴ Originally the membership was restricted to a hundred prominent Anglo-Celtic Australians living within a forty-eight kilometre radius of Griffith. The first Italian was admitted in 1959, thirty-one years after the Club's inception (Huber, 1977: 104).

⁵ 'Italian-origin' is used here to refer to migrants from Italy and their Australian-born descendants.



Figure 2: Festa Delle Salsicce, August 2006

Place and Social Cohesion: The relationship of the Museum to social cohesion amongst Italians and Italian Australians in Griffith is complex. One aim for the Museum is to remind young Italian Australians about their cultural backgrounds, and the Museum has certainly been visited by these younger generations. But the Museum has also aroused tension and division within the Italian-origin community. In particular, decisions about which donated

materials to display have resulted in widespread disappointment by those who donated materials only for them to end up in storage. There is also some perception that the Museum is largely a celebration of northern Italian heritage, highlighting a longstanding tension between northern and southern Italian migrants to the area. However, the Museum committee has made conscious efforts to overcome this perception by encouraging southern Italians to join.



Figure 3: Interior of the Italian Museum and Cultural Centre

The *Festa Delle Salsicce* adds yet another layer of complexity to the impact of the Museum on relations within the Italian-origin community. For example, the festival involves traditional Italian music, dancing and food, with food and wine for the day donated by local businesses and an Italian-style lunch cooked by local women. These processes can be seen as part of community-building through shared traditions as

well as an operationalising of informal networks in organising and preparing for the day. A key aspect of the festival is a salami judging competition. Organisers of the salami judging this year deliberately included both northern and southern Italian judges in order to maintain legitimacy in the community. They also included the younger generations in the judging process, with some of the older generation

expressing concern that without more involvement from youth the Italian traditions may be lost. In this way, it can be seen that the Museum has played a role in developing social networks amongst some Italians and Italian-Australians while it has also undermined trust and arguably missed an opportunity to engage other members of the community.

The Italian Museum and Cultural Centre also impacts the relations between ethnic groups in Griffith. Visitors include locals from Anglo-Celtic, Italian and Pacific Islander backgrounds, as well as diverse groups from local primary schools. The *Festa Delle Salsicce* provides opportunities for participatory inter-cultural exchange. Salami making is a tradition in Griffith that was brought by Italian migrants and that some members of the Anglo-Celtic community have adopted. Locals from both Italian and Anglo-Celtic backgrounds enter salamis in the competition and attend the festival. A scoping survey of those at the festival asked people if they thought the festival was meaningful, and, if so, why. Many said it was an opportunity to catch up with old friends and spend time with other long-time residents, with one respondent commenting that *'We're all local people, part and parcel of our community'*. A number of people also commented on the mixing of cultures, including the following two examples:

"[It's meaningful] because it's all the different nationalities...it's nice and harmonious, there's no hate... For integration it's really great. When I was married there was alienation, little intermingling. It's different now to what it was 45 years ago – the food was different and strange, 'wog food'. Now everyone joins in and loves the food."

"[It's meaningful because it's] seeing the heritage of the past, Italian heritage, and there's other people who get involved too. It's very pleasant to see that – everybody amalgamates."

These quotes indicate that the Festival facilitates effective inter-ethnic dialogue. Whether it facilitates bridging social capital is more difficult to discern. However, the opportunity provided to strengthen and develop informal networks between the Anglo-Celtic and Italian-origin communities suggests that the Festival, and hence the Museum, may play an important role in this regard.

References

- Anderson, K. (1990) 'Chinatown Re-oriented': A Critical Analysis of Recent Redevelopment Schemes in a Melbourne and Sydney Enclave', *Australian Geographical Studies: Journal of the Institute of Australian Geographers*, Vol. 28 No. 2, October, pp. 137-154.

Conclusions

As always, the preliminary research presented in this paper raises more questions than it answers. Griffith's Italian Museum and Cultural Centre is one site through which the region's Italian migrants and their descendants have enacted and expressed their belonging to place, as well as contributing to the region's economic resources. In contrast to the early Italian migrants to Griffith who were excluded from the prestigious Jondaryan Club, local and state government support of the Museum illustrates that the current generations have secured political and cultural influence in the town. Whether the same is true for more recent migrant groups is a matter for further examination.

