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## **CONMEBOL - Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol**

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## **CONMEBOL - Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol**

## Abstract

Football can be one of the most illuminating domains of globalisation, where Global South and Global North dynamics operate. In a sense, to understand the business world of football it becomes imperative to understand the particular regional and local aspects. In this chapter we trace the historical development of South American football through the figure of CONMEBOL, discuss the position of South American football in relation to global and European football by arguing against the mechanical division of Global South and Global North, and then present a three part analysis of the case of Brazilian football to illustrate the concomitant dimensions of political, social, and economical to understand the business of football. We conclude by providing future points of research in respect of the business of South American football.

## Introduction and the Challenges Facing South American Football

*“There are two types of football, prose and poetry. European teams are prose, tough, premeditated, systematic, collective. Latin American ones are poetry, ductile, spontaneous, individual, erotic” (Pasolini, 2015)*

Association Football (hereafter football) can be considered as one of the most illuminating domains of globalisation (see Giulianotti & Robertson, 2004), not only by its sheer worldwide diffusion as seen by the viewership numbers achieved during the 2014 FIFA World Cup finals in Brazil - 3.2 billion viewers overall and 1 billion just for the final game between Argentina and Germany (see FIFA, 2015) - but also by its inherent social, cultural, economical, and political characteristics that mimic our daily lives' experiences to a point that football can help us understand our living world (see Foer, 2010). In a sense, football is a microcosmos of this wider system that we call world society (Luhmann, 1997), and by understanding it it is possible to shed some lights on the current and historical processes that led to our contemporary world arrangements. Moreover, as argued by Ulrich Beck (2010) if we want to comprehend one cog of this machinery - for example the business and economical aspects of football - we cannot and should not omit the other concurrent aspects as the political, social, and cultural dimensions, in a sense that disassociating them becomes impossible in our present-day cosmopolitan world (see Beck, 2005). Consequently, to understand the overarching worldwide business of football, and in particular its supreme organisation - FIFA (*Fédération Internationale de Football Association*) - it is imperative to understand its parts as

by focusing on specific national and regional associations. Taking Pier Paolo Pasolini's (2015) opening quote as a metaphor of football's world system it can be argued that there is a clear dichotomy that runs along the lines of the Global South and Global North divide, whereas on one side we find the somehow nostalgic and pristine football (in South America) and on the other side we encounter the somehow dirty and over-commercialised football (in Europe). The metaphor used by Pasolini (2015) to describe the two Janus-faced natures of football is also found on the writings of South American social commentators as the Brazilians Roberto DaMatta and Gilberto Freyre (see Capraro, 2015), and the Uruguayan journalist Eduardo Galeano (1995). In theory, those two Janus-faced natures of football require each other to exist, in a way that European football is only systematic and collective if South American football is unpredictable and individualistic. In short, European and world football are what they are because of South American football. Thus, to understand the current business of world football we need to look to the concurrent cultural, political, and social processes of local and regional football, and in particular South American football.

The chapter will follow with a historical approach to the establishment of South American football in the light of CONMEBOL's (Confederación Sudamericana de Fútbol) foundation and development; on a second moment to discuss the position of South American football in relation to European and World football; thirdly, it will cover the last decade of sport mega-events in Brazil and its relationship to the Government initiatives to host those events, in particular the 2014 FIFA World Cup; fourthly it will discuss one impact of the organisation of the event through the episode of the relocation of families for infrastructure construction in Porto Alegre; fifthly it will present an analysis of the economic sustainability of one of the new arenas constructed for the 2014 FIFA World Cup; and finally it will provide some conclusions and future points for research in respect of the business of football in South America.

