

# One day 30 years apart in the Croatian-Australian transnational social space: 18 September 1919 and 1949

Walter Lulich

## Abstract

This article reviews two important events in Australian and Croatian transnational histories. The post-war deportation of Croats incarcerated during the Great War seemingly has little to do with the tour of a football club thirty years later. This article aims to establish a symbolic link between these two disparate events. The football club Hajduk arrived from Dalmatia, the same region that most of the deported citizens of vanquished Austria Hungary came from. Both events occurred in the days of the White Australia policy, which stressed the superiority of British culture and disregarded others. However, the most popular world-wide British cultural export, football, had much deeper roots in Dalmatia than in Australia. The tour occurred in 1949 amid the Cold War, ideological schism among former friends, fear of the atom bomb, and the hostile Yugoslav migrant organisation, which supported the USSR in its ideological strife with the homeland. Hajduk, which played under the name of Yugoslavia, won most of the games, gave many football lessons to Australian football enthusiasts and deflated the superiority of the Britishness and the White Australia dream. Furthermore, the club bonded strongly with its countrymen. During the tour, only one player, whose relative was deported thirty years earlier, played all the games. This article attempts to comprehend the reasons behind his endeavour to play all the games and considers the special significance of the club's name on this occasion.

**Keywords:** football, deportees, Hajduk, Dalmatia, White Australia

The Croatian migration experience in Australia is marked by two distinct events in 1919 and 1949. The first one is the war time internment of 750 Croats in a concentration camp. These Croats were citizens of Austria-Hungary and were mostly deported in September 1919 (Scott, 1936; Fischer, 1989). The second event relates to the excitement felt by the next generation of Croatian migrants during a very successful tour by the Football Club Hajduk, which arrived from their homeland, then under communist rule, during the Cold War in 1949. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of September

1919, 450 Croatian ‘prisoners of war’ were forced onto the SS *Frankfurt* in Sydney and were deported. Thirty years later, the football club Hajduk from Split, under the name of Yugoslavia, arrived in Adelaide and defeated the state team 7:0 the following day (Stenning, 1995; Poduje *et al.*, 1951). On the same day thirty years apart, two generations of Croatian migrants felt strong yet contrasting emotions, one anger and anguish, the other happiness and revenge!

It could be asked: what connects these two very different events? The key link between these two events lies in the fact that Hajduk came from the same region of Croatia as the vast majority of migrants from Austria-Hungary, including those who were deported, and later from Yugoslavia (Dalmatia). Secondly, the ideology of a superior, British White Australia prevailed over that entire period. Thirdly, among the many deportees were George Broketa and John Katnich. Thirty years later, two Hajduk players had the same surnames. While it is difficult to establish relations between the deported Ivan Katnich and the player Ervin, there can be no doubt about the relationship between George Broketa and the player Božo, who both originated from a village near Dubrovnik.

During the tour, only Broketa did not miss a single game, although it was expected that he might miss one (*SMH*, 30/7/1949). After seventy years, the question arises: why did only Božo Broketa play all 21 games in a tour that lasted 67 days? (Poduje *et al.*, 1951; *SMH*, 30/7/1949). Perhaps he wanted to demonstrate more than his ability to play football. After all, he was one of three Hajduk players who had won silver at the 1948 London Olympics. We can assume that he had an opportunity in early childhood to hear from his relative about his detention and deportation. Did his cousin’s misfortune inspire him to play all the games?

Besides the already mentioned surnames and the shared regional background of most of the deported migrants and players, it is possible to identify other factors that link these two contrasting events. Another factor is the transfer of British culture within the realm of British White Australia. Football as a major British cultural innovation never developed deep roots in Australia, although the first game was played in Sydney in 1880 (Thompson, 2006). By the time these two players arrived, football lagged the other sports at home and was unknown on the world stage. By any football standards, Australia was a third-world country when Hajduk landed in Sydney on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July.

## **Hajduk**

Football took deep roots in Dalmatia quickly after its first club Hajduk was formed by students in 1911 (Gizdić,2011). Hajduk very soon became more than a sporting symbol of the region; in a sense it represented the dawn of a new time. Their unconventional, brusque behaviour in search of a name for the club inspired the choice of *Hajduk*. It is a Turkish word with a wide range of meanings, including *mob*, *outlaw*, *robber*, *rebel* and *avenger*. As a regional club, Hajduk soon gained supporters beyond its home city of Split and Dalmatia. The club won four national championships before World War Two.

