The changing face of fandom: the case of Israeli football supporters

Yair Galily & Tal Samuel-Azran

Published online: 07 Jun 2020.

Submit your article to this journal ↗

View related articles ↗

View Crossmark data ↗

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Check for updates

The changing face of fandom: the case of Israeli football supporters

Yair Galily [iD] and Tal Samuel-Azran

Sport, Media and Society (SMS) Research Lab at the Sammy Ofer School of Communications, Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzliya, Israel

ABSTRACT
The article seeks to document the changing patterns in football fandom over the past three decades, since the advent of the so-called era of globalisation, using the case study of Israel. It shows how, in line with global trends, Israeli fans moved from passive following of sport clubs identified with political parties to becoming active supporters with growing involvement in the clubs' management. The article also traces the shift from party politics to patterns of nationalism and ethnocentrism amongst sport fans. Finally, it shows how Israelis moved from fandom of local clubs to that of foreign clubs, mirroring a similar trend in other countries.

KEYWORDS Football; fandom; Israel; glocalization; globalisation sport; fans; football clubs

Kick-off

"In an ideal world football clubs would be legally structured and governed in ways that prioritise sporting objectives above financial aspects. Moreover, all clubs would be controlled and run by their members – e.g. supporters – according to democratic principles."[1]

In the global era, new trends quickly spread to various countries, Israel included. To illustrate, until the 1990s Israeli football was influenced by the integration of sport and politics. Football clubs belonged to various sport associations, such as *Hapoel, Maccabi, Beitar*, etc., which belonged to, or were sponsored by, political parties. Associations appointed party representatives as team managers. Thus, during those years, football served as a tool for reinforcing identification between the fan and a political framework, and reflected the extent of the politicisation of Israeli society.[2] However, global trends described in this article dramatically changed this mechanism as these trends were glocalized – the interface between the global and the local.[3]

Indeed, in his book *From a Game to Merchandise* Ben Porat describes the story of Israeli football in light of the expansion and the empowerment of privatisation and capitalisation processes in the country, and their influence on club ownership patterns. Specifically, the weakening of the links to political parties began in the 1980s became a *fait accompli* once all the major clubs in the league passed to private hands.[4] Israeli football, like other football leagues around the world (especially in the UK), underwent a rapid process of commercialisation, which reached a peak with the shift in club ownership patterns from political to private. In 1992, the football club Maccabi Haifa was purchased by businessperson Yaakov Shahar and became the first Israeli club whose ownership was transferred from the hands of a sport association to a private individual. The process of football teams transferring to private ownership spread quickly, and was accompanied by a number of trends including securing contracts with foreign backup players, astronomical salary rises for players and profit increases from selling broadcasting rights of football games. This article documents and maps via three major trends how the move from public to private ownership, along with the accompanying trend of glocalization, have transformed the nature of fandom in Israel.

Transformation of the game from amateur to commercial: the changing face of fandom

How has the change in the management of the game of football from public to private ownership impacted football fans? As far back as the early days of the game in England in the 19th century, and until today, football has been a fans' game. Football fans are defined as spectators of football games who identify with a particular team and display loyalty and emotional identification with it.[5] The relations fans have with their teams have been compared to those of believers with their religion.[6] The importance of the team's symbol, the enthusiastic chanting, the perception of the stadium as a holy place, the admiration heaped upon players including the attribution of super-natural abilities to some, the sense of community created among the fans and the feeling of spiritual elevation at times of victory, support the claim that the team and the game represent a substitute for religion for many fans.[7] The fans' deep commitment to their football club is forged and strengthened as respect, status, and community and personal integrity are assumed by the fans.[8] Thus, the team's achievements represent confirmation of the fan's self-respect.[9]

Ben-Porat argues that a football team represents a reference group for the fan. Fans develop an entire compilation of values, behaviours, opinions and norms in light of their identification with the team. The development of deep identification with and commitment to the team by the fan usually begins at

an early age.[10] The process of the fan's connection to the team is often mediated first by a significant figure. Ties are developed based on emotion, history and a sense of mutual belonging – I belong to the team, and the team belongs to me.[11]