### History of CONMEBOL

In 1910 to celebrate the centenary of the start of Argentinian independence from the Spanish Crown - the process started in 1810 with the Revolución de Mayo and culminated with the declaration of independence in 1816 - it was proposed by the Argentinian Football Association (AFA) that the annual international football festival between Uruguay and Argentina would also have invitations to other South American teams, including Chile and Brazil (Mason, 1995). This incipient continental competition between the four countries was a

reflection of the early football encounters between the distinct British expatriate communities in South America, in particular from the largest and most important trading route stops as Montevideo (Uruguay), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (Brazil), and Valparaíso and Santiago (Chile). For instance, international football encounters between Argentina and Brazil started in 1907 when the former were invited for games in Brazil, whilst games between Uruguay and Argentina go back to 1888 when young British expats organised a festival to celebrate the birthday of Queen Victoria (Mason, 1995). Nevertheless, it was not 1910 that ended to be recognised as the founding year of CONMEBOL, but it was only with the centenary of the declaration of Argentinian independence that an Uruguayan - Hector R. Gómez - saw the appropriate momentum for uniting the different South American countries along one single confederation that would rule the amateur sport of football (Mason, 1995). As such, CONMEBOL is regarded as the oldest of all the continental confederations, having just national bodies and FIFA (formed in 1904) as its senior. The early task of the newly formed confederation was to organise the South American Championship (Campeonato Sudamericano de Fútbol) to be held in Argentina (1916), Uruguay (1917), Brazil (1919), and Chile (1920). The four first editions saw the participation of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay, while in 1921 (Argentina) we have the first participation of Paraguay, and in 1926 (Chile) of Bolivia, 1927 (Peru) of Peru, 1939 (Peru) of Ecuador, 1945 (Chile) of Colombia, and 1967 (Uruguay) of Venezuela. It was not until the 1975 edition, when the competition changed its name to Copa América that all 10 CONMEBOL members participated together (see CONMEBOL, 2018).

CONMEBOL was not only a pioneer in what refers of being the first continental confederation that sought to organise the sport of football, but also championed the organisation of the first FIFA World Cup finals in Uruguay in 1930. As argued by Mason (1995), Uruguay was not chosen by FIFA uniquely because of its past triumphs on the pitch - Uruguay had won the 1924 and 1928 Olympic Tournaments - but because it had promised to pay travel and accommodation expenses to all participating teams, and to build a modern and larger stadium to host the competition - the Estadio Centenario (centenary) was build to celebrate the centenary of Uruguay's first constitution and also to host the 1930 FIFA World Cup finals. Moreover, Uruguay at that time in history was experiencing an unprecedented economic growth anchored in growing exports of frozen meat and wool (see Finch, 1981; Mason, 1995), whereas Europe was in its inter-war period. Another pioneering feature of CONMEBOL was the invitation of non-CONMEBOL members to take part in Copa América, as with the participation of the United States of America (USA) and Mexico in 1993 (Ecuador), and Japan in 1999 (Paraguay). Nevertheless, in a business sense it is the 2016 Copa América that can be regarded

as iconic as it was the first time the competition was held outside any of the members' political national borders - it was held in USA, in a sense paving the way for the defunct proposed game 39 of the English Premier League (see Millward, 2011). In a way, as argued by Maffesoli (1988, 1990) South America, and particularly Brazil, can be considered as the laboratory of *European* modernisation where ideas and concepts are tried out before taking their *big* stages. As such, comprehending the South American experience in relation to the business of football can help us in understanding the wider processes involved with global football.

### South American Football as Global North and Global South

As posited previously, the social, economical, political and cultural arrangements regarding world football in its relationship to South American football is a reflection to the wider global arrangements to a point where it becomes impossible to distinguish who reflects who - is it football that mimics the world, or is the world that mimics football? (see Giulianotti, 1999; Giulianotti & Robertson, 2009). To situate the current condition of South American football and its relationship to the global business of football it becomes imperative to look for the historical developments in the last century that shaped the processes in ways that we can understand South American football as both part of the Global North and the Global South concomitantly. As argued by Brewer (2018) the business world of football saw an increasingly transformation from the mid-20th century onwards when there was a qualitatively variation in what was the primary goal of sport. For Brewer (2018), whereas previously the commercial expansion of football was solely one of the possible means to which clubs and organisations as national associations, confederations and FIFA guided their activities, currently the commercial and businesses aspects became if not the end-in-itself, one of its primary goals. Brewer (2018) identifies the ascension of João Havelange - a Brazilian national who represented Brazil in the 1930 and 1952 Summer Olympic Games in swimming and water polo respectively - to the presidency of FIFA in 1974 as the igniter of the shifting of power within world football in what regarded the Global South (non-Europe) and the Global North (Europe) dynamics. The ascension of Havelange to the presidency of FIFA needs to be read in conjunction with wider social and political re-arrangements that took place around that period, especially through the liberation and independence of distinct African countries (see Armstrong & Giulianotti, 2004; Said, 1994). Nevertheless, Havelange ascension to FIFA presidency was not the igniter of this wider change, but actually the ultimate representation of the Global North and Global South

