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TRANSNATIONAL PLAYERS:
DIFFERING WOMEN'S FOOTBALL
MOBILITY PROJECTS IN CORE AND
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

NINA CLARA TIESLER

[Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon, Portugal](#)

2014

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2014

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Nina Clara Tiesler

Author: Nina Clara Tiesler

Research Fellow, PhD

Institutional affiliation: Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon

Address: Av. Prof. Aníbal Bettencourt no. 9, 1600-189 Lisbon, Portugal

E-mail: ninaclara.tiesler@ics.ul.pt

T: +351-96 332 7994

The following manuscript is original and not under consideration for publication anywhere else.

Author Bio

Nina Clara Tiesler is Research Fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon.

Correspondence to: N.C. Tiesler, ICS-UL, Av. Prof. Aníbal Bettencourt, no. 9, 1600-189 Lisbon, Portugal. E-mail: ninaclara.tiesler@ics.ul.pt

Biographical note:

Nina Clara Tiesler, Dr. phil. in Comparative Studies of Religion, is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences at the University of Lisbon, where she is working in the areas of Sociology and Anthropology with special focus on Migration Studies. She belongs to the coordinating group of the Football Migration Network and was Principal Investigator of the international team project on the role of football among Portuguese Diaspora communities in six different countries, funded by the Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology (2007-2011). Currently she holds a João Havelange Research Grant to study the globalisation of women's football.

Abstract:

Mobile players in men's football are highly skilled professionals who move to a country other than the one where they grew up and started their careers. They are commonly described as migrants or expatriate players. Due to a much less advanced stage of professionalism and production of the game in women's football mobility projects are different. The percentage of cases which drop out of these concepts developed for men's football migration increases when specifically looking at the peripheral and semi-peripheral countries. At describing the cases of Brazil, Equatorial Guinea, Mexico, Colombia and Portugal, the aim of this paper is to conceptualise an umbrella category for mobile players that can include current realities in the women's game, namely the transnational player who has gained and displays transnational football experience in different countries and socio-culturally contexts. Analysis is based on original data on fluxes, 31 interviews with mobile players from diverse countries and secondary data material on players' biographies. It allows pointing out some main features of the increasing international mobility of women footballers and suggests that players who are crossing borders impact significantly on the development of the game at global scale.

Key-words: soccer, migration, transnational players, FIFA Women's World Cup 2011, women athletes

Three Types of Transnational Players:

Differing women's football mobility projects in core and developing countries

As with young males all over the world, a growing number of young women equally dream of becoming professional footballers and pursuing their dreams by intensively investing into their skills over years. The number of registered players has, in fact, more than doubled since 2000, with over 30 million females playing the game (FIFA 2007). That said, however, at the present moment 'making a living' as a football player in the women's game is only possible in around twenty-two out of 136 FIFA-listed countries¹. This implies that in 84 per cent of the countries highly talented female footballers have to leave their home in order to play professionally. The percentage of top players who leave the peripheral and semi-peripheral countries of women's football, among them European countries such as Portugal, Ireland, and the Ukraine accounts for 80 per cent of this mobility (Tiesler 2010a: 4). While the first professional soccer league for women in the USA (WUSA) and its follow-up WPS (Women's Professional Soccer League), leagues in the biggest receiving country, had accounted for up to 30 per cent of migrant players, the percentages of foreigners in the preferred countries of destination in Europe, while such as Sweden, Germany, England, Russia and Spain, make up on average around 19 per cent (Tiesler 2010a: 5). In single premier league clubs in the European core countries², such as Germany and Sweden (coming first), migrants can constitute anywhere between 36 to 50 per cent of league players (team rosters 2010/11)³.

In the growing body of literature on sports migration, in general, and on the mobility of football talent and labour, in particular, athletes who are crossing borders for professional reasons and for career purposes are commonly described as migrants (Bale and Maguire 1994; diverse in Tiesler and Coelho 2008; diverse in Maguire and Falcous 2010) or sojourners (Maguire and Stead 1996), as mobility projects in football are often circulative and/or based on only short term contracts and stays abroad (Rial

2008). In order to grasp the experiences and activities of migrants who do not necessarily settle permanently – and/or where assimilation to the host society is not the ultimate or only outcome – the concept of transnationalism was developed in migration studies (Glick-Schiller *et al.* 1992; Portes 1997; Al-Ali *et al.* 2001; Vertovec 2004). What was considered as new and characteristic of these types of migrants is that their networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both home and host societies (Glick-Schiller *et al.* 1992: 1); characteristics which match with the vast majority of migrants in the social field of football (Maguire 1999; Lanfranchi and Taylor 2001; Magee and Sugden 2002; Trumper and Wong 2010).

Sojourners and migrants in men’s football are highly skilled professionals who move to, settle, live and work – at least for a brief period of residence – in a country other than the one where they grew up and started their careers. A step away from the difficulties to distinguish migrants from sojourners and vice versa (for mainstream migration studies see Reyes 2001; Tannenbaum 2007) and with regards to the particularities of the football labour market, Poli and Besson have coined a concept which includes both: the “expatriate player” (Poli and Besson 2010; Besson *et al.* 2011). Their definition reads:

“An expatriate player is a footballer playing outside of the country in which he grew up and from which he departed following recruitment by a foreign club” (Besson *et al.* 2011: 1).

The concept certainly matches with/grasps biographical and recruitment realities behind the dominant mobility pattern in men’s football. Due to a much less advanced stage of professionalism and production of the game (organisation of leagues and competition for all age groups, coaching and training facilities, legal frameworks for recruitment, reasonable wages and health insurance) mobility projects in women’s football are different. Not all mobile women players, however, are migrants or expatriates, respectively. For example, of the one-quarter of national squad players at the FIFA Women’s World Cup 2011(WWC 2011) who held contracts in clubs abroad, the concept of the expatriate player cannot be applied. The percentage of cases which drop out of this even most inclusive concept developed for men’s football migration increases when specifically looking at the peripheral and semi-peripheral countries of women’s football, such as Equatorial Guinea, Mexico, Colombia or Portugal.

The aim of this paper is to conceptualise an umbrella category for mobile players that can include current realities in the women's game, namely the *transnational player* who has gained and displays transnational football experience in (at least) two countries and socio-culturally different contexts. Due to the integration of what we coin *diaspora players* and *new citizens* into the national squads of ambitious new comers in women's football, we find mobility projects (aspirations, experiences, and outcomes) of transnationally experienced top players which differ from the expatriate, the ideal type of the mobile male player.

Conceptualisation is based on insights derived from a case study amongst the Portuguese national squad (based on *expatriate* and *diaspora players*), analyses of original quantitative data on international fluxes⁴, and of secondary qualitative material (press articles, online and FIFA sources) on biographies of players who represented Brazil (high number of *expatriates*), Mexico (*diaspora players*), Colombia (*college players*) and Equatorial Guinea (*new citizens*) at the WWC 2011. Fieldwork has mainly taken place in Portugal from December, 2009 up to present, including research periods during the Algarve Cups of 2010 and 2012⁵ which allowed interviewing mobile players of diverse nationalities⁶. The data material allows pointing out some main trends and features which shape Women's Football Migration (WFM), and consequent impact on the development of the game. Who goes where and why in women's football migration? How far do the mobility projects of expatriates, diaspora players and new citizens differ from each other?

In the Limelights of Mega Events: global stage, global production and mobility

Although the international mobility of women footballers has gained greater visibility the last few decades, little attention has been given on the part of scholars⁷. The particular stage where first significant public attention was given to this new type of geographic mobility of women athletes was the FIFA Women's World Cup 2011(hereafter: WWC 2011), hosted in Germany between June 26 and July 17. What echoes from that mega event is a key narrative produced by football governing bodies,

stakeholders and the sports press, stating, in the words of Joseph Blatter, that: 'Women's football is now more global' (FIFA 2011a).