Hajduk did not play for three years during the war. From 1944, the club played 117 games, representing the Yugoslav liberation army in various countries around the Mediterranean, and entertaining the allied troops. French president Charles de Gaulle bestowed the Legion of Honour on the club for its wartime role (Gizdić2011). Three of its players won silver medals at the London Olympics in 1948, in the very heart of British Empire. The arrival of Hajduk in Australia signalled the clash of two football worlds, advanced Dalmatia and backward Australia. Football was well established in the old region of Dalmatia from where over 5,000 not very welcome migrants arrived between the two wars. They were *foreigners*, ridiculed with names like ‘dago’, ‘dinks’ and ‘wogs’ (Price, 1963). Like the players, they ate cabbage and drank wine rather than beer (*Sun*, 31/07/1949).

Hajduk returned home victorious, farewelled by their countrymen in Fremantle with paper ribbons on a British ship, *Orion*, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September (Poduje *et al.*, 1951). A new era of slow reckoning began in Australia with the arrival of European refugees, and especially Southern European ones, who together with some brave locals preferred to play the “world game” over other forms of football (Moseley, 2014; Murray, 2011).

### **Australia enters the war against Austria-Hungary**

The Great War created many hardships for the Croatian migrants that had come to Australia in search of work and a better life. There were approximately 2,000 in Australia at the time, mostly young and single or with families at home. They held Austrian citizenship and had no choice but to accept difficult, physical work in mines and forests upon arrival. They established society in 1912 with its own premises close to the gold mines in Boulder, Western Australia (Tkalčević, 1992: 32).

The outbreak of the Great War greatly affected this small community, as communications with the enemy states broke down and migrants could not send money to their families. Australia went enthusiastically to the European war theatre to fight for the interests of the British empire to the ‘last man and shilling’ (Fischer, 1989: 4). Around 60,000 Australian servicemen lost their lives on the European killing fields, leaving behind over 11,000 orphans (Scott, 1936; Souter, 1976). Fuelled by war fever, many individuals and institutions eagerly sought potential enemies among their neighbours and at work who had the citizenship of enemy states, even if they had arrived in their childhood or were of German descent (Fischer, 1989). Many lost their jobs because locals, trade unions at the goldfields and returned soldiers refused to work with them (Oliver, 1995; Latter, 1992). Some declared themselves to be “enemy sympathisers” to secure financial support from the state for their families after they were incarcerated.

In 1915, several hundred Croats were detained alongside Germans on Rottneest Island across from Fremantle. Towards the end of that year, they were transported to the central German Concentration Camp in Liverpool-Holsworthy, on the outskirts of Sydney, where 27 died in internment (Stenning, 1995). A much smaller number joined the British war effort. After the war began the Croatian-Slavonic Society in Boulder, in accord with the rebellious Yugoslav Committee in London, recruited seventy-six Croats and a dozen Czech and Slovaks to join a Yugoslav volunteer unit. A smaller number in the eastern states joined the Australian army (Alagich and Kosovich, 2001; Šutalo, 2004; Darveniza, 1986). Later, in 1917, during an attempt to recruit volunteers among the internees in Liverpool, only thirty volunteered. The rest were marched back to the camp to the great delight of the German detainees; all the existing social and cultural differences between the two different groups of detainees vanished immediately (Splivalo, 1982).

Teenage detainee Anthony Splivalo refused to volunteer and immediately lost his job as a translator in the censor’s office, but his German friends found him another one (Splivalo, 1982). Anthony came to Australia at the age of thirteen, continued his schooling in Boulder and learned German during his internment. In his memoirs, he describes the anger of many Croatian detainees at the news that a large slice of the Croatian coast was given by Britain, Australia and their allies to Italy for its participation in the war. Many of the Croatian detainees resented the Habsburg monarchy but nevertheless adhered to it during their detention as they had no other institutional support.

## **New settlement**

New Croatian migrants, including women and children, arrived between the wars. There were at least five thousand Croats and a few thousand other migrants from Yugoslavia in Australia in 1947 (Price, 1963). Many new arrivals went to the interior, mines, forests and sugarcane fields of Queensland. In the same period, some who managed to save enough funds went to the outskirts of Perth and Sydney and started market gardens, vineyards, commercial fishing and tobacco plantations. Many farms were purchased from returned Australian soldiers, who received them as compensation for their service, and from British migrants who were unused to farming on the properties allotted to them by the authorities.