dynamics in regards of world football. Whereas in a mechanical division between Global North as the developed Europe and the Global South as the underdeveloped South America might suit some strict economical analysis (see Petersen-Wagner, 2017a; Rosa, 2014 for a discussion on mechanical and organic Global North and Global South distinctions), it does not reflect all the distinct dimensions that are indissociable as posited by Beck (2005). In a way, South American football was already the Global North of world football, and the ascension of Havelange to power was solely its ultimate manifestation.

As discussed previously, South American football organisation through the figure of CONMEBOL was well developed before European countries would get together to form UEFA in 1954. By the time UEFA organised its first continental championship in 1960, CONMEBOL had already hosted 27 editions of its continental competition. The prominence of South American football in the world stage by the 1960s is well documented, as by the feats of Uruguay (1930, 1950) and Brazil (1958, 1962) in the FIFA World Cup, and by the organisation of three of the seven first FIFA World Cup tournaments (Uruguay - 1930; Brazil - 1950; Chile - 1962). In respect of the cultural and social significance to the nation, football was already truly embedded in the social fabrics of Argentina (Archetti, 1999; Rein, 2015), Brazil (DaMatta, 1982; Freyre, 1947; Kittleson, 2014), Uruguay (Galeano, 1995), and more generally across South America (Mason, 1995) in a way that preceded the global dominance of football as a sporting practice that overcomes the strict boundaries of social class dynamics as seen in the United Kingdom example (see Baker, 1979; Mason, 1980). Additionally, football in South America served as an expression of the nation-state in a way that it became one of the key elements that glued together distinct early migrant communities who otherwise would not recognise themselves as Argentinians (see Arbena, 1995; Archetti, 1995; Gil, 2002; Rein, 2015) or Brazilians (see Bocketti, 2008; Kittleson, 2014; Mascarenhas, 2014) for example. In a way, the experience of South American football in respect of distinct first and second generation migrants during the late 1800s and early 1900s can shed light on the processes taking place in Europe at the moment. The use of football as a platform to foster a sense of national belonging was well understood by South American politicians in both positive and negative terms (see Arbena, 1990; Duke & Crolley, 2001; Rein, 1998), to a point where athletes started to gain such a popularity that raised their profile to a level where they were elected or selected for political positions (see Doidge & Almeida, 2017; Kittleson, 2014). If we understand this in light of the trend of celebrity politics (see Street, 2004, 2012; Wheeler, 2013; Zoonen, 2006) it is possible to expect this phenomenon to take hold in other spaces - at the moment of writing this chapter, George Weah, who was selected as the FIFA footballer of the year in 1995, is already the

president of Liberia (NYT, 2017). The centrality of players within the space of Latin American football can be understood as a manifestation of what Max Weber (2013) referred to as charismatic leadership, or what DaMatta (1997) understood as *person*. The route to *personhood* in respect of South American football follows the path described in the below quote by Eduardo Galeano (1995, p. 19):

“Al sur del mundo, Èste es el itinerario del jugador con buenas piernas y buena suerte: de su pueblo pasa a una ciudad del interior; de la ciudad del interior pasa a un club chico de la capital del país; en la capital, el club chico no tiene más remedio que venderlo a un club grande; el club grande, asfixiado por las deudas, lo vende a otro club más grande de un país más grande; y finalmente el jugador corona su carrera en Europa.” [On the South of the world, this is the itinerary of the player with good legs and good luck: from his/her village to a small country town; from the small country town to a small club in the capital of the country; the small club does not have more solution than to sell to a big club; the big club asphyxiated by debts, has to sell him/her to a bigger club from a bigger country; and finally the player crown his/her career in Europe] (Galeano, 1995, p. 19, translated by the author)

The migration of South American players to Europe, not only to represent club level football but also international football, has been a feature since the early 1900s especially with the return of Italian descendants from Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay to Italy. As argued by Taylor (2006) of the over 300 foreign players playing in the Italian professional league between 1929 and 1965 half of them had come from South America, whilst over three fourths of foreign players in the Spanish league in the 1970s were from South America. The centrality that South American footballers had in those two particular European countries highlight the idea of South America being the Global North of football within the geographical Global South. In a sense, the distinctions between European and South American football as posited by the opening quote by Pasolini (2015) are not that clear cut, meaning that what we understand as European is to some extent already South American, and vice-versa.