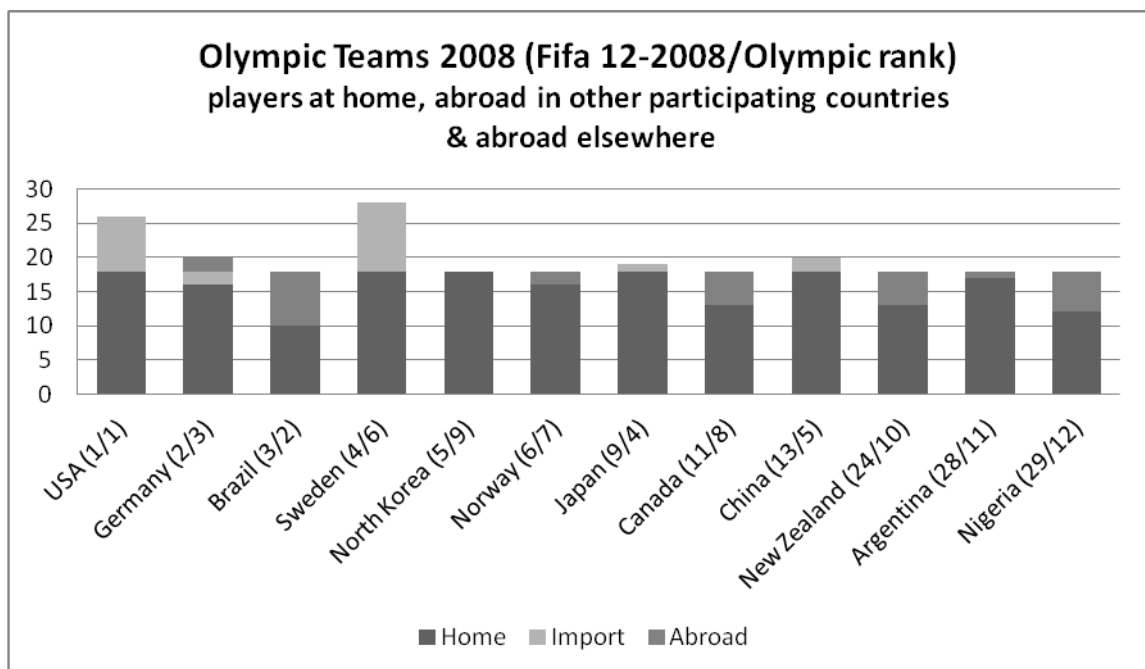
Viewing the body of academic literature on sports globalisation (Maguire 1999; Houlihan 2003; Rowe 2003; Robertson 1992; Giulianotti and Robertson 2004, 2009), we can summarise that the process involves three basic features: a) a *global stage*, that is, the large and international popularity of the game, b) a *global production* - referring to the production and conditions of the sport, such as the organisation of (professional) leagues and competitions at local, national and international levels, the number of participants at different levels of competition across the globe, etc, and, c) the *global mobility* of athletes (Botelho 2011, Botelho and Tiesler 2011). Over the past two decades, such analyses, especially when related to football, have taken the international mobility of players as the main demonstration of this globalisation process.

None of these theories derived from empirical research on women's football (WF) or other women's team sports. The history of WF differs significantly from men's football, as do the structural and socio-cultural conditions, and consequently the developmental stage of the discipline, often narrated by its own experts as being 'a hundred years behind' in comparison to the highly developed men's association football. By focusing on the incipient stage of WF's globalisation process, we hope that future studies can present analyses and concepts which might inform existing theories; especially when employing a micro-sociological perspective as it reveals that 'female footballers are not just objects being moved by global and economic forces, but are individuals who take an active part in the developing migratory process' (Botelho and Agergaard 2011: 810), and at a moment in time which points to the acceleration of the very process: in the aftermath of the WWC 2011 in Germany which has broadly been perceived as a 'breakthrough' in the international popularity of the game (*global stage*) while also showing first achievements of a *global production* evidenced by the more balanced strength among the competing teams⁸.

As for the popularity of the game, which interrelates with TV-presence and commercial interests (and sub consequently professionalisation options), this mega event set a new example. Matches were broadcasted at a level not seen before for women's sport, including in the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, North America,

South America, Australia and Asia. According to FIFA sources, the event smashed several TV audience records e.g. in Germany, the USA, France, Brazil and Japan (FIFA 2011b). From men's football at similar events, the expert comments by sport journalists during the 32 TV-aired matches (e.g. at *Eurosport*) provided the audience with information on the players' sporting biographies. They would regularly emphasize the club affiliation especially of those players who were under contract in a country other than the one they represented in the World Cup. Thus what was highlighted was the international mobility of national players⁹. As for this third feature of sports globalisation, the number of women footballers who are crossing borders and are contracted as professional players away from home is constantly increasing. While a glance at the percentage of mobile senior national squad players provides only a narrow window of the whole phenomenon¹⁰, it certainly proves the trend: Among the twelve Olympic teams of 2008, we have found that only 13 per cent of the players were mobile. Three years later, out of the 336 registered players for the WWC 2011, 72 - that is to say 21.4 per cent of them – were playing in first division clubs abroad¹¹.

Figure 1: Mobility of Olympic Players 2008



The figure is based on a survey of the twelve teams which competed at the Olympics 2008. We have overviewed the club affiliations of the 216 players and have found that 29 of them (13 per cent) were playing abroad. It shows that only one among the twelve Olympic countries in 2008, unsurprisingly the People's Republic of North Korea, had not been involved in players' migration. The main sender among these twelve had been Brazil with eight players abroad. Half of them held contracts in premier league clubs in other Olympic countries (three in Sweden, one in Japan) while another four were playing in Denmark, Spain, Austria and France. Nigeria's *Super Falcons*, traditionally the strongest among the African teams, came second as sending country, with two players in China, three in Sweden, and only one in a non-Olympic country, that of Finland. Both Canada (with five) and New Zealand (with three) counted on players with contracts in the most prominent lady soccer league in the USA, while also two Norwegian players had gained contracts in top core countries, that of Germany and Sweden. As well, few Argentinean players has crossed outside their borders up until that date, the only exception being midfielder Mariela Coronel playing for one of Spain's major recruiting clubs, Prainsa Zaragoza, since 2007 where she was teammates with Brazilian (Olympic) goalkeeper Andreia in 2008, as well as with a number of Portuguese, Mexican and other expatriate players from diverse countries.

Due to very favourable conditions for the game in Germany, its first division clubs had received Olympic players from Norway and New Zealand, while its own top players only stayed abroad for less than one season, if at all, as was the case in this Olympic year, with two players in Sweden. As neither the wages nor the training facilities had been better in Sweden, this points to the opportunity to enlarge ones football experience as the main motive for moving to an equally competitive, but differing football system and more mixed (in terms of players' nationalities) league abroad. Indeed, Sweden's women's first division presented the highest number of foreign Olympic players (three from each Brazil and Nigeria, the two from Germany, and one each from New Zealand and Norway), followed by the USA, accounting for eight (five from Canada, three from New Zealand). Naturally, it had been Sweden, the USA, Germany, China and Japan receiving Olympic players in 2008, while at the same time

keeping their own top players in the domestic league, as these had been the countries running (semi-)professional leagues¹².

The role as key receivers of women's football labour and favourite destination for top players from all regions of the world which provide highly skilled talent was again confirmed for the USA, Sweden and Germany in follow up and more extensive surveys¹³. Out of the 29 mobile players who were capped for the Olympics, 23 were present in leagues of other Olympic teams. Among the six players who held contracts in countries which did not qualify for the Olympics that year, five had been recruited by clubs in countries which belonged to the FIFA Top 20 (ranking of December 2008)¹⁴.