Nevertheless, the characteristics of a team's fans are not necessarily similar, and over the years the range of types who make up the character of fans has grown. Fans differ in the intensity and the motives for supporting their team. Giulianotti, who examined fan types in Britain at the beginning of the 21st century, claims that the change in the management of British football in the 1990s and the transfer of team ownership to private hands have brought about change in the character of the typical British football team fan. He argues that the traditional fan has been replaced by a new one – the urban consumer. Thus, whereas the traditional football supporter, usually of lower socioeconomic status, recognised a common denominator for broad class and community identification with the team, the urban consumer belongs to a middle or high socioeconomic status and identifies with the change in social status and prestige of the game. In tandem, these fans' connection to the team is arguably entirely different from that of traditional fans as they hold a consumer's promotional brand-name viewpoint. Such fans are especially attracted to the big football clubs, who represent for them success, professionalism, wealth and social prestige. Giulianotti has emphasised the tension has grown between the different fan types, as traditional supporters increasingly feel they are being pushed out of the stadium.[12] Indeed, studies have shown that many traditional football fans are no longer present at games due to the increase in ticket prices.[13] The next section will follow the transformation of the traditional fan in Israel.

Israel fans' transformation from passive followers to active consumers: ownership structures of Israeli football clubs

First, to contextualise the following section and explain the changes in Israeli sport fandom, it is important to present the regulations regarding sport ownership in Israel and thus illuminate how these regulations promote commercialisation and privatisation of sport teams. IFA's (Israeli Football Association) Regulations Concerning the Transfer of Rights in Football Clubs (RCTRFC) defines football clubs either as non-profit associations (Amutot) or as non-profit companies. Generally, the IFA's regulations allow corporate bodies (either business companies or non-profit associations) to acquire ownership or management rights of clubs under certain conditions. For example, the application will be rejected if the corporate body, or its owner or director, was convicted of a serious crime in the last five years. Essentially the transfer of rights of ownership or control without the IFA's authorisation has no force.

Whenever there has been a transfer of ownership or managing rights on behalf of a corporate body, all the economic and business activities of the club are centralised by the corporate body. The corporate body must be administrated according to the accounting principles accepted by IFA. The RCTRFC also establishes a minimum capital for corporate bodies owning or managing clubs. Where the IFA withdraws its authorisation, the corporate body is obliged to sell its rights in the club within a given period of time. In case of non compliance, the IFA nominates a special committee in charge of selling it.[14] According to IFA regulations, nothing prevents a business (corporate) body owning or managing a club in order to distribute profits, provided that such distribution is done in respect of the conditions fixed in IFA's regulations. According to the RCTRFC, corporate bodies may raise funds by issuing shares and registering the club in the stock exchange. However, the incomes of the club and the corporate body must be devoted to the professional, economic and sporting success of the club. In addition, the current regulations promote transparency and more importantly, involvement of the public in managing the teams. The regulations also note that the board of directors of a corporate body owning or managing a club, shall require the participation of a 'representative of the community,' whose role is to observe that the club/corporate body complies with IFA's regulations and corporate governance rules. To do this, the representative of the community must have access to all the relevant documentation. All this background leads o the next stage, the initiation of organisations like Israfans, described below.

Supporters groups and the initiation of Israeli fans

The existing football fans' clubs are constituted by informal groups of supporters promoting classic supporters club issues like the colours of the club, travel, meetings and anti-violence. In practice, the groups lack formal personality and rights and hence do not have a legally recognised right of influence over the management of clubs.

In 2013, Israel's Ministry of Sport decided to initiate a reform process and it seemed that significant changes were going to be made. This decision reinforces the idea that there is a better way for sports clubs to be managed – by the active participation of the people who care the most, the supporters. Indeed, an intermediate decision recently handed down in pending litigation, the District Court of Tel-Aviv recognised that the applicants, supporters of a football club, may be considered as 'persons concerned' in the club, having an interest that the club will be correctly managed. The court allowed the applicants to have access to documentation that the corporate body managing the club presented in its main evidence. However, in Israel there is no current practice of football club supporters associating under a formally

recognised corporative or similar structure. Although recently the IFA has recommended the implementation of a fan liaison officer modelled along the German model of Fan-beautragte, to the best of our knowledge these recommendations have not been taken any further yet.

