



Women, Soccer and Transnational Migration
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NEW FRONTIERS: THE TRANSNATIONAL CIRCULATION OF BRAZIL'S WOMEN SOCCER PLAYERS

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In recent decades, female women's migration has shifted to the center of migration studies due both to the increase in the number of women involved in international migration, and to a feminist reconceptualization of migration theory. New approaches have examined the presence of women abroad, ranging from studies of family reunification to women as independent economic migrants working in the "care" sector (as maids, cleaning women, prostitutes, nurses etc.). However, along with this specific insertion in the labor market, women also migrate in a South-North direction with other life projects and lifestyles: these include students, highly skilled migrants, entrepreneurs, diplomats and, what interests us here, soccer players.ⁱ

This chapter compares the global migratory flows of men and women athletes, and the conditions for women's soccer players in Brazil by focusing on the particular case of Santos highlighting the apparent gender inequalities. Unlike male soccer players, whose migrations to work abroad are registered on the site of the Brazilian Soccer Confederation (Confederação Brasileira de Futebol: CBF) and, in some cases, receive widespread media attention, women athletes who emigrate appear to repeat the trajectory of the three and a half million other Brazilians who now work abroad (most of them clandestinely) they leave the country invisibly.

In interpreting the circulation of women soccer players, I reflect upon the motivation for their departure, while also considering personal motivations (e.g. the opportunity to have open homosexual relationships). Further this chapter explores a long history of prejudice towards women's soccer in Brazil. I focus on the significance of the law that until recently prohibited women from playing organized soccer, and relate this exclusion to the sense of nationhood. Rethinking how borders are conceptualized at local, national and global levels, the chapter also explores the effects of living abroad on personal identity formation and more specifically, on the formation of lesbian sexual identities in a transnational context.

THE TRANSNATIONAL CIRCULATION: A WAY TO SURVIVE IN THE SPORT

Of the eleven starters on Brazil's women's football team in 2010, eight played abroad. The exportation of soccer players to northern hemisphere countries, both men and women, has been occurring for years. The first wave of Brazilian football migration for men occurred in the 1930's (Rial 2008), while for women it only began in the 1990's, as it did in many other countries (Agergaard & Botelho 2011). Pretinha, one

of the precursors in this movement, played for three seasons in the United Statesⁱⁱ and later in Japan. Kátia Cilene and Simone Jatobá went to France, Elaine and Marta went to Sweden and the United States, Cristiane went to Germany, Sweden and the United States, and Rosana dos Santos Augusto moved to Austria.

Indeed, as Tiesler (2011, 2012) has shown, Brazil has played a decisive role in the international migration of women soccer players, presenting a high mobility of players in comparison to other countries. But this flow is incomparably lower than that of male athletes and the women lack the same visibility as the men. Why? Contrary to some countries of the global North (the U.S. for instance), and even recognizing some recent changes, the amount of women players are incomparably less significant than those of men in Brazil, as it is in much of the global South. In addition, most of the women players are classified as amateurs.

The website of the Brazilian Soccer Federation (CBF, a national FA linked to FIFA - the world governing body for both men's and women's soccer), provides data on the departure and return of men and women players abroad from 2002 to 2010. The CBF registers the departure of professional players: however, many women turn professional only after they have moved abroad, meaning that their departures are invisible in this data. From 2004 to 2009, the CBF has records of the departure of just 46 women from the country, compared with more than 3,000 men. The United States leads the list of destination countries for Brazilian women players with 14, followed by Spain with 10.

Total Official Transfers Abroad until 2009 = 46
2004 (9) = US (1), Canadá (1), Spain (4), Austria (1)
2006 e 2005 (zero)
2007 (5) = Germany (1), Spain (2), Italy (2)
2008 (13) = US (3) Germany (2), Spain (2), Denmark (4),
2009 (19) = US (10); Germany (3), Spain (2), Portugal (1), Finland (1), Sweden (1)
2010 (until April total 6) = Korea (2), Spain (1), England (1), Russia (1), Sweden (1)
Source: www.cbf.com.br

As we see, new frontiers were added since 2004. In this movement abroad, men and women players have faced similar situations derived from the economic precariousness of the Brazilian teams. A situation that has been changing in the last few years for men's soccer, with the economic growth of the clubs (Corinthians was classified by Forbes as the world's 16th richest club in 2013) and the return of many star players - some but not all at the twilight of their careers.

In all other circumstances, though, they are separated by an enormous abyss. While for men a move abroad represents an attempt to improve their playing and living conditions, for women it was for many years the sole way to survive in the sport.

Among male players, while a friendship network has some influence in the transfer system, it is the agents who mediate the transfers, find clubs and negotiate contracts. Among women, the transfer system is based on personal recommendations made through a network of player-friends, trainers and fitness coaches (Pisani 2012:109), something that, as Jean Williams has shown has been in place for decades: “[A]n

international network of women's football existed from the mid-1960s, while into the 1980s UEFA/FIFA were debating whether there was sufficient depth in competitive women's football to host 'official' tournaments" (Williams 2011). As an example she cites the English player Sue Lopez, born in 1945, who played for Southampton Women's Football Club in the 1960s and the 1980s, but who transferred to Italy in mid-career to play for teams there in the 1970s.