Particularly in light of contestation over the use of space in multicultural Australia, the relationship between the immigrant impact on the built environment and social cohesion warrants careful consideration. The concepts of dialogue and bonding and bridging social capital are useful avenues with which to explore this relationship. The research presented here highlights the broad issues. The Griffith Italian Museum and Cultural Centre may have facilitated some dialogue and cultural exchange between younger and older generations in the Italian community. But it has also created new divisions and is viewed by many with a general sense of disappointment and apathy. This highlights both the potential of such sites in developing networks and the possible pitfalls in any community project where decisions run the risk of alienating some members.

The study also draws attention to the potential of sites such as the Italian Museum to generate dialogue and exchange between cultural groups. In this case, the Museum serves an educational purpose for visitors from all cultural backgrounds. But, through the *Festa Delle Salsicce*, it is also a site that enables the engagement of people from non-Italian backgrounds in an active experience of Italian food, culture and traditions, and a space where relationships between Italian and Anglo-Celtic Australians can be forged and cemented.

Whether these intra- and inter-cultural relationships can be adequately understood through the concepts of dialogue and social capital, and whether similar patterns are evident in sites built by different migrant groups in a number of urban and rural settings in Australia will form the next stage of the research.

- Anscombe, B & Doyle, R (eds) 1997, *Aboriginal and Ethnic Communities in Rural Australia : Proceedings of the Rural Australia -Towards 2000, Conference, July 1997*. Centre for Rural Social Research, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW.
- Armstrong, H.B. (no date) *Investigating Queensland's Cultural Heritage: Whose Heritage?* [online] <http://www.bee.qut.edu.au/people/armstroh/clermont/lectures/Lismore.htm> Accessed 22/05/06.
- . (1994a) 'Cultural continuity in multicultural suburban places', in Gibson, K. and Watson, S. (eds) *Metropolis Now*, Pluto Press, Sydney.
- . (1994b) 'The myths of heritage: inconsistencies in a multicultural New World', *Polemic*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp.83-101.
- . H.B. (1997) 'Migrant Heritage Places in Australia', *Historic Environment*, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 12-24.
- . (2002) 'Landscapes of Hope: Migrant Spaces on the Margins', in Akkach, S. (ed) *De-Placing Difference: Architecture, Culture and Imaginative Geography*, Proceedings of the Third International Symposium of The Centre for Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture, Faculty of the Professions, The University of Adelaide, South Australia.
- Babacan, H. (2005/6) 'Locating Identity: Sense of Space, Place and Belonging', *International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities and Nations*, Vol. 5, No. 5, pp.113-124.
- Borrie, W.D. (1953) *Italian and Germans in Australia*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney.
- Burnley, I. (2001) *The Impact of Immigration on Australia : A Demographic Approach*, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne.
- Burton, C. & Griffin, J. (2006) 'Investigating social impacts of small museums in local settings', Paper presented to the Fourth International Conference on Cultural Policy Research, Vienna, 12th July.
- Collins, J. (2005) *Ethnic precincts as contradictory tourist spaces: the case of Sydney Australia*, Paper to the COMPAS/ISCA Seminar Series, Oxford University, June 10.
- Collins, J., Gibson, K., Alcorso, C., Castles, S. & Tait, D. (1995) *A Shop Full of Dreams: Ethnic Small Business in Australia*, Pluto Press, Leichhardt.
- Collins, J. & Kunz, P. (2005) *Spatial Dimensions of the Commodification of Ethnicity in the City: Producers, Consumers and the Critical Infrastructure in Four Sydney Ethnic Precincts*, Paper presented at IMISCOE Cluster B6 Workshop on Ethnic, Cultural, and Religious Diversity, Amsterdam, May 26-28.
- . (2006) *Ethnic Entrepreneurs, Ethnic Precincts and Tourism: The Case of Sydney*, Australia, unpublished.
- Dunn, K. (2001) 'Representations of Islam in the Politics of Mosque Development in Sydney', *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, Vol. 92 No. 3, pp. 291-308.
- . (2003) 'Using cultural geography to engage contested constructions of ethnicity and citizenship in Sydney', *Social & Cultural Geography*, Vol. 4 No. 2, pp. 153-165.
- . (2004) 'Islam in Sydney: Contesting the Discourse of Absence', *Australian Geographer*, Vol. 35 No. 3, pp. 333-353.
- Fairfield City Council (2006) *Cabramatta Spotlight* [online] <http://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/default.asp?iSubCatID=297&iNavCatID=1> Accessed 06/08/06.
- Florida, R. (2002) *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*, Basic Books, New York.
- Frost, W. (2000) *Migrants and Technological Transfer: Chinese Farming in Australia , 1850-1920*. Working Paper 100/00, Faculty of Business and Economics, Monash University, Melbourne, VIC.
- Gray, I. W., Dunn, P. F., Kelly, B. M., Williams, C. J. (1991) *Immigrant Settlement in Country Areas.*, Bureau of Immigration Research, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra
- Hage, G. (1997) 'At Home in the Entrails of the West: Multiculturalism, "Ethnic Food" and Migrant home Building', in Grace, H., Hage, G., Johnson, L., Langsworth, J. & Symonds, M. (eds) *Home/World: Space, Community and Marginality in Sydney's West*, Pluto Press, Sydney.
- Hartfield, M. (2001) *But Whose Heritage is it Anyway?* Paper presented at the International Community Development Conference, Rotorua, New Zealand.
- Hayden, D. (1995) *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA and London.
- Hempel, J. A. (1960) *Dutch Migrants in Queensland*. (n.p.), Canberra
- Huber, R. (1977) *From Pasta to Pavlova: A Comparative Study of Italian Settlers in Sydney and Griffith*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, QLD.
- Kabaila, P. (2005) *Griffith Heritage: A Thematic History*, Pirion Publishing, Canberra
- Kelly, B. (1983) 'Ethnic participation in Australian political systems: A Griffith case study', in Jupp, J., (ed) *Ethnic Politics in Australia*, Allen&Unwin, Sydney.
- Kloosterman, R. & Rath, J. (2003) *Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Venturing Abroad in the Age Of Globalization*, Berg, Oxford and New York.
- Lalich, W. (2003) *Ethnic Community Capital*, unpublished thesis, The University of Technology, Sydney.
- Lancashire, R. (2000) 'European-Chinese Economic Interaction in a Pre-Federation Rural Agricultural Setting', *Rural Society*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 229-243.
- Lash, S. and Urry, J. (1994) *Economies of Signs and Space*, Sage Publications, London, California and New Delhi.
- Leonard, R. & Onyx, J. (2004) *Social Capital and Community Building: Spinning Straw into Gold*, Janus Publishing Company, London.
- Leyden, K. (2003) 'Social Capital and the Built Environment: The Importance of Walkable Neighbourhoods', *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 93, No. 9, September, pp.1546-1551.