Instead, recent years have seen many changes in Israeli fans' attitudes towards their involvement in the sport teams they root behind. From a fans' organisations' perspective, fans are increasingly realising that their privately-owned teams are not managed for the benefit of the community, but instead to promote private interests – as has been the case in many other European countries. As a result, two supporter owned clubs have been established in Jerusalem (Basketball) and Tel Aviv (Football), and the number of groups seeking to follow them is growing rapidly.

Another major illustration to the transformation of Israeli fans from passive followers to active consumers in the initiation of Isra-fans. Isra-fans (the umbrella organisation for democratic supporters' trusts and supporter owned clubs in Israel) was established in 2007 as a reaction to empty terraces, poor communication with the police, which often resulted in violence, and a strong sense of alienation between the fans and the management of the clubs they support. It represents 22 supporter clubs and fan projects in Israel, most of them belonging to teams at the first two divisions. The group is independent and aims to serve as a permanent framework for all supporters' clubs and has a constructive relationship with IFA. Their main issues cover ticket pricing, policing and strengthening supporters' clubs. Israfans also assists supporters' clubs based on the German model of fan projects; to illustrate, the group promotes supporters representation on the boards of their clubs and supporters rights and fan culture in general. At the same time, Israfans assist the authorities with the fight against violence and racism in sport and aims to encourage and strengthen the relationships between the clubs and their communities.

Importantly, the initiation of Isra-fans is inspired by similar trends in global sport fandom. Specifically, Isra-fans is inspired and has even sought advice from Supporters Direct (an umbrella organisation set up by the British government to secure a greater level of accountability within football clubs) in helping supporters groups to become actively involved in the governance of their clubs. In order to promote fan culture in Israel, Isra-fans also organises exchanges with supporters' groups meetings in Europe. In these seminars the groups discuss issues around how to fight violence in sports, supporters' rights, policing and different ways of involvement in the decision-making processes at the clubs they support.

Not surprisingly, one of the main areas of activities of Isra-fans is in reducing the ticket prices for football games. In a survey conducted among all supports groups in the Israeli first division, supporters named the high prices of the tickets as one of the main reasons for low attendance.

Accordingly, Isra-fans produced a policy paper on ticket pricing to all clubs in the Israeli first division and to the Israeli football association. Consequently, a pilot for reduced ticket prices for all the games of the Bnei Yehuda Tel Aviv team throughout season 2007/8 was initiated, resulting in an unprecedented success. According to the initiative, if the club would have made less money from ticketing than before, the IFA would have paid the difference. However, ultimately the club made more money with reduced ticket prices than with more expensive ones, illustrating the potential of creating a win-win situation for the team and the fans by cooperating with Isra-fans initiatives.

In addition, Isra-fans is involved in the formation of supporters' census. This initiative is related to amending the poor relationship between supporters and the management of the clubs. Thus, Isra-fans asked supporters' clubs to conduct supporters' census within their ranks. These censuses are planned to become the foundation for umbrella supporters' organisations, whose elected supporters will serve as representatives when dealing with the management of their clubs.

Furthermore, Isra-fans also attempt to improve the relationship between police and supporters. To do that, Isra-fans have established a list of suggestions emphasising solutions to the problems arising between fans and police. This plan has been presented to the interoffice committee that deals with sport related violence, in which Israfans is a permanent member. The plan was also presented and discussed in the Israeli media.

One notable example of how the culture of Isra-fans inspired local Israeli fans to become proactive is that of the Hapoel Katamon Football Club, which is owned and managed by its fans. The club was created by supporters of Hapoel Jerusalem, who were dissatisfied about the way their club was run. Hapoel Katamon Football Club is named after the Jerusalem neighbourhood of Katamon, where Hapoel Jerusalem had a stadium. When Hapoel Jerusalem was relegated from the top to the third division, fans could not see a future for the club in the hands of the current owners, who they held responsible for the poor sporting as well as financial performance of the club. In reaction to these developments, supporters started to raise NIS 500,000 to form a new team. More than 500 supporters purchased a NIS 1,000 stake in the team and businessmen provided additional funds. To date the club has about 700 members who pay 1,000 shekels a year (around 290 US dollars).