Their transfers inside or outside the country are rarely negotiated by agents, since most of their moves between clubs occurs at the end of their contracts. Many move to North America and Europe under the pretext of studying – a ploy used by only a few male players only when they head to the United States to play on university teams (Rial 2012).

The figures provided by the CBF (see above) are merely a sample and do not correspond to the total number of departures. The data does not include transfers to less common destinations, for example, such as the African countries (Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, and others). However, if we examine Equatorial Guinea's national team that won the 8th African Women's Championship in 2012 (making them the only African country apart from Nigeria to win this competition), we see that 11 of the 21 registered players were Brazilians who had been naturalized by Equatorial Guinea,ⁱⁱⁱ and most were connected to Brazilian clubs and only one based at a club in Equatorial Guinea^{iv}.

This case and others like it show that there has been an expansion of borders, and a larger number of potential destinations for Brazil's women soccer players, who, like their male counterparts, are conquering space in 'new' countries. The case of Equatorial Guinea, though an extreme example of this expansion, comprises a successful exception in Africa, though, a continent without any real tradition of importing players or migrants from other continents in general.

In Asia we can also note the incorporation of new clubs as potential destinations for women players over the past few years, in countries like South Korea and Russia. Likewise, European countries without any tradition of using important Brazilian women players, such as Austria, France, England and Iceland, have joined Spain, which has long been one of the main destinations for Brazil's women athletes (along with the United States and Sweden)^v.

As among the male players, the soccer careers of women display a large circulation among clubs in Brazil and abroad,^{vi} which they call the "rodar" (the spin), a mobility that the players see as a positive way to gather both life experience and soccer capital which improves their position professionally and economically. In Brazil, contracts last for a very short time, corresponding to the time span of the regional tournament or the Brazil Cup, a situation similar to that found among men playing in the lower club divisions that participate only in regional championships during the first half of the

year. The Santos director I talked to cited an example: “There is a girl who played for us in 2009. She wasn’t selected here and began 2010 at Palmeiras. Palmeiras were eliminated in the first phase of the state championship. So she went to Botucatu to play in the Brazil Cup. They were eliminated in the quarter-finals. So she ended up without a club. One half-year at Palmeiras, another three games at Botucatu, and her year was over.”

Indeed, this is the most accurate analogy: Brazil’s top women players have salaries and training conditions similar to men in the fourth division or lower.

Conditions for women’s soccer in Brazil: the case of Santos

In February 2011, I was able to accompany the day-to-day lives of players from Santos F.C. when a “female” modality was still operating in the club, although it closed in 2012. The club owned a townhouse near the stadium where most of the thirty female players lived. Many of them shared the same room and they were even forced to transform the living room into a bedroom (which they called the favela). With the exception of a small group of players that included Marta, Andrea and Maurine, each of whom had contracts with higher wages and lived elsewhere, all of the other women lived in these precarious accommodations, and whose only income was a study grant from the local council. During school holidays, the grant ceased, although the women continued to train. The intermittent “salary” was not the only

difference in relation to the professional male players. The “mermaids” – as they were known - were transported to the Training Center (TC) in an old rusty bus. They shared the training pitches with the younger male squads, while the professional male players trained at another location. At the TC, priority was given to the boys: they trained first, had better transportation, used better dressing rooms and so on. Many of the female players studied at night and some of them frequented Neo-Pentecostal churches, a practice also adopted by many male colleagues over the last few decades, reflecting the enormous rise in Neo-Pentecostalism in Brazil (Rial 2012). However, the start of the final training session was often delayed, meaning that the women had to go for eating dinner at the stadium restaurant with the young male players. The women’s team home matches were also played in another stadium because, as one club director told me, Santos spends at least US\$ 17,000 every time it opens its stadium and it would be unprofitable for a women’s match.

A day in Santos

Here we are describing the situation at Brazil’s largest women’s soccer club – at the time winners of the continental Copa Libertadores – and one can only imagine the conditions at other clubs. Nevertheless, Santos received hundreds of requests to sign young women players from various Brazilian states in search of a professional career. I was able to accompany the first day of one of these women. She had arrived in the city a month earlier, coming from a poor family from the interior of São Paulo state, some 900 km from Santos, with the sole objective of embarking on a career in

professional soccer. She had learned to play with her brothers and was working as a nanny for two children in the city to earn her living while waiting for a “break”. On her day-off from work she could train for her trial, but she needed to bring playing clothes and equipment, cleats and a medical exam – all demands set by the club. She tried unsuccessfully to match the performance of the other players during the training session I watched, because she lacked the level of fitness and skill. She was sent away right after the session, ending her dream of a soccer career.

The abyss separating men’s and women’s soccer in Brazil is clearly revealed in the names of the Training Centre’s different pitches, named after former Santos players: Pelé, Robinho and Diego. Although Marta was named five times as the world’s best woman player by FIFA, she is entirely ignored.

Those women who pass the test must face the insecurity of a short-term contract, which does not assure them even one year’s salary. It is thus not difficult to understand why so many female players want to leave Brazil, and to accept work in countries seen as difficult, like Russia, where they can obtain “the contract of their life,” even though they consider living “outside” to be a sacrifice given the problems with adapting to a different language, climate and food, and especially the distance from family and friends. “There is nowhere like (as good as) Brazil,” I was told by one player who had moved abroad, after being recommended by another Brazilian woman player, who also translated all the coach’s instructions for her.