The first new migrant organisation was established in Broken Hill by a group of Croatian migrants shortly after the 1<sup>st</sup> of May celebrations in 1926. This new society sparked the establishment of the Federation of Yugoslav Immigrants in Australia in 1934. The organisation founded 30 community branches throughout the country and the journal *Napredak*. Such initiatives were the result of the migrants' needs to satisfy their own collective needs in a society where they did not feel welcome and were considered strangers (Lalich, 2004).

They felt a need to help each other, to associate in their leisure time and social life, in tambouritsa bands, bocce and football games. In 1930, Yugoslav migrants (mostly from Dalmatia) established their own football clubs: *Zora* (Dawn) in Perth, *Sparta* in Boulder, *Swan Athletic* and *Swan Valley*, *Napredak* (Progress) in Broken Hill, and at the end of the war *Lola* in Leppington (NSW). The football club Sparta already existed in 1934 when the racist 'anti-dago' (i.e., anti-southern European) riots took place (Price, 1963: 209-210). Sparta was probably the first multicultural sport club in Australian history. Approximately half of its players were of British extract. The remainder were Yugoslav immigrants, predominantly of Dalmatian origin.

Dissatisfied with events back in the homeland, their social status in Australia and lack of institutional support, many of these immigrants were influenced by the October Revolution. The newly established organisation adopted leftist political and social agendas and became very close to the Australian Communist Party (Price, 1963; Srhoy, 1998). Approximately 90 percent of FYIA's 1,007 members were Croats (Marković, 1973). Except for the migrants from Macedonia, who had their own organisation, it is estimated that every sixth migrant from

Yugoslavia joined FYIA. Very few migrants were attached to the informal circles around the Yugoslav honorary consuls in Perth and Sydney, who sponsored the Sydney-based *Yugoslav club*.

Croatian migrants found themselves in a very different position during the Second World War to those who lived through the previous conflict (Markovic, 1973; Lalich, 2017). In September 1939, FYIA issued a declaration of support for the Allied war efforts. Many volunteered to fight in Australian units (Srhom, 1998), and one Lesley T. Starcevic received a VC in Borneo in June 1945. Moreover, they supported the Allies by subscribing to war loans, sending parcels to soldiers and collecting aid for the Soviet war effort. After learning about the situation in the homeland, the majority strongly supported Tito and the partisans, while a minority continued to support the former Yugoslav royalist regime (Lalich, 2014). Together with Stalin, Tito became a new hero to many. Financial aid to refugees in El Shatt in Egypt followed, and after the end of the war various forms of financial support was provided to families and local municipalities, alongside the development of some hospitals and orphanages. The exact amount of financial support is not known, but the support through the efforts of the Federation of Yugoslav Immigrants in Australia reached 200,000 pounds, a huge amount for a small community of less than 6,000 who participated in raising funds, donating approximately 50,000 weekly wages at that time. Some of the material help in a time of great need, sport items, reached the football club Hajduk too (Alagich & Kosovich, 2001; Alagich, 1985).

### **A meeting of two worlds**

In return for the received aid, the secretary of Hajduk offered to send the team in mid-1947 to visit and thank the migrant communities in Australia for their assistance (*Hajdukov Vjesnik*, 1948). Hajduk made a first visit to migrants by making a tour of four Southern American countries in 1931, during which it won five and lost seven games (Bezić-Filipović, 2007). The idea was accepted by both the FYIA and ASF, and former football player Marin Alagich was accepted as a contact man. The offer was enthusiastically accepted by the president of the ASF, who had seen the Yugoslav national team win a silver medal with three Hajduk players at the London Olympics. ASF insisted that the club play under the name of Yugoslavia and offered it 60 percent of ticket sales in return for playing at least four test games with the national team to help it acquire international experience (Alagich, 1985).

## Football in Australia

The first football match was played in Australia three decades before Hajduk was born. The game failed to take root like other transplanted British sports, however. *Sheilas, Wogs & Poofers*, the title of the 2002 biography of Johnny Warren, the captain of the Australian national team at its first appearance at the world championship in 1974, clearly implies not only who played football in Australia but also its status among other sports in Australia a quarter of a century after the Hajduk tour. Before 1949, only three European teams had come to Australia, and the national team had only played several games with national teams from neighbouring countries (Thompson, 2006). Its first real international test was Hajduk with three silver Olympians: Matošić, Broketa and Vukas. In a sense, the arrival of Hajduk signalled the end of an overdrawn era of soccer infancy in Australia. The tour also coincided with the arrival of many young European refugees and migrants, who would initiate a long path of football recovery in this country (Gorman, 2017).