A Decade of Mega-Events in Brazil: The Federal Government Initiatives and the 2014 FIFA World Cup



While Uruguay in the 1920s was one of the fastest growing national economies in a worldwide perspective (see Finch, 1981), the early 2000s saw Brazil taking prominence in the world stage to a point where the acronym BRICS was coined by Jim O'Neill at Goldman Sachs (O'Neill, 2001) to represent the fast growing economies in the world. Brazil was also featured in The Economist cover page in 2009 with the heading of 'Brazil takes off', where the position of Brazil in the world stage was highlighted especially by emphasising the differences between Brazil and the other BRICS economies (Economist, 2009). This period is also regarded as the golden decade of Brazilian sport, especially by the organisation of different mega-events as the Pan-American Games (2007), the World Military Games (2011), the FIFA Confederations Cup (2013), FIFA World Cup (2014), and the first Olympic Games (2016) to be held in South America. The organisation of those mega-events were not possible without the involvement of all spheres of Brazilian society, from local municipal governments, through regional state governments, and the federal national government. In this light, this section will look how the federal government got involved with the organisation of the 2014 FIFA World Cup, and what were its initiatives in relation to national social and economical development, and public policies in sport. In a sense, this section focus on the public side of the business of football and how governments and public entities relate to it. This approach goes into the direction proposed by Beck (2005) in relation to the inseparability of the different aspects of world society, in a sense that to understand the privately business sphere it is indispensable to understand the public government sphere.

From the first experience of organising the Pan-American Games in 2007, the Brazilian national government in its strategic agenda saw sport as one of the key factors for social and economical development of the country (Brasil, 2008, 2010, 2016). When Brazil received the rights to host the 2014 FIFA World Cup finals back in 30th October 2007 the national government perceived the event as an inductor for national development through the use of PAC (Programa de Aceleração de Crescimento - Program for the Acceleration of Growth) for establishing priorities in what concerned the development of the crucial infrastructure for regional and national economical growth. For this reason, the national federal government proposed changes in legislation, implemented new control and planning systems for monitoring the event's related projects, established new models for hiring, managerial monitoring, and procurement. For instance, in what regards the establishment of new public procurement systems, the national federal government adopted the RDC (Regime de Contratações Diferenciadas - System for Special Procurement) (see Brasil, 2011) after an intense debate in the country's upper and lower chambers in order to enhance the public tender

process for construction. What started as a new procurement system developed with the FIFA World Cup finals as the intended target lately became available throughout other areas of public management in Brazil. This was perceived by the national federal government as one of the legacies of hosting the competition. The organisation of the event also created a better symbiosis between the different levels of public administration in Brazil (municipal, regional, national), private companies, and civil society where for better coordination between those different entities it was created governance committees under the executive coordination of the Ministry of Sport. Thematic chambers with the participation of all involved entities were created involving different areas pertinent to the organisation of the event as tourism; communication; doping control; public policies; intelligence, defence and security; sustainability; accessibility; football town; culture, tourism and Brazilian image; energy; strategic legacy.

The national federal government in its vision perceived that hosting those sporting events, and in particular the FIFA World Cup finals, as opportunities for developing their wider and far reaching changes they envisioned for the country. By the decision of the federal government, it was sought to install a development program through the banner of 'nationalisation of benefits' by the dissemination of investments in construction and modernisation of the sportive infrastructure beyond what those 12 host cities would get. The vision adopted by the government was that the initial development in the 12 host cities would spread and branch out to the surrounding and adjacent cities and towns in what they envisioned as a stimulant effect for both local and regional developments. For hosting the 2014 FIFA World Cup, the federal government through its development bank - BNDES (Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social - National Bank for Economic and Social Development) - had provided lines of credit of up to 3.81 billion reais (£800 million in 23rd April 2018 conversation rate of 0.21), which were in accordance with market practices in what regarded interested rates, for mobility, ports, airports, security, telecommunications, and tourism infrastructure works. Overall, it was invested over 8 billion reais (£1.7 billion) between federal government, local and regional governments, and private investments (Brasil, 2015b) for hosting the event. The broader foci of these investments was the decrease of inequalities and the generation of employment. In what regarded the development of cities, the government understood the event as catalyst for wider changes in respect of urban mobility, public transportation, sewerage and habitation. Nevertheless, as it will be seen in the following section those works were not completely without debate and political and social struggles by part of the population affected by the event. For policing, the government understood the event as