A statement by one American woman football player describes well what I also found visiting Santos:

I first came to Brazil eight years ago to play professional football for Santos and it quickly became evident that the nation of football was not the nation of woman's football. We wore seven-year old men's jerseys; we walked forty-five minutes to get to practice – no bus – and often had tired feet by the time we got there; we stayed up late at night washing our uniforms by hand in outdoor sinks; we were fed different food than the men's team. The only thing we had in common with the men's team is the team name. My teammate shared stories with me of the struggles they faced to be accepted as female players. And I am still learning about the word "preconceito" or prejudice about the woman's game.

Caitlin Davis Fisher
(former player on the former Santos Futebol Clube^{vii})

An invisible game

“No one knows, no one watched,” read the headline in a prominent Brazilian newspaper, announcing the end of the most important women's soccer championship in South America, known and referred to in English as the Copa Libertadores, in 2010. The article was accompanied by a photograph of an empty stadium. The team from Santos represented Brazil and won the Copa for the second time with six victories in six matches against the other national champions, scoring 25 goals and conceding none. At the other extreme, the Universidad de Iquitos of Peru team was

eliminated after four losses with a negative goal difference of 28. The statistics reveal the enormous disparity in women's soccer in the Americas. Brazil, represented by its national champion Santos team, completely outplayed the other countries, with the exception of Chile, represented in the final by Everton, and Argentina, whose top side is Boca Juniors. The tournament finished with an average attendance of 300 people per game: in other words, all the games were played in empty stadiums. By way of comparison, the Brazilian D Series championship for men's teams (the fourth most important league in the country) had average attendance of 2,700 paying fans per game, nearly nine times as many.

Although 15,000 people went to Pacaembú Stadium to watch the final of the women's Copa Libertadores in 2009, this was largely down to the fact that the game was being broadcast on TV and Marta^{viii} was playing for Santos. Despite being voted the world's best woman soccer player five times (2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010) a record for men and women, and being a national celebrity, her recognition by the same journalists is much less than that of male stars - for instance, during the 2012 FIFA's world's best player competition, in which Marta was competing, the Brazilian media preferred to aim its spotlights on Neymar, who was competing for the best goal of the year. During the Libertadores final, the fans chanted, "Marta is better than Kaká," referring to Brazil's internationally famous male star, but the journalists covering the event consider the chants to be a joke. Santos FC was unable to keep Marta after 2010 because of the offer of higher wages,^{ix} and since then she has played for clubs in Sweden and the United States. Still, she is the first woman to have her footprint at the

Hall of Fame of Maracanã, and in 2010 a leading Brazilian magazine (Época) listed her among the one hundred most influential Brazilians.

Not only for money: reasons for leave Brazil

Playing outside the country earns women a level of recognition seldom obtained in Brazil, as Pisani suggests in her ethnography of Foz Cataratas FC:

“...through these migrations, the women players feel valued, recognized and honored. Adriane Nenê tells us that she stayed for an hour after the game signing autographs for the fans; Thaisa relates that the coach treated her differently from the other athletes and she felt there was more flexibility, more recognition. Playing for a team abroad also allows the player to receive good wages, like the salary received by Marina who was able to buy a house in Brazil from the money obtained playing soccer in Sweden.” (2012:109).

For some women players, leaving Brazil also has another meaning. Abroad, whether in Europe or the United States, they can openly maintain homoerotic relationships that would have to be kept “in the closet” in Brazil, given the strong prejudices in the soccer world and, to an extent, in society in general. Although gender relations have

transformed in recent decades in Brazil, women who play soccer suffer prejudice in a still macho society, where women face a double work shift both inside and outside the home that leaves them with little leisure time.

While much has changed, the famous line from the former coach of the Brazilian men's team, João Saldanha, still rings true for most Brazilian men: "Can you imagine your son coming home with his girlfriend saying: 'She's the defender for Bangú'? No way, huh." The Bangu Athletic Club was founded in 1904 for the practice of football by workers at the Bangu company factory in Rio de Janeiro and still has an image of a club for workmen. Although a journalist, a leftist intellectual and a strong opponent of the military dictatorship, who publicly denounced government torture whenever he travelled abroad with the team, Saldanha reveals the macho attitude found among many leftist men (and some women) at the time (and even today) when it comes to women's soccer.

The perception that only butch lesbians can like soccer, though now changing, persists in many circles. Homophobic crimes affecting the subaltern classes are common in the country and although there are no records of women players being attacked, the risk exists. Attitudes often differ little from the South African view which, as is well-known, had such tragic consequences for Eudy Simelane from Banyana Banyana, the women's national soccer team, who was subjected to "corrective rape."^x

Pursuing a different lifestyle to those possible in Brazil is one of the motives of a player's decision to move to another country, which entails a profound insertion in local life. Indeed, the Brazilian women players have a much deeper local immersion than the men, who tend to live in protective bubbles (Rial 2011) whose permeability depends on their cultural capital (less local immersion among those with less schooling), language (greater local immersion in Latin-speaking countries), the country where they are living (greater local immersion in the United States, for example) and salary (greater local immersion among those earning lower wages).