Brazilian Expatriate Players

Only one Olympic player went to a low ranking semi-peripheral country of women's football, namely Austria (ranking 38 at FIFA in December 2008): the Brazilian midfielder and left winger Rosana dos Santos Augusto, a key player of the Brazilian national squad since the year 1999. After having partly played professionally in Brazil, she had accepted the offer to move to a club in an amateur league together with two other Brazilian players in 2004. While training facilities were worse (only three times per week, in the late afternoon, after her locally based teammates would get off work), and Austrian top players are generally seeking contracts in the neighbouring Germany, the wages were better than in Brazilian (semi-)professional clubs. Besides that, it had been the opportunity to compete in the UEFA women's Champions League for which FC Neulengbach had qualified, that had motivated Rosana to make this move (*GloboEsporte* 14.05.2008). This high level competition among the strongest clubs of the European core presented one more stage besides Brazil's international performances which helped her to make the jump to the most often desired US American WPS (Women's Professional Soccer League) in 2009. After having played for Sky Blue FC for two seasons, she was recruited by the leading French club Olympic Lyon, a major receiver of foreign talent and UEFA Champions League winner during the seasons 2010/11 and 2011/12.

The example of Rosana's career and mobility options and choices illustrates the exceptional status of Brazil in women's football migration. It is the only high ranking

core country in women's football (from 2007 until 2011 always among the Top 3, with the USA and Germany)¹⁵ which over the past years (with the curious exception of the WWC year 2011) had also presented a stable position among the ten main sending countries worldwide, with often more than half of their national squad players abroad. No other FIFA Top 10 country is known as a main sender (Tiesler 2010b: 4, 7).

In Brazil, women's football had been prohibited by law until 1975 (Votre and Mourão 2003), with ongoing legal restrictions until 1981 (Wollowski 2011) and has only increased in popularity during the past ten years. With men's football as the *King of Sports* in Brazilian society, the women's game and its players face a strong and continuing social stigma based on sexist beliefs that football is not a sport for women. The sexist myth that this violent sport might damage women's procreation organs, impacting on their fertility, and thus impeding them to fulfil their inherited role of becoming mothers is still en vogue in a number of African countries (Saavedra 2003). It had dominated equivalent discussions on the societal and legal acceptance of WF in European countries from the late nineteenth century on, especially after the First World War, when women's teams were banned from the pitches, until the times of emancipatory movements in the late 1960s and a top-down pressure exercised by UEFA on the federal associations which led to the late acceptance of women's teams in European association football in the early and mid 1970s (Pfister *et al.* 2002).

With short exceptional periods of professional systems based on ephemeral sponsorship, Brazil lacks a national women's league, and runs only small amateur and semi-professional regional competitions due to limited financial interest and support. The national league *Campeonato Brasileiro de Futebol Feminino* (disputed from 1994 until 2011) ran on a professional basis for only one year. The best players, such as Marta Vieira da Silva and Cristiane Rozeira da Sousa Silva, who are both highly mobile and earning not only better money but recognition abroad (both playing in Sweden at the time of the 2008 Olympics and both awarded international prizes), were accidentally and directly invited to play on the Brazil women's national football team in 2002¹⁶. Over the past ten years, the national squad contested at the *global stages* such as the World Cup finals and Olympics, increasing the popularity of TV broadcasts of those tournaments. However, this was not sufficient to stimulate the Brazilian footballing culture among women who prefer to support men's football over

women's¹⁷. In contrary to other high ranking countries and rather alike the semi-peripheral and peripheral countries in women's football, Brazilian players generally find much better financial, athletic and socio-cultural conditions (including the lack of harassment and gaining recognition instead) in their countries of destination.

Encompassing both home and host societies:

Expatriates as transnational players

Over the past years, Brazilian expatriate players were present in nearly all of the 22 receiving leagues, from the highest ranking such as the USA, Sweden and Japan over South Korea, Italy, Spain, in the financially strong Russian league, and even in low ranking countries such as Cyprus, Poland and Serbia where only single clubs provide rather modest allowances to migrant players¹⁸. Many of them are/were national squad players and some of them regularly spent parts of the (off-) season on loan in Brazilian clubs. Before leaving to Austria in 2004 Rosana dos Santos Augusto had already been on the move inside Brazil and has meanwhile lived in four different countries. As with other expatriate players, her football mobility projects involve an offer by a club abroad, migration decision making, settling in a foreign country and living away from home, adapting to different cultural codes on and beyond the pitch, identifying with her team in the host society, keeping contact to people and places left behind via information technologies, a few visits, as well as during training camps and matches of her national squad. As is also the case with other women migrant players from Latin America, African and Eastern European countries, the wages she earns in European (Champions League) and with the US American WPS clubs allow her to support her family at home.

By switching clubs and crossing borders she has enlarged and diversified her football experience provided both to the club level (currently Lyon) and with the Brazilian national squad. Her 'networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both home and host society' (Glick-Schiller *et al.* 1992: 1), as does her football experience which I coin as being transnational in nature.

A transnational player gains maturity and enlarges her/his football experience by having been trained and embedded in different societies and football systems. Sporting ambitions such as developing football experience were highlighted elsewhere as key motives among women football migrants from diverse countries (Agergaard and Botelho 2010; Botelho and Agergaard 2011; Tiesler 2012a, 2012b). Playing football abroad is seen as a means of transforming yourself into a more mature player and has been described as rites of passage (Stead and Maguire 2000; Botelho and Agergaard 2011: 814). What turns this (at least) bi-societal football experience into a transnational one is the players' engagement in both the club (and domestic league) of one country and in the national squad of another. In playing for her/his national squad and a club abroad, s/he displays this experience 'across national boundaries and brings (at least; nct) two societies into a single social field' (Glick-Schiller *et al.* 1992: 1) which, in this case, is that of football. As stated by Mazzucato (2009), 'transnationalism emphasizes the linkages between institutions and identities that migrants create by being simultaneously engaged in two or more countries'. Footballers who are playing for a club in a highly developed league in one country while at the same time representing the national squad of another, create a linkage between institutions which work for the development of women's football at the local and national level (clubs, domestic leagues, professionalisation process) with institutions which reflect on global inequalities in the production of the game (national squads at international competitions). This holds true for the majority of expatriate players in women's football as most of them are usually seeking contracts in more competitive championships which also provide better training facilities and the desired opportunity to dedicate themselves exclusively to football. As such few leagues can provide at least semi-professional conditions, playing abroad means improving your skills. Consequently, it is perceived as overwhelmingly positive by the players themselves, as well as by coaches and staff responsible for the national squads of semi-peripheral and peripheral countries. A head coach of one of the latter countries explained:

"We have to work harder and are already investing a lot to improve the conditions for women's football here. Until we can reach a point where our top players, who have to work in full-time jobs besides football when staying in the country, actually find adequate training facilities and strong adversary teams, they can develop their skills much better abroad. It's not only about the physical shape but