catalyst for a wider integration of the three levels of police (municipal, regional, federal), and the use of more preventive approach that focused on the community. In the social perspective, the focus was on the extension of citizenship rights and quality of public services in regards of education, health, accessibility, and security, and the valorisation of a national identity comprising multiple regional identities. In respect of local environment, sustainability was the main focus of the wider governmental investments.

Moreover, the federal government saw the 2014 FIFA World Cup also as an inductor for development of national football. The construction or refurbishment of the 12 arenas, the construction of Training Centres and Official Training Fields were perceived by the government as an indication of the desired new stage Brazilian football would achieved in the coming years. One of the first challenges envisioned by the government was how to ensure that a new management system will be in place in order to guarantee the sustainability of those new sportive spaces (see final section in this chapter). For instance, in 2015 after the FIFA World Cup finals the national federal government statued a new law (see Brasil, 2015a) establishing the practice of fiscal responsibility in football, transparence in the business of football, and democratic principles in relation to the management of clubs and national and regional associations. Moreover, this new law introduced special instalment for football clubs to repay old debts with the federal government, and created the APFUT (Autoridade Pública de Governança do Futebol - Public Authority for the Governance of Football). The 2014 FIFA World Cup also served as a catalyst for wider governmental initiatives to prevent violence in sport as through the Grito pela Paz (Cry for Peace) program that sought to prize the football spectacle and make fans aware that stadia are places for fraternisation and not of violence encounters. This federal initiative found resonance in club football by the introduction of spaces in stadia where fans from both sides can sit and watch the game together, especially what concerned big regional derbies as Internacional versus Grêmio in Porto Alegre (see GloboEsporte, 2015; StadiumDB, 2015).

Besides that, the 2014 FIFA World Cup in mens football has also served as a catalyst for the development of women football as with the construction of the first centre of excellence in women football (see Itaipu, 2014) through a project within the Sport Incentive Law (Lei de Incentivo ao Esporte) that provides tax break for private investors. Moreover, the federal government through a Caixa Econômica Federal (public owned bank) sponsorship hosted the III National Women Football Championship, the II University Cup, and the II School Cup. Nevertheless, as pointed out by Damiani (2014) and Baldy dos Reis & Souza Junior (2014) the vast amount of public and private investments, and media coverage still resides on men football

whilst women still experience a lower degree of professionalisation in the sport, the pay gap is still enormous, and regrettably women still face sexual and moral harassment whilst performing their roles as athletes, coaches, referees, reporters, and football managers. At the moment of writing this chapter a social movement in respect of women's space in Brazilian football has emerged under the banner of 'Deixa ela trabalhar' (Let her work) slogan (see BBC-Brasil, 2018).

### The Relocation of Residents during the works for the 2014 FIFA World Cup

As mentioned in the previous section, the economic and social development project envisioned by the national federal government alongside the other two spheres of public administration in Brazil (municipal and regional) was heavily centred around the idea of using the FIFA World Cup - and also the Rio 2016 Olympic Games - as catalyst for infrastructure extension and enhancement. It was perceived by the government that because of Brazil's continental size, and its historical deficit in what regarded infrastructure foundation, this was one of the main causes for obstructing and restricting further economic and social growth (see Neto, Soares, Ferreira, Pompermayer, & Romminger, 2011). Nevertheless, for those investments in key infrastructure under the banner of 'nationalisation of benefits' to take place there was an unfortunate necessity for the relocation of families where the work would take place. A particular case in question was the relocation of families in Porto Alegre - Rio Grande do Sul due to the enlargement and duplication of Avenida Moab Caldas (also known as Avenida Tronco) that would speed up the connection between the south of the city and its most dense populated areas - north and centre, and provide a ring road around the Estádio Beira-Rio (Sport Club Internacional's stadium and one of the host venues for the 2014 FIFA World Cup).