Although switching between clubs tends to be as high as among male players – which leads me to define this dislocation as a circulation (Rial 2008) rather than emigration – we observe that many women players obtain contracts in foreign clubs at advanced stages of their career, something that rarely happens with male players over the age of thirty. Why do they emigrate? While for male football players migration is one among various possible projects in their careers, for women, as we will see, it may be the only one. Although the modality had grown enormously since the early 1980's, they have restricted opportunities to play professionally in Brazil, and when they do, except for the national team, it is in leagues and championships that are still almost invisible.

A BIT OF HISTORY

The invisibility of women's soccer migration, and the awful playing conditions in Brazil, may be better understood if we look at the historical development of women's soccer in the country.

As in many countries, women's football was born as a contemporary of men's football and had a turning point during World War I (Giulianotti 2002). There are records of women's teams playing football in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in the first decades of the 20th century. However, in the mid-1940s, when Brazil was under a dictatorship, women's football suffered a tremendous blow, with a ban that would last almost four decades. Why was women's football banned in Brazil until 1979? The official reason for the prohibition was not different from the allegations raised at the same time on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean: health. This is not a surprising coincidence and perhaps we can see in it an early sign of globalization in sports. Moreover, it's probably more accurate to see it as a general movement in Western societies that led to restrictions on the presence of women in social spheres they had conquered during and after World War I. The gender equality gained at that time in Europe and North America was soon reversed – and sport followed this general social movement, with specific traits in each country.

In Brazil, the prohibition against women football teams was a corollary to the eugenic

ideologies that preached the importance of protecting women's bodies so that they could procreate healthy children / and thus improve the white race in Brazil. This is similar to the ban on the presence of blacks on teams, based on an ideology that sought the whitening of the nation.

Behind this supposed protection, therefore, we can identify the *mise-en-jeux* of the boundaries of a social place for women, that of the mother, which conformed to a particular corporal ideal: a plump body, without muscles, with rounded forms and limited mobility. A model, in other words, that corresponded to socially prescribed feminine roles: passive and submissive, without agency (Ortner 2007).

The doxa paradox

The historical development of women's soccer in Brazil and restrictions on their play may provide some reasons for the current migration of women soccer players. For women to play soccer today, in Brazil or abroad, the sport had to stay alive. One question persists: how did the "beautiful game" survive in such a hostile environment, how did it resist the ideological male domination expressed in laws and in actions that forbid its practice? And why did women comply with the rules with so few and sporadic insurgencies until the 1970s?

Banned from the 1940s onwards, women's soccer continued to exist through sporadic transgressions against male domination (Rigo et al. 2008). The leading female sport in Brazil at the time was swimming – where corporal movements were softened by the water – and practiced in middle class clubs. Examples of women's soccer did indeed

exist before the ban was finally lifted, although historians indicate such cases were few in number and whenever they gained notoriety were systematically suppressed by the Regional Sports Councils. “Surrounded by prejudice, the sport did not take hold among women” (Mazzoni 1950:289). Despite being highly anachronistic, the 1941 law remained in force until the late 1970s, keeping women off the soccer fields. This exclusion would be further entrenched in Deliberation no. 7 of 1965, in which the military dictatorship, which had recently seized power, specified which sports were prohibited to women – including wrestling, long-jumping and soccer – and regulated the intensity and finality of their participation in other sports.^{xi} As Bourdieu stressed when formulating the doxa paradox, what is surprising in the obedience given to orders is precisely how seldom they are transgressed. Inspired by a non-fiction text by Virginia Woolf (1938) and what she calls “the hypnotic power of domination,” Bourdieu presented the mechanism of male domination as a form of symbolic violence that has the complicity of the subaltern. “The doxa is that sum of social beliefs or practices which are seen as normative, as going unsaid, as being outside the framework of challenge and criticism” (1998).

In the 1960s and 70s, a time of widespread transformation in gender relations in the Western world, with an expansion in the realm of opportunities for women, Brazil reinforced its exclusion of women from the sport that occupied (and still occupies) a central place in the country’s imagination. Women thus suffered a double exclusion: like men, they could not vote (because of the dictatorship), but they could also not participate in this language shared by men, which was soccer, and which shaped them as Brazilians in the popular imagination. Preventing women from playing soccer was thus to exclude them symbolically from full participation in the nation. And soccer, more than any other social practice, would serve to construct this sense of nationhood.

This symbolic violence (Bourdieu 2001) was more efficient because invisible – women did not perceive the measures as exclusion but rather as a natural absence, appropriate to their gender condition. We can clearly see this in Janet Lever’s description of encounters in Brazil, included in *Soccer Madness: Brazil's Passion for the World's Most Popular Sport*, a ten-year ethnographic study for a PhD at the University of Chicago:

“Brazilians believe that their national passion is a game for men that requires masculine fortitude and violent physical contact. The women with whom I spoke consider this exclusion to be normal. My questions about their lack of interest were received with curious expressions or laughs. A few people told me that it was against the regulations of the CBD – some had said that it was against federal law – to organize football among girls. When I asked in 1973, an employee of the CBD laughed and told me that such a law was not necessary, given that it was unimaginable that girls would play football. But at the end of the seventies, some women began to organize their own teams, so that in March of 1981 the federal government proclaimed a law that prohibited sponsorship of female teams and their use of sports fields.” (Lever 1985:164-5)¹.