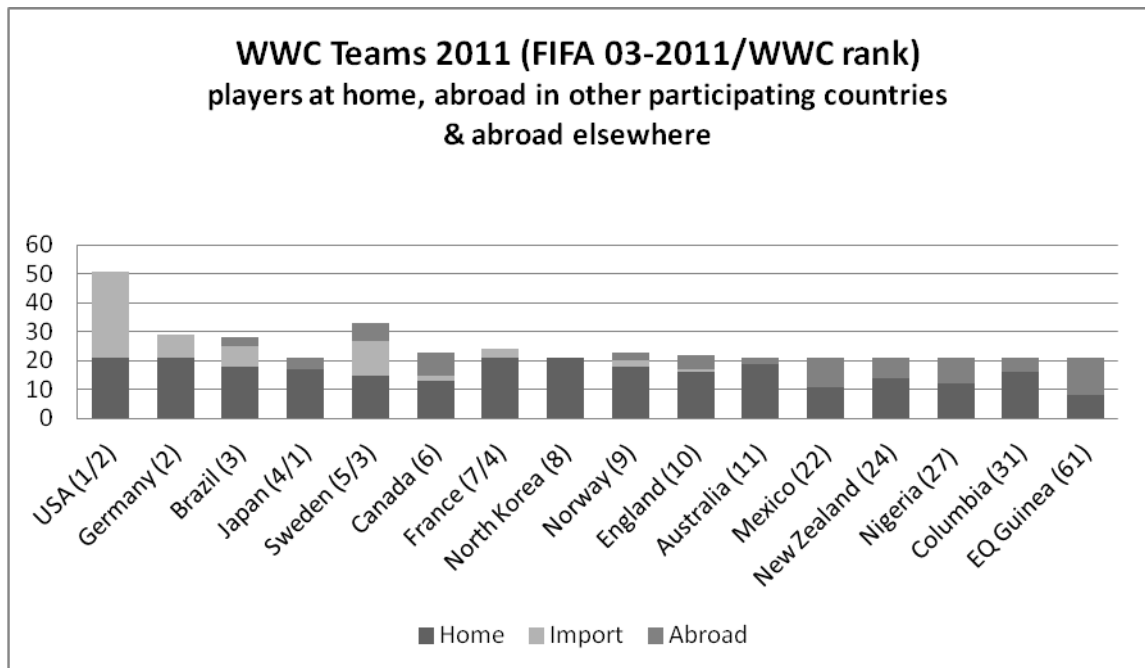
about a broader football experience at large which they bring into the national squad. They also dealt with other systems and playing styles.”

The majority of interviewed players from such countries pointed out the aims of ‘playing professionally’, ‘improving my skills’, and ‘improving my performance for the national squad’ as the main motivation to pursue a career abroad. Head coaches and staff from the core countries, on the contrary, do not necessarily support their players emigration aspirations, unless the destination league is clearly more competitive and/or the club competes in the UEFA Champions League; the latter having been the impulse for a turn in the ‘migration policy’ e.g. of the Japanese head coach¹⁹.

All migrant (or expatriate) players who, at the same time, are part of the national squad of their home country can be considered transnational players as they embody and display transnational football experience in two different contexts. But this experience is not an exclusive feature of expatriate players only. Not all transnational players are actual migrants, respectively expatriates, as their football mobility projects differ from the exemplary one represented in Rosana’s case. This becomes apparent when looking at and behind the following figure, and especially in the case of Equatorial Guinea, Mexico and Colombia as sending countries, as well as Brazil which here suddenly appears as a major receiving country. The ‘production’ of the game in Brazil and consequently the conditions in the domestic league did not improve noteworthy between the time of the Olympics 2008 and the WWC 2011. So it comes as quite a surprise to find players from Equatorial Guinea with affiliations to Brazilian clubs in the following overview.

Increased international mobility and diverse mobility projects

The figure is based on an overview of the club affiliation of 336 players who were capped for the sixteen national squads competing at the WWC 2011. 72 of them, which is 21.4 per cent, held contracts in countries other than the one they represented at the World Cup.

Figure 2: Mobility of FIFA Women's World Cup Players 2011

As usual, the People's Republic of North Korea neither attracted any foreign player, nor did any of its own players leave the country. All the other competing teams had been involved, in one way or another, in what has been introduced as a key feature of the globalisation process of women's football, namely in the international mobility of players. We have found three mere receiving countries, five which were both importing and exporting players, and seven mere emigration countries. A similarity to the survey of players' circulation among the (only 12) Olympic countries of 2008 is that the number of mere sending countries is always the highest (2011: 7 of 16; 2008: 6 of 12). This is no surprise; as such few domestic leagues, even among countries which qualify for the highest international tournaments, can provide at least semi-professional conditions.

In contrast to 2008, where only one country was at the same time sender and receiver of women's football labour, in 2011 this number even exceeded the one of mere receiving countries. This is interesting because in 2011 already more countries than in 2008 provided at least semi-professional conditions (with England and Mexico having started running professional leagues), and still the number of mere receivers decreased. It points to the tendency that players are not only migrating out of pure

necessity. More players from the core countries and others who find good athletic (partly professional) conditions in their domestic league are seeking contracts abroad before retiring from their own national squad and prominent positions at home; either because financial conditions are more attractive abroad, to gain transnational football experience, or both. This is shown by the cases of Sweden and Japan which still, in 2008, had been mere receiving countries. While the World Champion in Japan did not account for any expatriate World Cup player in its domestic league at that moment in time (June 2011), it was able to count on four transnationally experienced players who got prepared for the international tournament by playing for high ranking clubs in the USA (1), Germany (2) and France (1). Besides gaining a more diverse football experience abroad, it might well have been the cutbacks suffered in the Swedish first division in the season prior to the WWC 2011 which might have had a weight in the decision of six Swedish players (in comparison to zero in 2008) to sign with clubs in the USA (2), Germany (3) and France (1). Still, the Swedish *Damallsvenskan* continued to have a higher import than export rate, attracting foreign talent from six other WWC countries: seven players who were part in the Nigerian squad, as well as one from each Canada, New Zealand, Brazil, Norway and Australia.

College players as migrants

A total of 51 World Cup players got prepared for the tournament in the USA during the season, by playing in WPS or college teams: the 21 American players as well as 30 who are national squad players of other countries: seven players of the Mexican national squad, Canada, England and Colombia with five each, New Zealand, Sweden and Brazil with two each, and Japan and Australia with one each. Only 18 of them became migrants following the recruitment of a (professional WPS) club and, as such, match with the concept of the expatriate player. Five players from Colombia and one from New Zealand had moved to the USA on the basis of soccer scholarships which allow them combining an intense football activity with educational purposes. They can be considered migrants, as their mobility projects involve basically the same features as exemplified by Rosana's experience (migration decision making, settling away from home, phases of adaptation on and beyond the pitch, etc). They also move to a higher

ranking country, but have not (yet) entered a national league nor are they signed as professional or semi-professional players. Therefore, they are not expatriates but college players, and still they embody and display transnational football experience when joining the national squad of their home country.

Besides Colombia which debuted with the youngest among of all WWC teams in 2011, a number of other national teams regularly count on the enforcement of college players who receive their football socialisation in the strong US American system which counted on 18 million active players in 2011, among them Canada, Portugal, Ghana, Trinidad and Tobago and Mexico. But not all college players in the USA who hold foreign nationalities are football migrants.

Non-migrants who gain and display transnational football experience: diaspora players

Among the six Mexican national squad players who are affiliated to universities in California and Texas, only one actually moved to the USA after having been granted a respective scholarship. One had moved there with her family at the age of three and another four were born in the US to Mexican parents. They grew up in the USA, have never lived in Mexico, did not leave their country of birth and socialisation, nor did they settle abroad for football reasons. Their mobility projects do not involve migration decision-making and they do not follow the recruitment of a club abroad. They follow the invitation of a national football association to join the national team of their parents' home country of which they usually possess citizenship or are able to obtain it due to ancestry. Their mobility projects are not alike those of expatriate players or migrant college players, as they are only travelling (but not settling) abroad to join their national squad for training camps and matches. I suggest, following the concept introduced by the journalist and author Timothy Graine (2008), coining them diaspora players. Other national teams who are known for integrating a significant number of diaspora players from countries which provide more advanced infrastructures for the women's game and, consequently, a larger pool of highly skilled players are lower ranking peripheral countries such as Greece, Turkey, Israel and

Portugal. Since the year of 2005, the latter counted on the daughters of Portuguese migrants who were socialised in the USA, Canada, Brazil, France, Switzerland and Germany, some of them making the squad for a number of years. While continuing to play in the domestic championships of their country of births, they expand their football experience by integrating into the national squad of the country which their parents had left, and at international competitions where they compete with other national teams. They are supposed to improve the performance of the team and expected to adapt to a probable different football system and cultural codes (including language, interaction) on the pitch but hardly beyond.