Beyond the issue of becoming more proactive in the financial and managerial aspects of sport teams, the second aspect brought about with the advent of globalisation and private ownership of groups, as opposed to affiliation with political parties, is (perhaps ironically) a move of fan culture towards nationalist and sometimes even racist politics. This is expressed in both the tendencies of fandom in international competitions as well as racist interference in the recruitment of players; in the case of Israel, the

recruitment of Muslim players in some of the teams. These matters are discussed below.

Fan culture in the global era: the rise of nationalism and ethnocentrism

In theory, the move from teams identified with political parties to business-men owned teams, which took place simultaneously to increased process of globalisation in the 1990 s, should have depoliticised sport. The four decades of the Cold War were often characterised by the division to Communist bloc versus the West, as can be illustrated in the mutual boycotts pf the 1980s Moscow Olympic games by the US and its accomplices in protest of the 1979 Soviet Union invasion of Afghanistan and the Soviet retribution in boycot-ting the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Since the 1990s, such political boycotts are rare, illustrating that politics play less of a role in the global era.

However, fan culture actually reflects that in the global era, there is a trend of increased political and ethnocentric tensions. In ethnic realm, studies show that the fandom of teams like Barcelona in Spain and Glasgow Scotland are highly identified with ethnic tendencies: the oppressed Catalonian minority in the case of Barcelona Spain and the Catholic minority in Scotland in the case of Glasgow.[15] In the nationalist realm, one of the most famous illustrations is a YouGov poll conducted about the fandom tenden-cies of fans from 19 countries before the 2014 Brazil World Cup. The poll revealed that the team most Argentinians rooted against was England, perhaps reflecting the tension between the countries on grounds on the Falkland/Malvinas islands. In the same spirit, English fans rooted against Russia and Germany, reflecting the current tensions with Russia and the traditional rivalry and animosity towards the German team since the World War II. In the same manner, French fans rooted against Algeria, German fans against Iran, and Greek fans against the German team, most likely on grounds of the EU (led by Germany) economic sanctions against Greece.[16]

In the context of Israel, during the same 2014 Brazil World Cup, a series of studies showed Israeli fans show a similar trend of being led by nationalistic tendencies rather than sport-oriented sentiment. Thus, a study entitled 'Germany's Victory over Brazil was like the Blitzkrieg.' The Sport-Politics Nexus in Israel During the 2014 World Cup found via a poll amongst a representative sample of the Jewish population that Iran was the team most Israelis rooted against followed by Germany.[17] These teams represent Israel's contemporary most dominant enemy – Iran – and the country behind the greatest tragedy of the Jewish History: Germany. The analysis further highlighted that users' comments after the games were often char-acterised by the political comments, hence the title of the article. Indeed, dozens of comments regarding the German team, who eventually won the World Cup, linked between the German team and the Nazis. The user

comments towards the Iranian team were equally hateful and politics rather than sport-centred. Importantly, a related study found that the animosity towards the German and the Iranian teams was the strongest amongst the 18–20 age group, illustrating that Israel's young generation of football fans not only continues to view sport games in a political context but in fact shows, surprisingly, even higher tendencies to view football from a nationalistic perspective in comparison to the older generation.[18]

In parallel, in the age of privately-owned football teams Jewish-Israel fans have increased their animosity towards teams that represent Arab-Israelis, specifically the Bnei Sakhnin team, somewhat at the expense of the traditional rivalry between teams representing right- and leftwing political parties in Israeli society. To elaborate, the Bnei Sakhnin team was created as a union of two teams, Hapoel Sahnin and Maccabi Sakhnin, who, despite being of rival clubs, realised that in order to advance Arab-Israeli teams' profile in the Israeli football league they should unite based on their mutual Arab identity. Importantly, Bnei Sakhnin is partially sponsored by Qatar, which partially sponsored its football stadium, named Doha Stadium after the Qatari capital. This created a stir in the Israeli public since Qatar is widely criticised in Israel as financier of the terror organisation Hamas. Thus, major games between Bnei Sakhnin and Israeli teams are often characterised by violence and tensions. While the main rivalry is between Bnei Sakhnin and Betar Jerusalem fans, the latter identified with rightwing tendencies, violence between Bnei Sakhnin fans and other Jewish fans of other sport associations – Maccabi teams and the more leftwing-identified Hapoel teams – is a common occurrence.