¹ “Los brasileños creen que su pasión nacional es un juego de hombres que requiere aguante masculino y violento contacto físico. Las mujeres con quienes hablé consideraban normal su exclusión; mis preguntas acerca de su falta de interés fueron recibidas con expresiones burlonas o con risas. Varias personas me dijeron que iba contra las regulaciones de la CBD – algunos hasta dijeron que contra la ley federal – organizar fútbol entre niñas. Cuando pregunté en 1973, un funcionario de la CBD se rió y me dijo que no era necesaria semejante ley, ya que era inimaginable que las niñas jugaran al fútbol. Pero a finales de los setenta, algunas mujeres empezaron a organizar sus propios equipos por lo que en marzo de 1981 el gobierno federal sí proclamó una ley que prohibía patrocinar equipos de fútbol femeninos y el uso de terrenos deportivos para sus competencias”

Banning women from soccer, which combined gender, nation and the public imagination (Freyre 1945, Da Matta et alli 1982, Filho 2003, Capraro 2007), excluded them from the greater collective and a broad spectrum of social practices. Incapable of representing the nation symbolically in competitions where nationalist feeling was re-enacted, they were not only passive and submissive, but also second class citizens.

Recognition of a lurking danger can also be seen in this interdiction, the risk that passive beings could be transformed into social subjects, with agency. But the ban can also be interpreted as a way of silencing women in one of the nation's most important spaces of self-affirmation. Moreover, this interdiction perhaps betrays the fear of an uncomfortable revelation. Here we can turn to Appadurai's observation in a similar context of excluding women from another sport, in this case, cricket in India:

“...women have become both players and aficionadas of cricket. Yet, for the nation at large, cricket is a male-dominated activity in terms of players, managers, commentators, aficionados, and live audiences [...] The Indian female gaze, at least thus far, is twice removed, as they are most often watching males play, but also watching males watching other males play.” (Appadurai 2001:111).

The homoerotic component in the experience of watching soccer is revealed by the exterior eye of the Other, in this case, women. The exclusion of women ensures that men can gaze lovingly at other men without this passion placing their masculinity in

question.

It was only in 1979 that the ban on woman's football was lifted. Coincidentally, the year that the ban was rescinded, 1979, was also the year when Brazil passed an Amnesty Law allowing citizens who had fought against the dictatorship and gone into exile to return to the country. Overturning the prohibition on women in Brazilian soccer had to wait until the country's political opening and was stimulated by heated debates in the realm of physical education, a field permeable to the feminist movement in Brazil, itself sparked by the return of left-wing women from exile abroad, especially from France. Thus, the feminism that began in the 1970s among various groups opposing the dictatorship in Brazil, initially Marxist in orientation and more directly concerned with class oppression, intensified at the end of the decade with the return of many Brazilian feminists who had been in exile, and who raised questions related to the body and to sexual and reproductive rights (Grossi 1996). It was at the heart of this debate that feminists working in the field of physical education achieved this great victory, the end of the prohibition on women's participation in soccer (and other sports) in Brazil, with the promulgation of Deliberation no. 10 of 1979 by the National Sports Council.

The organisation of Brazilian women's soccer

In the 1980s women's soccer teams began to spring up around the country (Franzini

2005:325, Almeida 2010), linked to soccer departments at the traditional sports clubs, but also to private businesses, with games in the 1970s organized by gay bars, if we are to believe the report by *Veja* magazine (1996:72-73). Women won their freedom, albeit not complete freedom, because the National Sports Council maintained ridiculous rules for bodily protection such as breast shields and shorter match times.

“According to the Council, a women’s match had to last 70 minutes with 35 minutes each half and a 15-minute interval. Five substitutions could be made during friendly matches and three in official games. Players were required to use breast protectors, shoes could not have sharp studs and the ball could not be controlled using the chest, which was considered equivalent to a hand ball.^{xii} These rules were probably inspired by those of the ponderous German Soccer Federation, which in 1970 decided to place restrictions on women’s soccer, decreeing that games could last only sixty minutes, the season had to start and end in ‘good weather’ months (March to October), flat running shoes had to be used instead of studded soccer boots, the women had to play with ‘youth balls’ that were smaller and lighter than regular balls, and they were banned from playing in championships. Additionally only women could be employed to train the teams, players had to undergo medical exams to be repeated every four weeks and, given the “female anatomy,” shirts could not display any advertising. These rules lasted for little time, though, and vanished two years after they had been imposed’. It was only in the 1990s that these special rules were abolished in Germany and the rest of Europe in a top-down movement: UEFA standardized the rules, eliminating the national and regional variations (Markovits & Rensmann 2010:168-9).

The re-initiation of women's soccer was led by the Radar team in Rio de Janeiro (Votre & Mourão 2003), which fielded the top players, some of whom would emigrate in the coming years (Almeida 2013). Although Radar enjoyed a series of victories in international competitions, it was only during the 1996 Olympic Games that Brazilian women can be said to have made a significant return to the soccer fields.