Albeit, being part of a football team which represents a given nation, in reality they are not embedded in this society-at-large. The space of socio-cultural experience of the country which they represent is fairly limited to the social field of football - which seems to be the reality of many fully professional women expatriate players as well, who do not so much enter countries but clubs, clustering with team mates and other migrant players and often living more virtual contacts beyond the borders than daily life interactions in their immediate environment beyond the club (Botelho and Agergaard 2011; Tiesler 2012b). And still, the mobility experience of diaspora players is different, for it does not involve migration, housing and daily life but, instead, travel, hotels and the interruption of daily routine. They travel to their parents' country of origin at average between three and six times per year for a few weeks or meet their squad for preparation camps and matches at the location of international competitions. For some of them, joining the national team had been the first occasion to visit this country which, until then, was mainly introduced to them by the narratives and memories of their parents who had left decades ago. Still, others knew their ancestral homeland from more or less frequent holiday visits. Not all are fluent speakers of their parents' native language which is (supposed to be) the lingua franca in the national team environment. A Mexican player write all kinds of Spanish football expressions on her hands and arms before matches, while Portuguese players motivate their parents to switch the house language to Portuguese during the days before joining their team.

Diaspora players develop a greater interest for their parents' home country, e.g. by accessing media more frequently, and they generally start keeping close contact with

their national team colleagues via facebook and Skype. As far as they or their parents are embedded in local ethnic communities, their participation in the national team of the 'home country' naturally brings attention and pride within the community. A few diaspora players had even been capped for the U-17 or U-19 national teams of their countries of birth, and still they took the (irreversible) decision to accept the invitation to the senior or A national team of a lower ranking country. Some prefer the coaching or playing styles of the other country, many stressed the more family-like atmosphere among the squad or 'to fulfil my fathers/parents' dream' as a motive. All diaspora players I spoke with mentioned that the participation in the team, which often also includes giving interviews to the press at the locale (where their connection to the country is a popular question), motivated or enabled them 'to connect with my roots'. Alike expatriate players and migrant college players, their 'networks, activities and patterns of life encompass two societies' (Glick-Schiller *et al.* 1992: 1); they create linkages between institutions and subjectivities by being simultaneously engaged in two or more countries (Mazzucato 2009), or, in other words, 'their lives cut across national boundaries and bring two societies into a single social field' (Glick-Schiller *et al.* 1992).

Travelling new citizens as transnational players

Two questions remain when looking at the figures which illustrated the circulation of players who were a part of both the 2008 Olympic and the 2011 WWC teams. Among the Olympic teams of 2008, main receivers had been the USA, Sweden, and Germany. First of all, in 2011, Brazil, once a former mere emigration country, appears as the fourth strongest receiver of WWC players. Who goes to Brazil and why can it attract foreign players despite critical infrastructures issues in its championship and an already huge pool of highly skilled local talent the clubs can hardly accommodate? Secondly, Equatorial Guinea appears as the main sender, albeit it only qualified to be on the *global stage* at the WWC for the very first time in 2011. Global stages (including continental cups) are known as key hubs of player transfers, especially in the women's game which still lacks financial and human resources which would allow more systematic scouting at the international level. After the 2008 Olympics, six Brazilians

made the jump to the USA, joining WPS teams. In the aftermath of the WWC 2011, when both the WPS and one of the few Brazilian clubs that was able to provide reasonable conditions to women players, folded, four key Brazilian national team players went to Russia, while others dispersed elsewhere.

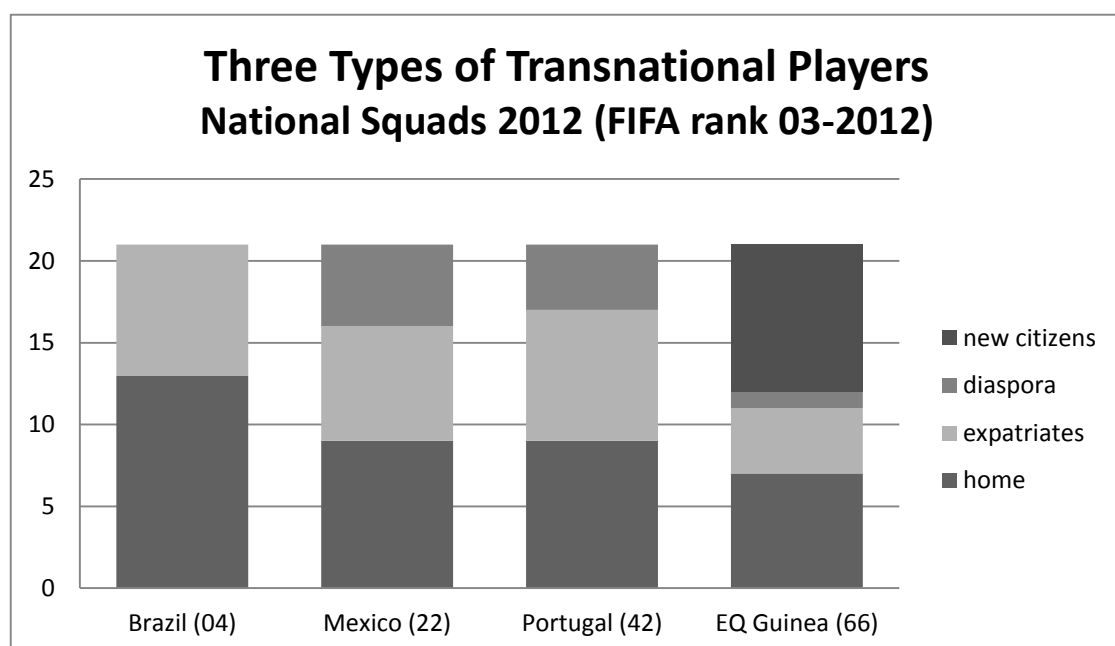
Players can be seen and scouted at international events or they have to rely on their own transnational, mainly 'friend-of-a-friend' (Bale 1991) networks which indeed seem to work very well: apart from sending DVDs and links of Youtube videos documenting their performance directly to certain clubs and coaches, many players with mobility aspirations receive help from already experienced and established expatriates. The latter, as well as some diaspora players, recommend other players who are ready to migrate to their current or former coaches. Some who receive an offer negotiate an additional contract for a friend as they usually prefer to not migrating alone. Portuguese players, for example, used to migrate in clusters or chains to Spain and even further to Iceland and the USA, and diaspora players who grew up, live and play in core countries have already managed to bring over teammates from their national team from a peripheral country (Tiesler 2012a).

The only Guinean-born player, who actually left her country, after being recruited by a foreign club, is the international star striker Genoveva Anonma. She had moved to Germany in 2008, playing for a small first division women's club for two seasons and was signed by the habitual Champions League participant Turbine Potsdam after the WWC 2011. Her national team counted on a European-born diaspora player for a couple of years, while another fifteen mobile players who represented Equatorial Guinea at international matches, since it debuted in 2002, were born in Cameroon, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and, most representatively, in Brazil. They were 'scouted' and invited to join the Guinean national team and naturalised. I suggest coining this type of mobile player as new citizens. Unlike diaspora players, they do not have ancestors in the country where they obtain citizenship and, generally, no previous connection to it. There are cases of naturalisation to be found regularly in men's football. But here, these former foreign players had normally lived for a certain period, sometimes for years, in the country where they start representing the national team after naturalisation. Thus they departed as migrants, settled as expatriate players, and then turned into citizens. This pattern requires a stable and well organised domestic league

which provides the legal and financial conditions to attract and contract foreign players, which is not the case of Equatorial Guinea in women's football.