Furthermore, whereas during the politically-sport-teams-nexus phase the political attitude was related to the political party related to the club, it is fascinating to follow how different private team owners affect the political attitudes and tendencies related to the team. Specifically, it is interesting to explore how Betar Jerusalem's change of ownership in the last decade affected its recruitment of Arab-Muslim players. Until 2013, the rightwing-identified club had never recruited a Muslim player. However, between 2005–2013 the team was owned by the Russian Oligarch Arakadi Gaidamak. Gaidamak, who invested unprecedented amounts of money in the club, announced that two Muslim players from Chechnya would join it in the 2012–13 season. This move triggered major protests by some fans, and was part of the reason the fans were behind the club's purchase by Eli Tabib, ending the Gaidamak era, though the issue of an Arab-Muslim player remained in the headlines. In 2018, Betar Jerusalem was purchased by the high-tech entrepreneur Moshe Hogeg who announced that he would end the anti-Arab-Muslim sentiment amongst the club's fans. To this purpose he worked towards ending the animosity between Betar and Bnei Sakhnin, promoting a resolution that reduced to an extent the traditional rivalry

between the clubs. Next, in the summer of 2019, Hogeg was the driving force behind the recruitment of Ali Muhammad, a Nigerian football player. While some of the fans strongly protested, Ali Muhammad's impressive performance on the pitch resulted in a 'love story' with the fans, highlighting the great ability of club ownership to impact attitudes of sport fans towards different teams.

Finally, globalisation affected Israeli fans by promoting the advent of local Ultras clubs, groups of football fans known for their fanatical support to their teams, a trend imported from Latin America and Europe. These fanatical organisations are often dedicated to increasing the involvement of fans in the decision-making of the club, but they often prove destructive forces. This is vividly illustrated by the nationalistic trends illustrated in the case of Betar Jerusalem Ultras, who were the main force behind the anti-Arab/Muslim sentiment.

Fandom of foreign clubs: fandom of Barcelona in Israel

Theorists of glocalization typically challenge the assumption that globalisation processes always endanger the local. Rather, glocalization both highlights how local cultures may critically adapt or resist 'global' phenomena, and reveals the way in which the very creation of localities is a standard component of globalisation.[19]

Another growing characteristic of fandom worldwide in the age of globalisation is the rise in fandom of foreign clubs.[20] This is mostly the result of advances in satellite television and the advent of the commercial web in the 1990s which allow local fans to follow football games of their beloved teams from all over the world in an affordable price. Kerr and Emery found that elements such as style of play, the presence of a superstar such as Messy or Ronaldo and the ability to participate in the highest division are amongst the main aspects that predict the global fandom of local teams. Accordingly, it is not surprising that amongst the most followed clubs in the world are those from the Spanish League – Real Madrid and Barcelona and the English Premier League – Liverpool, Chelsea, Manchester United and Manchester City. In addition, other clubs that gained global following are the German Bayern Munich, the Italian Juventus and the French club Paris Saint Germain. To illustrate the magnitude of global fandom of the most loved clubs, consider that each of the two leading Spanish clubs, Barcelona and Real Madrid, have over 200 million followers in the main social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) combined.

Accordingly, a November 2012 global study by research company Repucom (now owned by Nielsen Sports) found that the club with the most fans in Israel is actually Barcelona, with 20% of Israeli sport fans saying they root behind the Spanish club. The same survey found that Barcelona

was also the club most Macedonians, Bosnians, Finnish and Hungarians rooted behind, though Israel it had the greatest share of Barcelona fans.[21] A 2015 survey by, Calcalist, the most popular economic paper in Israel, found that 28% of Israeli football fans root for Barcelona. The local club most Israelis rooted for is Maccabi Tel-Aviv with only 16% of respondents saying they root behind the club.[22] A 2016 survey by Mastercard on 5,000 respondents again confirmed that Barcelona is the most talked about team amongst Israelis, followed by Real Madrid and Maccabi Tel-Aviv.[23] A 2017 survey amongst Arab-Israelis found that 41% of them root for Real Madrid, more than any other team, followed by Barcelona with 28% of respondents saying they are rooting behind the Catalan team.[24]