There are now several regional women's championships and the Brazil Cup. Nevertheless, the activity is not intense and shows the slow progress in this area. According to statistics produced by the Brazilian Soccer Confederation (CBF), nearly 400,000 women played soccer in Brazil in 2012 – this number corresponds to those women who played at least once during the year, in any situation. This is a very low number compared to the 12 million women who play soccer in the United States, 2,000 of them professionally. But the numbers do at least show the significant growth in the sport: there are 5,744 women registered as soccer players^{xiii} in Brazil in 2013, already almost half of the number of registered male professional players (13,338). However, this figure is much lower than the total number of registered male professional and amateur players, which is 108,958. Because the CBF considers all registered women to be amateurs, the proportion is just 5% of the total number of men.

The CBF's National Register of Women's Soccer also records 265 women's soccer teams.^{xiv} However, only the three best placed teams in the Brazil Cup receive the Athlete Allowance, a funding scheme created by the government to assist high level amateur sport. In other words, only 72 of the 5,516 women who play soccer at clubs participating in official leagues actually receive the allowance (Pisani 2012:79). In Brazil, most professional women players earn the minimum wage (around 300 US\$ a month). At the larger clubs, salaries range from R\$1,500 to R\$ 5,000 (US\$750 to US\$2,500) a month.^{xv}

No one plays here with short hair

The salary is not the only difference with men's soccer. Women who enter the soccer universe are expected to be capable of attracting male attention not because of their athletic performance but because of quite specific physical attributes. They should be "feminine," which, according to the Sao Paulo Soccer Federation (SPFF) document of 2001, requires them to correspond to a strict standard of beauty that includes tight shorts and make-up rather than a "clean" face.^{xvi} Another document from the SPFF emphasizes the importance of "taking steps to consult players about image, personal style and dealing with the media."

Without any embarrassment, the São Paulo Soccer Federation stipulated that beauty is a fundamental requirement when selecting the women to play in the state

championship. The beautification of the athletes is among the “principal objectives” for the “success of the tournament” (Ferrão 2010), which, according to Federation President Eduardo Farah, must “display a new image of women’s soccer, which is repressed because of the macho attitude. We must strive to combine the image of soccer with femininity.” Another director of the SPFF, Renato Duprat, was even more categorical: “No one plays here with short hair, it’s in the regulations” (Arruda 2001). Applying this discriminatory and chauvinistic ruling, one of the stars of the Brazilian women’s team, Sissi, who was playing in the United States at the time, was unable to play in the São Paulo championship because she had short hair.

Although permitted, women’s soccer continues to be limited by a sexist view of gender roles, which only accepts women’s presence on the field if their bodies are controlled: it is not mothers they want, but sensual models. Thus the perennial classification of women in Brazil’s patriarchal society as either wives or whores is reaffirmed on the soccer field. Anyone who thinks that this view is confined to the past or limited to Brazil has never visited the websites of the world’s leading sports media outlets. A quick visit to the Brazilian *Globo* or the Spanish *Marca* or *As* sites reveals that women appear not as athletes, but as ‘misses,’ ‘muses’ and ‘fiancées,’ usually skimpily clad and in erotic poses.

Although Santos F.C. has been one of the few clubs to give importance to women’s soccer, the female players are also eroticized by the team name, “sereias” or mermaids. The club has minor league teams and schools that train 800 girls beginning

at 9 years of age.^{xvii} Other teams investing in sports for girls include Juventus in São Paulo, Atlético Mineiro in Minas Gerais, and Sport in Pernambuco. In this situation, the chant “Marta is better than Kaká” really seems an exception. And it is true: to get where they are, the Martas of Brazil have had to overcome much tougher obstacles than the Kakás.

Just as in European countries, therefore, the soccer practiced by women in Brazil appears to have followed one and the same cycle: it began at the same time as the soccer practiced by men, also as a comical circus curiosity, it grew at the start of the 20th century, it was officially banned for medical reasons in the 1940s, and it resumed following pressure from the feminist movement in the 1970s, becoming institutionalized in the 1980s and formally equal to men’s soccer in the 1990s. Contrary to the situation in the global-North, the precariousness of its practice led many women athletes to leave the country (Tiesler 2012), searching for better economic and cultural conditions, preferably to North America and Europe but, more and more frequently, also for countries in the global South.

CONCLUSION

The adverse domestic context for women’s soccer could explain the high circulation between clubs in the country and the players’ urge to leave. Indeed, economic motivations are central for a large proportion of players who ply their trade outside

the country, knowing that playing abroad brings improvements in their professional conditions and generates earnings that can be sent back to support their households and families at home. In this sense, the migration of women soccer players repeats other flows of low-skilled Brazilian women who migrate to the global North for jobs in the “care” sector. Otherwise, there is little in common with those women who are inserted in “care” occupations, for whom countries in Africa or Asia are improbable destinations.

The circulation of Brazilian women soccer players broadens frontiers for Brazilian migration flows to countries never before reached by Brazilian migrants, such as Equatorial Guinea. It also repeats the circulation of male athletes, who go abroad seeking better financial opportunities and more prestige. Circulation, for men and women players, means an increase in economic and symbolic (“footballistic”) capital, but for men, it may also involve a way of financing their clubs of origin, and in some cases bring these clubs large sums of money. Although they have some points in common, the women soccer players have not gained the same recognition as the men. Their salaries and their visibility in the media are much lower than those of the men,, in Brazil and abroad, which can be explained not only by the long history of the interdiction of women in sport but also by the persistent and hegemonic view of soccer as a male sport, which excludes women; an attitude that fortunately has been changing – although slowly.