## Cold war(s)

The international climate changed significantly in the lead-up to the tour. In addition to the ongoing Cold war, fear of nuclear warfare and the exodus of Croatian migrants out of Australia in 1948, an ideological schism broke out between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Like many other Yugoslav migrant organisations throughout the world, the FYIA, heeding the idea of socialist internationalism, dissociated itself from the home country and vehemently attacked the Yugoslav communist party and its leader Josip Broz as a nationalist and traitor (*Napredak*, 30/10/1948; 23/04/1949). As a consequence of this disruption, the then Yugoslav consul in Sydney and former editor of *Napredak*, Ivan Kosovich, signed the agreement between ASF and Hajduk a fortnight before the team departed on the tour. Because of his position within the FYIA, Alagich lost his role as a contact man for the tour.

The football tour suddenly had a new purpose as a political propaganda tool aimed primarily at the migrant community and the destabilisation of the FYIA's pro-Stalinist stance. The secretary of Hajduk and long-time player Šime Poduje was pushed aside; instead, the government delegated a politically more reliable party functionary, Božidar Novak, as one of two tour managers. Prior to departure, the team met with the returnees from Australia who sent their regards to their friends and relatives in the country and urged them to return to the homeland to help rebuild it and develop a new socialist society (*Vijesti iz Nove Jugoslavije*, 5/8/1949).

Thus, what was initially a football mission underlined with nostalgia suddenly became a political one.

### **An unusual football-political tour**

After a 43-hour flight, Hajduk was welcomed in Sydney on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July by consulate staff and countrymen. The Sydney Lord Mayor organised a reception for the team, as did the state premiers and the mayors of Melbourne and Brisbane, and similar functions were held wherever the team played (Bezić-Filipović, 2007). Friction only arose with the leaders of FYIA, who insisted that public functions with migrants be held without any politically charged speeches; but that was the duty of the government delegated tour manager, B. Novak. This caused strife at some functions. The weekly journal *Napredak* followed all the games but disassociated itself and the FYIA from the tour after the eastern leg (*Napredak*, 24/9/1949). The well-attended farewell reception in Perth turned out to be a political manifestation of support for Tito and the Yugoslav political stance.

Over the course of the tour, Hajduk secured 19 victories, one loss, a draw and a huge goal difference of 121:23 in its favour (Poduje *et al.*, 1951). The touring side won four out of five test matches with the national team and two unofficial games. It also played seven games with state squads and seven with combined regional and local teams. The results clearly indicate the vast gap in the quality of football on both sides. Approximately 200,000 spectators went to the tour games, The largest crowd for a single game was in Sydney (27,000), where the Socceroos lost 2:3 (*Sydney Herald*, 31/7/1949).

The Croatian community in Broken Hill financed the team's visit to the town with the support of the local business community and city authorities. The local community collected 500 pounds to make the visit feasible (Alagich & Keenan, 2019; Poduje *et al.*, 1951). The visit was organised by the younger brother of Marin Alagich, Rudolf, who was the goalkeeper of a local team consisting of Australian, British, Italian and Croatian players. This was probably the first multicultural sports team in Australian history to play an international game. This first international sporting event in the history of the silver city was attended by 4,000 spectators in a very friendly atmosphere. At the end of tour, Hajduk visited the wine region of Swan Valley, where it played a friendly match with the local team of Croatian migrants with an Australian goalkeeper. After the game, which Swan Athletic lost 10:1, a big party was organized

(Katnich, 2019; Poduje *et al.*, 1951).

The tour was not as financially successful as the ASF expected it to be, and Hajduk only made 7,350 pounds from ticket sales for the first fifteen games, less than half than expected. Consequently, ASF helped Hajduk cover its expenses for the final games by increasing its share from 60 to 80 per cent of ticket receipts (Alagich, 1949; *SMH*, 17/9/1949).