On the official FIFA List of Players at the WWC 2011, five of the eight Brazilian born players were listed with 'no club affiliation', two with Guinean clubs and one held a contract in South Korea. Anonma played in Germany; the diaspora player played in her home country, that of Spain; one Guinean-based player born in Cameroon; and another originally from Nigeria playing in Nigeria, etc. Indeed it appears as if the new citizens usually continue playing in the domestic league of the country where they grew up, as their club affiliations - at least as documented shortly before and again after an international match - indicate, as currently, for example, there are seven Brazilian born players affiliated to Brazilian clubs. Some venture further after having garnished scouts' attention at international matches. This had been the case, for example, of the Brazilian born Equatorial Guinean player who went to a South Korean club, of a Nigeria born player who gained a contract in the Serbian first division after her performance at the WWC and a Cameroon born player who signed with a Polish club in the aftermath of Equatorial Guinea's first appearance at the very global stage. Following Poli and Besson's (2010) definition of the expatriate player, it appears that only Anonma's mobility project matches with this concept. Players who first became new citizens and then expatriates in a third country can be conceptualised as mobile new citizens.

Figure 3: Differing Mobility Types of National Squad Players



FIFA eligibility rules describe the criteria that are used to determine whether an association football player is allowed to represent a particular country in officially recognised international competitions and friendly matches. In the 20th century, FIFA allowed a player to represent any national team, as long as the player held citizenship of that country. In 2004, in reaction to the growing trend towards naturalisation of foreign players in some countries, FIFA implemented a significant new ruling that requires a player to demonstrate a 'clear connection' to any country they wish to represent. In January 2004, a new ruling came into effect that permitted a player to represent one country internationally at youth level and another at the senior level, provided that the player applied to do so before his/her 21st birthday (FIFA 2009). That was the case of a number of diaspora players mentioned along the text, who had played for U-17 and U-19 national squads in their home countries before switching their FIFA nationality in favour of their parent's country of origin. In March 2004, FIFA amended its wider policy on international eligibility. This was reported to be in response to a growing trend in men's football in some countries, such as Qatar and Togo, to naturalise players born in Brazil (and elsewhere) that have no apparent ancestral links to their new country of citizenship. An emergency FIFA committee ruling judged that players must be able to demonstrate a "clear connection" to a country that they had not been born in but wished to represent. This ruling explicitly stated that, in such scenarios, the player must have at least one parent or grandparent who was born in that country or the player must have been resident in that country for at least two years (BBC Sport 2004, FIFA 2008). As not all of the Equatorial Guinean new citizens fulfilled the latter condition, the originally suggested line-up of the squad needed amendments at the last minute. And still, the squad was able to count on more than one transnationally experienced player (Anonma) by having integrated players who were socialised in at least five different countries.

Three Types of Transnational Players

The opportunity to develop football experience in a different (and usually more advanced football) context is one of the main motives of expatriate players in women's football, besides playing professionally. As stated by Stead and Maguire (2000: 36f), in

relation to men's sport migration, and by Botelho and Agergaard (2011: 814) in relation to women's football migration, playing football abroad 'carries elements of rites of passage as it is perceived as a means to transform yourself into a more mature footballer' and opens up further mobility options. It is the (more or less successful) adaptation and embeddedness in a culturally different context which distinguishes this experience from the rather ephemeral international football experience also gained by "immobile" players via the representation of their club or national squad at international tournaments. I suggest coining it transnational football experience. What turns this (at least) bi-national football experience into a transnational one is the players' engagement in both the club and domestic league of one country and in the national squad of another.

In women's football, this experience is perceived as overwhelmingly positive and rewarding by the players themselves and most social agents involved in the process. As over 80 per cent of the countries which send their national squads into international competitions do not (yet) provide well-organised, sufficiently competitive domestic leagues which can prepare their players to confront the leading lady soccer nations, it comes as no surprise that in most lower ranking countries their expatriates are the key players of the squad. Because they are playing abroad, they are in better physical shape, have improved technical skills, and have gained broader knowledge and embodied experience of different tactics and systems of the game as such. Transnational football experience, however, is not only comprised of gaining bodily capital "abroad", such as improved technical skills and physical shape derived from the rare privilege in the women's game of an exclusive dedication to football, from daily practice and regular high level competition in a better organized league. Decisive are two more aspects: a greater maturity as a player and a broader knowledge of the game derived experience in a socio-culturally distinct context.

The recognition of these latter aspects and consequent request for transnational football experience is pointed out by the fact that even higher ranking core countries, which had competed at the 2008 Olympics, support the mobility of their key national squad players. The same holds true for the World Cup Champion of 2011, Japan. Albeit running a semi-professional league (the L. League) since 1989, where all actual and potential national squad players are contracted as professionals, the Japanese

Federation has in recent years switched to a pro-emigration policy (Labbert 2011). Consequently, it was able to comprise its WWC squad with transnationally experienced players who held contracts with premier league clubs in other core countries, such as the USA, Germany and Sweden.

Once an mobile player gets capped for her/his national squad, s/he is acting in at least two culturally and socially different football contexts, at the same time, and is confronted with different types of expectations, behavioral codes and customs. The concept of the transnational player refers to her/his embodied knowledge of the game derived from geographical mobility and respective subjective experience. At least in women's football, and according to our interviews with players and coaches, it is regarded as a type of socio-sporting capital resource which the player brings into her team (club and national squad).

Transnationally experienced players in men's football are first and foremost expatriate players who leave the country where they grew up following the recruitment of a club abroad (Poli and Besson 2010). Due to the far less advanced developmental stage, this is different in the women's game. Ambitious newcomers among the semi-peripheral and peripheral countries integrate migrant college players, new citizens and diaspora players in order to improve the performance of their national women's teams. If one compares the mobility projects of these players who are crossing borders it becomes clear that not all of them are actual migrants like the expatriate player.

College players who gain a soccer scholarship in the USA do share the experience of migration with expatriates by moving and settling away from home and facing challenges of adaptation also beyond the social field of football. Unlike expatriate players they do not follow the recruitment of a club. They might become professionals, or not, just like young male players who leave home in order to join a football academy abroad - albeit the latter are facing a premature professionalism at an early age which is generally not the case of young women footballers in college. Amongst transnationally experienced footballers, I suggest the gathering of expatriate, migrant college and academy players into one group, namely the one with actual migration experience.

As the type of mobile player that I coin new citizen naturalises him/herself following the invitation of a federal football association abroad to join its national squad, s/he can hardly be regarded as an expatriate. As we still lack sufficient qualitative data, the question of whether or not they themselves consider their mobility project as including the experience of migration or rather the one of a traveller, remains open. They officially become residents in the country of their FIFA nationality but, according to information derived from surveying team rosters in domestic leagues, many of them seem to spend most of the time during football season playing for clubs in their countries of origin.

The question of if the migration experience is part of their football mobility project was clearly answered by interviewees from diverse countries which match with the concept of the diaspora player. These players who were born and socialised in advanced girls and women soccer systems, and provide their skills to the national squad of the country of origin of their parents can not be considered migrants. Apart from visiting their ancestors' homeland in order to join their squad for training camps and international matches, they continue living and playing football in their country of birth. Their mobility projects do not involve migration, housing and daily life but travel, hotels and the interruption of daily routine.

What all these types of mobile women footballers have in common is that they gain and display transnational football experience in at least two differing social cultural contexts. Their 'networks, activities and patterns of life encompass two societies' (Glick-Schiller *et al.* 1992); they create linkages between institutions and subjectivities by being simultaneously engaged in two or more countries (Mazzucato, 2009), or, in other words, 'their lives cut across national boundaries and bring two societies into a single social field' (Glick-Schiller *et al.* 1992).

Conclusion

As an umbrella category of mobile footballers which, in contrary to the male ideal type of expatriate player, can include current realities of the women's game, the concept of the transnational player appears useful. It grasps three subcategories: Firstly, because

they are numerically most significant, indeed that of the expatriate player, including pre-professional youth, such as migrant academy and college players. New citizens and diaspora players then present the second and third subcategory. These might vanish in the future once the production of the women's game has further developed through commercialisation and the still young professionalisation process.