- Lowenthal, D. (1998) *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, Second edition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- OECD (2003) *SOPEMI: Trends in International Migration, Annual Report 2003*, Paris, OECD.
- Onyx, J. & Bullen, P. (2000) 'Measuring Social Capital in Five Communities', *The Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp.23 – 42.
- Pedersen, A., Walker, I. & Wise, M. (2005) "'Talk does not cook rice": Beyond anti-racism rhetoric to strategies for social action', *Australian Psychologist*, Vol. 40, No. 1, March, pp.20-30.
- Productivity Commission (2003) *Social Capital: Reviewing the Concept and its Policy Implications*, Research Paper, AusInfo, Canberra.
- Putnam, R. (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Simon & Schuster, New York.
- Woolcock, M. (2000) 'Why should we care about social capital?', *Canberra Bulletin of Public Administration*, pp. 17-19.
- Woolcock, M. and Narayan, D. (2000) 'Social capital: implications for development theory, research and policy', *World Bank Research Observer*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 225-49.
- Zukin, S. (1995) *The Cultures of Cities*, Blackwell Publishers, Cambridge MA.

About the Authors

Kirriily Jordan

Kirriily Jordan is a PhD student at the University of Technology, Sydney. Her research concerns the relationship between ethnicity, space and social relations.

Dr Branka Krivokapic-Skoko

Branka is a senior lecturer in Economics and Management at Charles Sturt University. Her recent research has focused on ethnic business communities; informal, ethnically-based business networks in agriculture; and multi-disciplinary perspectives on entrepreneurship.

Professor Jock Collins

Jock Collins is Associate Professor in the School of Finance and Economics at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). Writing on Australian immigration matters since the early 1970's, Jock is the author of two books and over 40 articles in international and national journals and edited books. Jock has been a consultant to the NSW Ethnic Affairs Commission, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the NSW Department of Treasury.