Besides economic and career prestige, personal motivations are also important in the choice to leave the country. In these cases, factors like an “American way of life” or a

European lifestyle, which may imply less prejudice in terms of sexuality (and in some places, color) also explain the impulse to cross borders and, in some cases, the longing for direct contact with another culture. In this sense, they are exploring new personal frontiers.

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ⁱ Here I use the term soccer. As Andrei Markovits and Lars Rensmann point out (2010:158), ‘soccer’ is used in countries where football played with the feet occupies a secondary place: “...the term “football” connotes the hegemonic code of the game in a country’s sports culture, whereas ‘soccer’ does not” (2010:158).

ⁱⁱ Delma "Pretinha" Gonçalves turned professional in 1992 when she went to the USA. There she played a season for Washington Freedom followed by two with San Jose, two sides playing in the country's women's football league, the WUSA. Then she went to Japan where she wore the colors of INAC Leonessa, to Sweden in 1995, and to USA again in 1999. She played in four World’s Cup and Olympic Games for the Brazilian team.

ⁱⁱⁱ My thanks to Martha Saavedra for drawing my attention to this point. The women are: Mirian Silva da Paixão, Adriana ‘Drika’ Soares Parente, Ana Cristina ‘Cris’ da Silva, Vania Cristina Martin, Jumaria Barbosa Santana, Dulcia ‘Dulce’ David Maria, Adriana (Tiga) Costa Aparecida, Carolina Conceição Martins Pereira ‘Carol Carioca,’ Mariana ‘Mari’ da Silva Machado, Camila Maria Nobre de Carmo and Bruna Amarante da Silva.

^{iv} See Chapter 3 by Agergaard, Botelho and Tiesler where the authors conceptualise elite players who get invited by another nation’s federation to join its national team as *new citizens* because, accordingly to FIFA rules, they need to obtain citizenship and live in this country for two years prior to their first appearance for the national team.

^v In 2013, the following women were playing:

Country and year	Name of the Player and year of birth	Club	Previous Experience Abroad
RUSSIA 2013	Aline Pelegrino 1982	WFC Rossiyanka	
	Cristiane de Souza 1985	WFC Rossiyanka	Germany (FFC Turbine Postdam and at VFL Wolfsburg); Sweden (at Linköpings FC); USA (Chicago Red Stars)
	Fabiana da Silva Simões 1989	WFC Rossiyanka	
	Esther dos Santos 1982	WFC Rossiyanka	USA (Sky Blue F.C.
Kazakstão	Bruna Amarante da Silva , 1984, naturalized in Equatorial Guinea	FC Biik	
South Korea	Pretinha	Goyang Daekyo Noonnoppi Women’s Football Club	USA and Japan
	Karina 1982	Suwon FMC WFC	
	Erica Cristiano dos Santos 1988	Suwon FMC WFC	USA
	Glauca Suelen Silva 1993	Hyundai Steel Red Angels WFC	
	Luana	Hyundai Steel Red Angels WFC	
	Carolina Conceição Martins Pereira ‘Carol Carioca.	Chungbuk Spor	
Austria	Monica Hickmann 1987	SV Neulengbach	
	Célia Branco-Ribeiro 1981	SV Neulengbach	
	Giovana Floriano 1987	SV Neulengbach	
England	Sheila Rocha	Keynshaw	

	Luciana Silva	Keynshaw	
	Ana Bruni	Keynshaw	

- In Russia, at WFC Rossiyanka (in the city of Krasnoarmeysk, near Moscow), Aline Pelegrino (born in 1982, who has played for Brazilian clubs), Cristiane de Souza (born in 1985, who has played in Germany at FFC Turbine Postdam and at VFL Wolfsburg; in Sweden at Linköpings FC and in USA at Chicago Red Stars); Fabiana da Silva Simões (born in 1989, who has played in Spain at Huelva and in the USA at Boston Breakers and Boston Aztec); and Esther dos Santos (born in 1982 who has played in the USA at Sky Blue F.C.); in 2012, at Energiya Voronezh, Simone Gomes Jatobá (born in 1981, who has played in France and Spain); in 2011, at Zorky Kransnogorsk, Kátia Cilena T. Da Silva (born in 1977, who has played in the USA, Spain and France).
- Kazakstão, at FC Biik, Bruna Amarante da Silva (born in 1984, naturalized in Equatorial Guinea).
- In South Korea, at Goyang Daekyo Noonoppi Women’s Football Club, Pretinha (born in 1982, who has played in the USA and Japan); at Suwon FMC WFC, Karina (born in 1982) and Erica Cristiano dos Santos (born in 1988, who has played in the USA); at Hyundai Steel Red Angels WFC, Glaucia Suelen Silva (born in 1993) and Luana; at Chungbuk Spor, Carolina Conceição Martins Pereira ‘Carol Carioca.’
- In Austria at SV Neulengbach, Monica Hickmann (born in 1987), Giovana Floriano (born in 1987) and Célia Brancão-Ribeiro (born in 1981).
- In England, at Keynshaw: Sheila Rocha, Luciana Silva and Ana Bruni.
- In Iceland, Christiane Lessa played for Haukar F.C. and Fyrkir.
- In Spain, the following had played (or are playing) at Levante UD: Grazielle Pinheiro (born in 1981), Kátia Cilene Teixeira da Silva (born in 1977), Thais Ribeiro Picarte (born in 1982, also played in Italy), Vania Cristina Martins (born in 1980, also played in Portugal). At CD Transportes Alcaine Prainsa Zaragoza, Andrea Suntaque (born in 1977); at Sporting de Huelva: Renata Capobianco Machado (born in 1978 who also played in the USA and Italy), Thais Ribeiro, Dayane Rocha (born in 1985, who also played in France and Italy), Fabiana da Silva Simões (born in 1989, who also played in the USA and Russia).
- In the United States: Sisleide do Amor Lima (a.k.a. Sissi, born in 1967, the oldest player in the WPSL at 45 years old) at California Storm, and Leah Fortune (born in Sao Paulo in 1990, American parents, plays for the Brazilian U-20 side). At Weston F.C., Christiane Lessa. Many other players can be cited for previous years: Miraildes Maciel Mota (a.k.a. Formiga, born in 1978, who also played in Sweden and is the only football player to have participated in 5 Olympic Games), Francielle Manoel Alberto (born in 1989), Marta (born in 1982), Marcia Taffarel (born in 1968), Cristiane de Souza (born in 1985), Daniela Alves Lima (born in 1984, who also played in Sweden), among others.
- In Sweden in 2013 the following played at Tyresô FF: Elaine Moura (born in 1982, who has played also in the USA) and Marta Vieira da Silva (born in 1986, who has played in the USA too).