As a 'transnational lens on migrant activities allows social scientists to view the ways some significant things are changing' (Vertovec 2004: 940), the last question relates to the possible impact of these movements on the production of the game. In connecting with the concept of the 'flow of social remittances' between home and host societies (Al-Ali *et al.* 2001), we suggest to understand the players' action of displaying transnational football experience in both the core and peripheral countries of women's football as a flow of bodily and socio-cultural remittances. Footballers who are playing for a club in a highly developed league in one country, while at the same time representing the national squad of another, create a linkage between institutions which work for the development of women's football at the local and national level (clubs, domestic leagues, professionalisation process) with institutions which reflect on global inequalities in the production of the game (national squads at international competitions). This is to say that at this developmental stage of women's football, transnational players generally do not only contribute to the improvement of their national team and possible success at the *global stages* – the latter commonly seen as an important pre-requisite to motivate the 'sports-media-business alliance' (Schaaf and Nieland 2011) to invest into the 'branch'. By providing their home country's team with their enlarged skills and transnational experience of the game (which includes first-hand knowledge about specifics of other international players) they also contribute to the overcoming of uneven technical, tactical and physical qualities among competing national teams at large.

Furthermore, until date, the group of expatriates amongst transnational players still represents the only full professionals in most leagues and recruiting clubs. Their mobility is expediting the professionalisation process (production). According to statements by the clubs and by the staff of national teams, the 'celebrities from abroad' also bring in more spectators and media presence (popularity) and thus help

to motivate sponsors. Even though women face far less (and little privileged) options for a full-time career in the football realm, they are not to be dissuaded neither from the game nor from their professional ambitions. Their ambition and determination, on the one hand, and the shortage of professional contracts, on the other, elevate the geographical mobility of players – and themselves as actors – to the central element in a dynamic triangle of global production, popularity and mobility. This is precisely owed to the insipient globalisation process of the discipline which might accelerate after WWC 2011 and its recent media-documented breakthrough in popularity. Yet it is exactly the deficits in those two pivots of the triangle that depend not on the women themselves, but highly on investments by the sports-media-business alliance (i.e. production and popularity), which appear to lag behind the commitment and personal investments of the players.

Acknowledgments

This study was funded by the Portuguese Foundation of Science and Technology as part of the project “Imagining the Modern Portugal? The role of football among Portuguese migrants in six diasporic settings (www.diasbola.com) and continues in progress under the title “Moving with the Ball: The globalization of women’s football”, funded by the João Havelange Research Grant 2012-2013.

I thank Vera Botelho for our inspiring discussions on new arising research questions on the globalization on women’s football at the time of the FIFA Women’s World Cup 2011. Her in-depth reading of the literature on sports globalization was of major guidance not only for our joint papers-in-progress but also helped to synthesise respective theories in form of the dynamic triangle of global stage, global production and global mobility.

Notes

- [1] The FIFA women’s ranking of December 2011 listed 136 countries. This number varies and has been higher in previous years (up to 168). National squads which remain inactive for a number of years drop out. Based on the

interviews with players and staff, as well as formal statements (UEFA and FIFA) and press information, twelve leagues could be determined for the 2011/2012 season where 50-75 percent of players received a salary and thus were enabled to concentrate exclusively on soccer: USA, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Japan, (probably North Korea.), South Korea, China, Netherlands (since 2007), Mexico (since 2009), Cyprus (2009) and England (since 2011). Yet the WPS in the USA was the only fully professional league until its closure in January 2012, and neither North Korea nor Mexico had expatriate players. If we trace the players' routes, we can determine another eleven possible destination countries so far: France, Canada, Australia (since 2010), Italy, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Spain, Austria, Switzerland and Finland. Here local players received only a small salary or an allowance, while semi-professional or professional contracts were mainly offered to migrants or returnees. For part of the players, the remuneration enabled the exclusive concentration on soccer, since it was combined with free accommodation, and in some cases unlimited access to a car was included in the package – or else the contract guaranteed paid part-time employment (as a coach, physiotherapist or in a factory) besides small salary, accommodation and vehicle use.

- [2] I consider as core countries of women's soccer those that a) run well-organised, partly (semi-)professional leagues and feature one of the twenty best per capita indices (either in comparison to other nations or to the men's per capita index), b) whose national teams have succeeded in qualifying for the finals of World Cups or the Olympic games and who have kept among the FIFA ranking's top 20 for at least three years as well as c) those countries in a position to afford the legal and financial prerequisites for the employment of football migrants – and who then actually implement them. This holds true for USA, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Denmark, Japan, China, South Korea, Finland, France, Italy, England, Netherlands, Canada, Australia and Russia. As semi-peripheral countries in women's football are considered those which rank between 16th and 30th in the FIFA list and regularly attain successes at continental tournaments such as the Asian Cup or Africa Cup (Trinidad and Tobago, Nigeria, Mexico) and which are either able to offer semi-professional conditions in at least a few clubs (e.g. Iceland, Finland, Spain) and/or their mobile talents are recruited by the top

league clubs of the core countries (e.g. New Zealand, Switzerland, Scotland, Columbia, to some degree Nigeria and Ghana). At any rate the criterion for those semi-peripheral climbers is that they provide sufficient quality to play any role at all in the international circulation and market of players. All other countries are considered peripheral countries of women's football, since they lack a minimum of structural conditions such as a league system for all age groups of girls, and hence they feature a relatively weak participation of actives. For endeavor to determine core, semi-peripheral and peripheral countries of the game along the lines of structural, supra-structural (here: gender systems) and socio-cultural (here: stigma vs. recognition) conditions see Tiesler 2012b. For a different approach on power relations and dependencies between the core, semi-peripheral and peripheral states in male sports migration see Maguire (2004: 487).

- [3] http://www.zerozero.pt/edicao.php?id_edicao=6147&op=dados;
http://www.zerozero.pt/edicao.php?id_edicao=6226&op=dados.
- [4] The data used primarily concerns the emigration (2008-2012) of national players (see tables and figures online in Tiesler 2010a, 2011). This was complemented by the analysis of team line-ups in the first divisions of (so far) Sweden, Germany, Spain, Holland, Russia, England, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Cyprus, Brazil, Mexico, USA, Japan and South Korea.
- [5] The Algarve Cup is a global invitational tournament for national teams, organised by the Portuguese Football Federation, recognised by FIFA, and held annually in the Algarve region since 1994. Called the 'Women's Mini World Cup' (*Mundialito do Futebol Feminino*). It is one of the most prestigious women's football events, alongside the Women's World Cup and Women's Olympic Football.
- [6] Based on long-term contact (since 2009 via Skype, Facebook and email) to coaches and players, 31 one-on-one interviews with mobile women footballers, eight brief interviews with players without intentions of migration (control group), as well as ten background talks with coaches, staff and parents. The 31 mobile players who volunteered for semi-structured interviews, who were born and grew up in Portugal (14), Norway (5), Sweden (5), USA (2), Japan (2), Brazil (2) and Germany (1). They spoke of their experience as professionals and

semi-professionals 'abroad' leading first division clubs in the following countries: Germany, Spain, France, Iceland, Italy, Sweden, Russia, China, Canada, and the USA. The staff and coaches originated from Norway, Sweden, Portugal and the USA, the parents from Portugal and the USA and the players without intention or experience of migration from Portugal and Germany.