### **Easy win for soccer stars**

This headline in *Barrier Miner* from the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 1949 reflects the emphasis made by most of the ninety or so reviews of the tour by the Australian media, which was very appreciative of the football presented by Hajduk (*Barrier Miner*, 15/8/1949). Many articles clearly indicate the superiority of the touring side, though there is also mention of several tough matches. The following words were used to describe the huge difference in quality of play: *football lesson, class, brilliant soccer, polished display, wins clearly, easy win, too good, fast soccer, trounced by, soccer wizardry, finer points of soccer demonstrated, visitors showed us how to play*. The obvious differences in quality are further illustrated by the bold headlines of the *Brisbane Telegraph*: ‘Q’ld. Trounced by Slick Slavs’ and ‘Slavs Swamp Aust., Take the Rubber’ (*Brisbane Telegraph*, 21/8/1949: 1, 2; 28/8/1949: 2). The *Courier-Mail* similarly offered the headline: “City wilts under Slav attack” (25/8/1949: 9), while the *Mirror* (24/9/1949) and *Western Australian* (28/9/1949) in Perth both spoke of a hollow victory over the state team. In Newcastle, 6,000 people came to see the game with the state team. The match inspired the following headline in the local *Newcastle Sun*: ‘Yugoslavs Boost Soccer Interest’ (*Newcastle Sun*, 3/9/1949: 6).

Spectacular saves by the goalkeeper Beara fascinated opponents, photographers and spectators alike. The team’s captain Matošić, who scored 31 goals and offered advice on how to play football in an interview (*Newcastle Sun*, 3/9/1949). After the tour, Beara and the club’s left-winger Vukas played for the European continental team against England in 1953 (Gizdić, 2011). In the final days of the tour in Western Australia, the *WA Soccer Football Journal* published an article on the rules of the game and a comment by the Hajduk team manager that though the team was presented as the Yugoslav national one, it was in fact a club, Hajduk (*WA Soccer Football Journal*, 24/9/1949). The *Newcastle Sun* had previously indicated that the touring team was Hajduk, “...one of the best known and respected clubs outside

*England...*” (3/9/1949: 6).

Aside from the tour, the media covered its dramatic political context, full of tensions on the Yugoslav border, political persecutions in Eastern Europe, fear of the Soviet atomic bomb, a coal mine strike in NSW in protest of miners being replaced by soldiers, and a power shortage that affected employment and transport in Sydney. An article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July speculated that some of the players might defect, as had previously been the case with sportsmen from communist countries (*SMH*, 23/7/1949). However, *Soccer Weekly News* refuted such hopes (30/7/1949). In an article entitled *Sportsmen Are the Best Ambassadors*, the *Sun* (31/7/1949: 6) emphasised that aside from the migrants who welcomed the team “...a lot became interested in Yugoslavia for the first time in their lives”.

### **Returning home to Split**

Miles from the reality of football in Australia, Split, Dalmatia and Yugoslavia celebrated the tour’s success. Hajduk received a hero’s welcome with flowers, music and speeches from over 15,000 supporters or a third of the city’s inhabitants upon the team’s return on the Yugoslav ship *Topusko*. The vessel had disembarked for Port Said with the slogan ‘Our victories are a salute to the Homeland, Party and Tito’ across its bridge. A Similarly warm welcome was received a year earlier by returnees on the ships *Partizanka* and *Radnik*; the former was destroyed by fire in the local shipyard in August during the team’s tour in Australia (Lalić, 2010). There were no further festive welcomes for migrants upon their return. Instead of migrants, footballers returned; the victorious team and its home city were reunited again. The victories of their football heroes were a gift to Split and Dalmatia.

The speeches upon their arrival were in tune with the slogan on the ship emphasising victory over football teams with no international experience and over an ideological enemy. The grandiose farewell at Fremantle was interpreted as a sign of the tour’s success in informing both migrants and a local democratic political community about the Yugoslav path to socialism. Meetings with the nostalgic Dalmatian migrants who were keen to see and meet with the representatives of their homeland were overshadowed by speeches about the current political situation. The return spectacle ended with telegrams to Tito and the party leadership and a collective walk to the team’s grounds (*Slobodna Dalmacija*, 26/10/1949).

Several days later, Tito received the team in Belgrade and the presents they had accepted on his behalf from the migrants (Poduje *et al.*, 1951). In a way, this tour signalled the final rift between a significant section of the migrant community and their organisation and its weekly *Napredak*, whose demise followed within a decade as new migrants had even less interest in their ideological stance.