^{vi} For example, Vania (Vania Cristina Martins), born in 1980, who played for the following clubs: Santos (1997), Portuguesa (1998), São Paulo (199-2001), UniSant’ Anna (2001-2004), Salto (2005), São Caetano (2006), Levante (2006-2007), Jaguariúna (2007), Sagrada Cena (2008), Palmeiras CEUNSP Salto (2008-2009), CF Femenino Cáceres (2008-09), Corinthians (2009), CF Femenino Cáceres (2009-10), São Caetano UNIP (2010), Hyundai Steel Red Angels (2011), XV de Piracicaba (2012), Juventus/São Caetano/Drummond (2012).

^{vii} Available HTTP <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zj-oJqQYQXM> (accessed 15 August 2013)

^{viii} Marta Vieira da Silva, or simply Marta (born on February 19, 1986 in Dois Riachos, Alagoas) is a Brazilian women's football player. She has played for the Swedish club Umeå IK, the US sides L.A. Sol, FC Golden Pride and Western New York Flash, and in 2013 for Sweden’s Tyressö. She was a member of the Brazilian national team that won silver medal at the 2004 and Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics. She was also awarded the Golden Ball as the MVP at the 2004 FIFA Under-19 Women's

World Championship after scoring six goals in the tournament, in which Brazil finished fourth. She was elected FIFA's Women's World Player of the Year in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010.

^{ix} In 2009 she received 60,000 euros from Santos (including the cost of an apartment), while at the Swedish club Umea she earned 30,000 euros. At Sol in Los Angeles, where she was named the Most Valuable Player in Professional Women's Soccer, she earned \$400,000 - \$500,000 a year (including sponsorship deals with Puma and the Amway Corp).

^x "Eudy Simelane was gang-raped by four men and then wantonly stabbed many times, mostly in the face..." The crucial thing to know about Eudy is that she was gay, and that she lived her lesbian life openly. Evidently an incredibly brave thing to do in South Africa" Gardner (2009).

^{xi} "Rowing, for example, could be practiced as long as it was not competitive and sought to correct organic defects, while various track and field sports could be practiced so long as they demanded less effort than the male events" (Goellner 2005:93).

^{xii} Available HTTP <http://gremiofeminino.wordpress.com/historia-do-futebol-feminino/> (accessed 15 August 2013).

^{xiii} Available HTTP

<http://www.cbf.com.br/BID/Registro%20Geral%20de%20Atletas/?e=&nc=&c=&t=3&f=&r=&page=1> (accessed 15 August 2013).

^{xiv} Acre 8 teams; Alagoas 15 teams; Amapá 7 teams; Amazonas 3 teams; Bahia 12 teams; Ceará 11 team; Distrito Federal 17 teams; Espírito Santo 13 teams; Goiás 8 teams; Maranhão 8 teams; Mato Grosso 7 teams; Mato Grosso do Sul 2 teams; Minas Gerais 16 teams; Pará 12 teams; Paraíba 6 teams; Paraná 6 teams; Pernambuco 12 teams; Piauí 7 teams; Rio de Janeiro 13 teams; Rio Grande do Norte 4 teams; Rio Grande do Sul 25 teams; Rondônia 5 teams; Roraima 2 teams; Santa Catarina 5 teams; São Paulo 28 teams; Sergipe 5 teams; Tocantins 8 teams. (Pisani 2012:79-80).

^{xv} In the United States, a top player like Martha can earn US\$500,000 a year (Frutuoso 2009), in Sweden, it is estimated that Marta earned about US\$8,000 a month.

^{xvi} Document prepared in conjunction with Pelé Sports & Marketing.

^{xvii} Santos closed their women's football department in 2012 due to a lack of sponsorship.