- [7] With the exception of Agergaard and Botelho (2010), Botelho and Agergaard (2011), Tiesler (2012a, 2012b), and several conference- and working papers by Agergaard, Botelho, Tiesler and Williams during the years 2010 and 2011. See Botelho (2010), Tiesler (2010a, 2010b, 2011) and Williams (2011) at <http://diasbola.com/uk/foomi-source.html>.
- [8] This became obvious already during the group stage from the small number of goals (24 matches, 66 goals, on average 2,75 goals per match), while in the following stage four out of eight matches required extra time, and three could only be decided on penalty shoot outs.
- [9] Our sample had been 24 taped matches aired by *Eurosport* in Portugal, commented by Nuno Santos in company of diverse guests, as well as five taped matches aired by the German public channels ARD and ZDF. In both samples, the club affiliation of all players or groups of players with international inroads had been pointed out.
- [10] For there are two groups of women football players strong in number who remain invisible in such an overview. In the professional realm, these are former national players from the core countries of women's soccer (especially the USA and Scandinavian countries) who find an opportunity to prolong their careers in slightly weaker leagues which however can afford professionals. Further, players trained in the world's strongest girls-and-women's soccer system, the USA (18 million active players) do not need to have made it into the senior or A national team in order to be attractive for the European and Asian markets. Current national players indeed make for a significant percentage of the professional, internationally mobile football talents, since they can be spotted at international matches and aspire to train and compete in the best possible conditions during the running season – conditions which exist only in few countries. Even so, outside of the professional system it is the US-American high school and college soccer system, where athletic scholarships enable highly talented young players

to integrate their academic training with intensive football practice, which competes in numbers with migration in the (semi-)professional realm. For the latter see the abstract for the paper by Sara Booth and Katie Liston at the workshop *Sports as a Global Labour Market – Female Football Migration*, 03-04 December 2010, University of Copenhagen, at <http://www.diasbola.com/uk/foomi-events.html>.

- [11] These are the players who were announced by their Federations to be called to their national squads until 16 June 2011, accordingly to FIFA sources. By the beginning of the tournament only 304 players in total were capped, among them 61 with contracts in clubs abroad (20 per cent).
- [12] Williams (2011) explains that various national football associations use differing criteria for the designation and classification of amateur, semi-professional and professional players. Instead of following the politicized, gender-blind officious language, she uses the biographies of women players who gathered professional experience in various decades since the 1960s, in order to describe important, iridescent shades of grey between these three core concepts, thus also paying tribute to the development history of this sport discipline. In order to enable international comparability, this paper distinguishes as follows: Professional leagues are those that pay a salary to all players, as usual at differing rates, but in any case sufficient to cover the basic expenses and costs of living at least to the standard of the national minimum wage. Semi-professional leagues are those that do not pay a salary to all players, but an allowance to most, and that also employ some full professionals. Amateur leagues are those where a minority receives an allowance and only individuals (mostly migrants) earn a remuneration that enables them to concentrate exclusively on football. In some amateur leagues, e.g. the Cypriot, Austrian and Swiss, there are individual clubs who would be called semi-professional or even professional by these criteria. At least a few professional players are also found in semi-professional and even second division amateur clubs.
- [13] At accessing the team rosters, I have surveyed the geographic mobility of 799 players which comprised forty women's national squads during the season 2008/2009 (see table online in Tiesler 2010a and resulting figures in Tiesler 2010b). 187 of them (23.4 per cent) had been on the move. Among the forty

national squads which provided data on team rosters at different online sources, twenty-three represented European countries. Among these 473 female players registered at UEFA, 123 were playing in championships abroad (26.0 per cent). Other regions with comparable high players' mobility during this season had been Africa with twenty-eight out of 100 players on the move (28 per cent), Central and South America (27.4 per cent), while the percentage 32 of mobile players from North America (USA and Canada) was with one single exception built by Canadian athletes who played in the neighboring USA. The Asian countries (surveyed here were only China and Japan) only accounted for two out of thirty-six mobile players (5.6 per cent), and the countries from Oceania (American Samoa, New Zealand and Australia) for 9.1 per cent. European players are with 26.0 per cent slightly more mobile higher than the average of all 40 countries surveyed (23.4 per cent).

- [14] In Spain (FIFA rank 20): 1 from Argentina, 1 from Brazil; Finland (19): 1 from Nigeria; France (7): 1 from Brazil; Denmark (6): one from Brazil.
- [15] The FIFA women's ranking started in July 2003 and is since then updated four times a year. Brazil started in the Top 10 which it never left, with a first entry in the Top 5 in August 2004, and a stable rank among the five best since October 2007, when it ranked third for the first time. From September 2008 on it had always been one of the leading three, until December 2011, when the WWC 2012 champion Japan made it to rank 3, putting Brazil to rank 4.
- [16] Marta was discovered for the national team at the age of 15 while playing for Rio de Janeiro-based club Vasco da Gama. Two years later, she made her first jump abroad, following an offer by Umea IK (Sweden) where she played for four seasons before leaving to the WPS club Los Angeles Sol in the USA. During her stay in the USA, which involved another two WPS clubs (FC Gold Pride and Western New York Flash), she returned to Brazil twice, on loan to FC Santos. When the WPS was folded in January 2012, she returned to Sweden, signing with Tyreso FF. Cristiane was 15 years old when she debuted for the U-19 national team. At the age of 19, she went to Germany to play for one season for each Turbine Potsdam and VfL Wolfsburg before leaving to Sweden (Linköping FC) in the season of 2008. After one season back in Brazil she made the jump to the USA, playing for the WPS club Chicago Red Stars. She

returned home to São Paulo in 2009, playing for FC Santos during two seasons until she was recruited by the Russian first division club *Rosiyanka* following the WWC 2011 together with three other Brazilian national team players. At counting on players from Brazil, the USA, Sweden, Ukraine, Romania and South Africa, *Rosiyankas* team roster is currently one of the most diverse in terms of nationalities while the Russian first division at large integrates players from 18 different countries. In contrast, the new professional women's league in England is comprised of Anglophone players only albeit also diverse in terms of nationalities.

- [17] See 'Brazil to set up women's soccer league'. *Sports*. People's Daily, 29 September 2002 <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90779/6274126.html>. Download 19.12.2010 as well as 'Brazil will create women soccer cup'. *Sports*. People's Daily, 29 September 2007: <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90779/6274148.html>. Download 19.12.2010. 'Peladonas! Jogadoras tiram a roupa na Espanha. Veja!'. Agência Futebol Interior, no date: http://www.futebolinterior.com.br/news.php?id_news=22398. Download 25 January 2010.
- [18] Accordingly to conversations among migrant players, exceptional top wages in Brazil for national squad players normally do not exceed some 800 Euro (2000 Real) per month. In the German *Frauenbundesliga*, which appears to be the wealthiest women's leagues worldwide the wages of only three top players were estimated as numbering over 100.000 Euro per year. Another eight best paid German players receive at average 62.500 Euro per year. For the English semi-professional Women's Super League (WSL), set up in summer 2011, the clubs have all signed up to a salary cap, stipulating that no club can pay more than four of its players over £20.000 (24.000 Euro in January 2012) . While we lack reliable updated information on wages in Sweden, sources from 2006 and 2008 indicated very low average wages for local players (5.500 Euro per year in 2006, 6.228 in 2008), while migrant players received more (bloggers assumed that Marta earned 11 times more than the average wage of local players). Sources: The Guardian 2008: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/football/2008/oct/05/womensfootball.ussport>. Spiegel Online 2011: <http://www.spiegel.de/sport/0,1518,770013,00.html>.

Stockholm News 2008: <http://www.stockholmnews.com/more.aspx?NID=1055>.

The Guardian 2011: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/football/blog/2011/apr/07/womens-super-league-launch> .

- [19] The move of a Scandinavian national team player to the Russian first division, for example, was hotly debated not only amongst responsible staff but also in the press. The player herself reported to me that her team mates, friends and family were critical about it as well. Another top player from a Scandinavian country told me about her rather career harming experience in a Champions League club. Her difficulties to adapt to a different playing and coaching style lead to her spending more time on the players bench during the season so that her prominent position in the starting eleven of her national squad was put at stake due to lack of practice.

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Edição . ICS Working Papers

Coordenação . Sofia Aboim

Design . João Pedro Silva

Apoio técnico . Ricardo Pereira