Conclusions

As Giulianotti and Robertson rightly acknowledged, popular culture provides many acute illustrations of glocalization projects. In football, supporters of clubs and nations establish intensive forms of mutual particularity on a trans-local basis. The relativised construction of particular identities possesses strong symbolic and discursive components, such as through the use of team colours, and the production of narratives relating to the history and lore of the favoured side.

This article maps and documents the changing patterns in football fandom over the past three decades, since the advent of the so-called era of globalisation, using the case study of Israel. It showed how, in line with global trends, Israeli fans moved from passive following of sport clubs identified with political parties to becoming active supporters with growing involvement in the clubs' management, underscoring the shift from party politics to patterns of nationalism and ethnocentrism amongst sport fans. Finally, it showed how Israelis moved from fandom of local clubs to that of foreign clubs, mirroring a similar trend in other countries. Altogether, the article illustrates how, in three decades of globalisation and privatisation, the whole fandom patterns changed dramatically, mirroring global trends and leaving the system that characterised it since the birth of Israel in 1948 a thing of the past.

Notes

1. UEFA, strategy document, 2019.
2. Ben-Porat, *Oh Beitar Jerusalem*, p. 128.
3. Giulianotti, *The Globalisation of Football*, 550.
4. Ben-Porat, *The Political Economy of Football*, 49, 52.
5. Guttman, *Sports Spectators*.
6. Dunning, *The Development of Football as a World Game*, 90.

7. Colles, *Football as a Surrogate* Religion, 68.
8. Real, *Deep fan, 331.*
9. Wann, *Sport fans.*
10. See note 2 above 2, 128.
11. Guttman, *Sports Spectators.*
    Dunning, *The Development of Football.*
12. Giulianotti, *Sport Mega Events*, 3301.
13. Bennett, *Sports Sponsorship*, 302.
14. http://fasfe.org/images/docs/SDEurope-Full-Report.pdf.
15. Porat, *Football Fandom*, 289.
16. Aisch, *World Cup opinions in 19 Countries.*
17. Samuel-Azran, *Germany's Victory on Brazil was like the Blitzkrieg.*
18. Ibid., *Jewish-Israeli Attitudes towards the Iranian Football Team*, 263.
19. Giulianotti and R. Robertson, *Forms of Glocalization*, 134.
20. Kerr, *Foreign fandom and the Liverpool FC*, 889.
21. Bornstein, *Now it's official.*
22. Daskal, *Maccabi, Barcelona.*
23. Ynet Sport, *Barcelona is the Most Talked about Team in Israel.*
24. Ibid., *The Most Loved Team amongst Arab-Israelis: Real Madrid.*

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributors

Yair Galily Ph.D is behavioural scientist and founder & head of the Sport, Media and Society (SMS) Research Lab at the Sammy Ofer School of Communications, Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya.

Tal Samuel-Azran is the head of the International Program at the Sammy Ofer School of Communications, Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzliya, Israel.

ORCID

Yair Galily ⓘD http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5308-5675

Bibliography

Aisch, G., D. Leonhardt, and K. Qauealy. 2014. "World Cup Opinions in 19 Countries: Likes, Dislikes, Predictions." *New York Times.* http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/11/upshot/world-cup-opinions-in-19-countries-likes-dislikes-predictions.html?_r=0&abt=0002&abg=0

Bennett, R. "Sports Sponsorship, Spectator Recall and False Consensus." *European Journal of Marketing* 33, no. 3/4 (1999): 291–313. doi:10.1108/03090569910253071.

Ben-Porat, A. "Oh Beitar Jerusalem: The Burning Bush Protest." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 18, no. 4 (2001): 123–139. doi:10.1080/714001672.

Ben-Porat, A. "The Political Economy of Football: The Importation of Foreign Football Players to the Israeli League." *Football & Society* 3, no. 1 (2002): 54–68.