### **Politics, football and Malta**

The local daily *Slobodna Dalmacija* followed the tour minutely and published within a fortnight of Hajduk's return two major reviews by a migrant who was both a player and an employee of the Yugoslav consular office. The migrant Luka Marković (30/10/1949) placed great emphasis on the welcome given to the team upon its arrival in Western Australia and Swan Valley in particular. He also emphasised the love and fidelity shown by the migrants towards their socialist homeland, their gratitude to the Communist Party that made the tour feasible, and their support of the Party and its leadership. He also mentioned the strife caused by a group of Stalinists at the large reception in Perth before the team's journey home.

Team member Vojko Andrijašević emphasised the ideological context of the club's Australian tour in a review entitled 'We are returning to our homeland proud that we delivered a task given to us by our Party and Tito' (Andrijašević, 26/10/1949). He also placed importance on contacts established with the migrant community and indicated their firm link with the homeland. In his review, he states that football in Australia is still in its infancy, and that its players lack international experience, noting that Hajduk was only the fourth European team to ever visit the continent. He adds that after an unexpected first defeat, the Australians adapted their playing style, and that some players could find a place in better European teams. Andrijašević accurately assessed the success of his team with the statement that Hajduk had played many teams below their rank, and that the Australian national team, in comparison with European standards, could be considered equal to very low-ranking Malta. The reality of Hajduk's 'huge success' became clear after the team's homecoming; the truth hit hard as it was not as glorious as it appeared in the newspaper headlines.

In addition to emphasising the political context of the tour, manager B. Novak, in an article published on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1949, noted the weakness of football in Australia. He pays particular attention to the

meetings with migrants, who were happy to meet people from their homeland and wanted to know more about the ideological dispute with the USSR. He also writes about confrontations with Stalinists, whom he calls *Informbiro traitors*. Furthermore, he states that the tour gave that part of the world a valuable opportunity to observe the quality of Yugoslav football, and that the plucky Australian footballers never stood a chance. In his review, he stressed that local media gave good coverage of the tour, and that the Australian functionaries emphasised how their players had gained precious international experience. However, he also emphasised that football in Australia is considered a business and that clubs do not have their own grounds. He ends his review with a statement about the emotional farewell from Fremantle on the SS *Orion*.

### **Concluding remarks**

One hundred years after the deportation, and seventy years after a football tour with deep political implications, it is important to stress that both historical events occurred at the height of the Australian dream of being an integral part of a superior British empire, its society and culture. This was further emphasised by the White Australia policy, which did not recognise *others* and other cultures as equals to the transferred British heritage. The arrival of a football club from the ancient region of Dalmatia with three silver medallists from the recent Olympics in the heart of the Empire punctured this dream, for it showed that an important British cultural export, football, was more at home in that part of the world than in Australia. The visit taught important lessons, not just football ones, and promoted the best-known feature of British culture internationally to many Australians.

Certain members of Australian society were aware of the full potential of football, as there were teams around the country and spectators willing to buy tickets to see the post-war touring side. Special emphasis should be placed on enthusiasts who enjoyed the game in ethnically mixed teams, as in Broken Hill, where three Croats, four Britons, three Australians, and Italians all played against Hajduk, *Swan Athletic*, with its British goalkeeper and ten Croatian players, and *Sparta*, a British-Croatian club in Boulder in the 1930s. Those who attended the Hajduk games saw the seeds of a distant era yet to come, when football would play a more prominent role in an increasingly multicultural society. Many would first have to learn a bitter lesson, however, as the superior team came from the very region from which *dagoes* continued to arrive. These new migrants would soon give football a new face to in Australia and make

it attractive to diverse segments of society.

Besides the educational and promotional significance of the tour, it is important to stress that it occurred amid the Cold War and major ideological infighting within the communist bloc, which threatened the world as much as nuclear weapons did. Besides connecting with the migrants and promoting the Yugoslav path to political and ideological independence from the Soviet Union, the tour had the additional task of taking on pro-Soviet forces within the migrant community. This meant giving up on the migrant organisation and its people, who started negotiations about the tour well before this ideological rift. However, with the changes in political paths, Marin Alagich, who began negotiations for the migrant side in Australia but was ignored during the tour due to politics, would have the final word in a way in a publication on the occasion of Hajduk's 75<sup>th</sup> jubilee in 1986. The publication introduced him as a very diligent community leader and sports activist among our migrants and stated "... during the tour the team was very correct and fair ... and as great ambassadors of our beloved homeland made our people very proud" (*Hajduk*, 1986).