Ben-Porat, A. "Football Fandom: A Bounded Identification." *Football & Society* 11, no. 3 (2010): 277–290.

Ben-Porat, G., and A. Ben-Porat. "(Un) Bounded Football: Globalization and Localization of the Game in Israel." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 39, no. 4 (2009): 421–436. doi:10.1177/1012690204049064.

Bornstein, S. 2014. "Now It's Official: Barcelona Is the Most Loved Team in Israel." *Globes*, April 22. [in Hebrew].

Coles, R. "Football as a Surrogate Religion?" In *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain*, edited by M. Hill, 61–77, Queensland: SCM Press Ltd, 1975.

Daskal, U. 2015. "David, Maccabi, Barcelona." *Calcalist*. [in Hebrew].

Dunning, E. "The Development of Football as a World Game." In *Sport Matters: Sociological Studies of Sport, Violence and Civilization*, 80–105. Routledge, 1999.

Galily, Y., and T. Samuel-Azran. "Football and politics: Past, Present and Future from an Israeli Perspective." In *Palgrave International Handbook of Football and Politics*, edited by J. M. De-Waele, E. Gloriozova, and R. Spaaij, 369–384. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

GIiulianotti, R. "Supporters, Followers, Fans, and Flaneurs: A Taxonomy of Spectator Identities in Football." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 26, no. 1 (2002): 25–46. doi:10.1177/0193723502261003.

Giulianotti, R. A., and R. Robertson. "The Globalization of Football: A Study in the Glocalization of the 'Serious Life'." *The British Journal of Sociology* 55, no. 4 (2004): 545–568. doi:10.1111/j.1468-4446.2004.00037.x.

Giulianotti, R. "'Sport Mega Events, Urban Football Carnivals and Securitised Commodification: The Case of the English Premier League." *Urban Studies* 48, no. 15 (2004): 3293–3310. doi:10.1177/0042098011422395.

Giulianotti, R., and R. Robertson. "Forms of Glocalization: Globalization and the Migration Strategies of Scottish Football Fans in North America." *Sociology* 41, no. 1 (2007): 133–152. doi:10.1177/0038038507073044.

Guttman, A. *Sports Spectators*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1986.

Kerr, A. K., and P. R. Emery. "Foreign Fandom and the Liverpool FC: A Cyber-mediated Romance." *Football & Society* 12, no. 6 (2011): 880–896.

Mammadzade, N. "Top 10 Football Clubs with Most Fans in the World." Accessed October 30, 2019. Pickvisa.com

Real, M. R., and R. A. Mechikoff. "Deep Fan: Mythic Identification, Technology, and Advertising in Spectator Sports." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 9, no. 4 (1992): 323–339. doi:10.1123/ssj.9.4.323.

Samuel-Azran, T., and Y. Galily, Amit Lavie-Dinur and Yuval Karniel. "Jewish-israeli Attitudes Towards the Iranian Football Team during the 2014 World Cup Tournament." *Media, War & Conflict* 9, no. 3 (2016): 252–271. doi:10.1177/1750635216632793.

Samuel-Azran, T., Y. Galily, Y. Karniel, and A. Lavie-Dinur. "'Let the Germans Win? Israeli Attitudes Towards Die Mannschaft during the 2014 World Cup Tournament." *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research* 45, no. 5 (2016): 391–403. doi:10.1080/17475759.2016.1207198.

Samuel-Azran, T., Y. Galily, Y. Karniel, and A. Lavie-Dinur. ""Germany's Victory on Brazil Was like the Blitzkrieg": The Sport-Politics Nexus in Israel during the 2014 World Cup." *Global Media Journal* 8, no. 1 (2018): 18. (German edition).

Wann, D. L., M. J. Melnick, G. W. Russell, and D. G. Pease. *Sport Fans: The Psychology and Social Impact of Spectators*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2001.

Ynet Sport. 2017. "Barcelona Is the Most Talked about Team in Israel." *YNET*, May 25,

Ynet Sport. 2017. "The Most Loved Team Amongst Arab-Israelis: Real Madrid." *YNET*, May 29.