Hajduk succeeded in its political mission on account of its close contacts with the migrants, many of whom were already supporters of the club. They warmly welcomed their team for what was a meaningful historical event according to historian Mary Stenning (Bezić-Filipović, 2007). Many migrants, who were at that time mostly from Dalmatia, welcomed players into their homes as ambassadors of the homeland. The great success of their beloved footballers made them very proud about their own potential in a new and often difficult social environment. The tour also introduced many Australians to a world many miles from their isolated continent.

This review of the first major international test of Australian football concludes with an attempt to comprehend what the tour meant to the only player who did not miss a single game. Why did Božo Broketa, a silver medallist from the London Olympics, play every single game? What did he feel during these games? What did he have on his mind? What motivated this endeavour in a tour that lasted 67 days? Many other questions could be raised and left to our imagination after seventy years. Did he do it because he remembered the stories of his relative, who as an *enemy alien* was mercilessly and indefinitely incarcerated in an Australian concentration camp and deported after the Great War to a newly created country where, like so many other deportees, he saw no

future?

In an attempt to answer such intriguing questions and summarise this most unorthodox of football tours, we may look to one of the meanings of Hajduk's name, the *avenger*. Its use could assist in explaining not only the tour's success, but also the reaction of the migrants and home-city dwellers. Hajduk's victories sealed many wounds, the feeling of being unwelcome strangers in a country which as a part of the transferred British cultural environment had ignored its most recognisable cultural export, football. Likewise, many inhabitants of the club's home-city, Split, were overjoyed with the team's success and waited for hours at the harbour for its arrival. Frustrated by the stringent borders imposed by the Cold War and the consequent constraints on freedom and food shortages, they became aware that something from their own city and region had nevertheless prevailed abroad. In keeping with one of the meanings of the club's name, the *avenger*, Hajduk showed Australia that it still had much to learn before it could be considered an equal to other parts of the world, and that despite having been on the winning side of both world wars, it was a total loser in the most important international sporting contest, football. And who was better suited to lead the team and press that message than Broketa, whose family suffered on account of the detention and deportation of their relative. Someone with the same surname as a deportee came back to Australia and triumphed on the football pitch, leaving many in awe on both sides of the world. Looking back, we can say that the football team Hajduk, through its many victories on the 1949 tour of Australia, symbolically *avenged* their unfortunate countrymen deported on the SS *Frankfurt* and SS *Valencia* thirty years earlier.

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## Sažetak

Ovaj prilog je zasnovan na dva vrlo važna, ali različita događaja odvojena trideset godina u zajedničkoj australsko-hrvatskoj transnacionalnoj prošlosti. Protjeravanje Hrvata zatočenih tijekom Prvog svjetskog rata nema ništa zajedničko s turnejom nogometnog kluba trideset godina kasnije. Kroz ovaj članak nastoji se uspostaviti simbolička poveznica između ta dva potpuno različita događaja. Velika većina protjeranih bili su iz Dalmacije, građani poražene Austro-Ugarske, odakle je iz nove države došao na turneju Nogometni klub Hajduk. Oba događaja su se odvijala za vrijeme trajanja tzv. politike bijele Australije, zasnovane na poimanju superiornosti britanske kulture prema svima ostalima. Međutim, u svijetu najpopularniji izvozni britanski kulturni proizvod, nogomet, uspostavio je ipak mnogo dublje korijene u Dalmaciji nego u Australiji. Turneja se odvijala 1949. godine za vrijeme hladnog rata, straha od atomske bombe, ideološkog raskola između bivših komunističkih prijatelja i javno iskazane privrženosti SSSR-u jedne od skupina iseljenika iz Jugoslavije tijekom tog sukoba. Nogometni klub Hajduk koji je nastupio pod nazivom reprezentacije Jugoslavije pobijedio je skoro svim utakmicama, održao mnoge nogometne lekcije australskim zaljubljenicima u nogomet i ponizio snove o superiornosti britanske bijele Australije. Nadalje, klub je uspostavio bliske sponove s doseljenim sunarodnjacima. Za vrijeme turneje jedino je jedan igrač, čiji je rođak bio protjeran pred trideset godina, odigrao sve utakmice. U ovom prilogu pokušavaju se rasvijetliti razlozi zašto je baš taj igrač odigrao sve utakmice uzimajući u obzir jedno od simboličkih značenja imena kluba – osvetnik.

**Ključne riječi:** nogomet, protjerani, Hajduk, Dalmacija, Bijela Australija.