The duplication and enlargement of Avenida Tronco was featured in Porto Alegre's master plan since 1959 when it was recognised by the then mayor Leonel Brizola as a key link between the already populated areas of centre and north of the city, and the growing south. Nevertheless, those works never happened and the disorderly occupation of the area that took place during 40 years led to over 1,500 families to be living where the road should have been standing. It was perceived by municipal managers that the less they did in relation to the area during this 40 years period, the less trouble they would create for themselves (see Magno, 2014). Nonetheless, the FIFA World Cup and the federal government incentives for infrastructure development across the country were sought as an opportunity that municipal

managers could not miss in order to put into effect what Porto Alegre's master plan already proposed back in 1959. The enlargement and duplication of Avenida Tronco involved an investment of around 156 million reais (£32 million), comprising both road works (83% of total costs) and also the relocation of families (17% of total costs), where the former was made through financing via the federal owned bank - Caixa Economica Federal - and the latter invested by the municipal government (see PMPA, 2018). The history of the disorderly growth of the area and further occupation of where Avenida Tronco stands is related to the construction of the new horse racing track in Porto Alegre during the 1950s, when it moved from a central location (Moinhos de Vento neighbourhood) to the south of the city (Cristal neighbourhood), and attracted a large contingency of manual labourers from the countryside, Santa Catarina (the closest regional state to Rio Grande do Sul), and Uruguay and Argentina. Those manual labourers worked at the horse racing track, but with the economical decline of horse racing during the next decades those individuals without a job still decided to stay in the surrounding areas of the track. Moreover, those spaces also served as attracting poles for the huge influx of countryside individuals in the 1960s, and historically the periphery were also the space where the early liberated slaves (late 1800s and early 1900s) sought to settle.

Nevertheless, the decision making process taken by the public municipal managers for duplicating Avenida Tronco that involved the relocation of families were seen by residents as a top-down decision generating further setbacks that prevented the works to occur at the desired pace. Porto Alegre is widely recognised by its experience on participatory budgeting (see Gilman, 2016; Santos, 1998) where inhabitants can make direct decisions on how to allocated part of the budget for investments. In a sense, the experience of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre that started back in 1989 with the then mayor Olivio Dutra serves as a backdrop for understanding the processes around the relocation of families during the construction and duplication of Avenida Tronco. Whereas initially the municipal government had agreed to relocate families to surrounding areas to their original location, with the proximity of the FIFA World Cup the municipal council passed a complimentary law in 2010 releasing it from the obligation to spend the allocated resources from the national federal government program (Minha Casa, Minha Vida - My House, My Life - PMCMV) for the construction of new houses in the same surrounding location. This decision by the municipal council and the then mayor at the time - José Fortunati - caused further setbacks in talks with residents, leading it to approach the relocation through two other legal procedures available: house payment bonus (bonus moradia); and social rent (aluguel social). In the former case, individuals could decide to find houses they wish to buy up to a limit imposed by the government, who would subsidise that

negotiation in order for those individuals to move from their original home (up to 52,000 reais - £10,000), where the latter involved the municipal government paying rent for individuals until the new houses outside the surrounding areas would become ready through the PMCMV (up to 500 reais monthly - £105 monthly). Until July 2014 when the FIFA World Cup started there were 708 families who have been relocated, where 402 opted for house payment bonus, 108 who received indemnities that were higher than the bonus, and 180 families who decided for social rent. The rest of the families have decided to resist and stayed in the region while they waited for the PMCMV houses to be completed. The latter resistance movement was known as 'key for key' (chave por chave) where residents would only give up their house keys when they would get on their hands the new house keys. In a way, the public municipal managers found themselves in a situation where they were engaging in talks with further two connected social movements who provided support for the residents' concerns: the Comitê Popular da Copa em Porto Alegre (World Cup Popular Committee); and the Ponto de Cultura Quilombo<sup>1</sup> do Sopapo (the Quilombo do Sopapo Cultural Centre). Up to this moment, the duplication and enlargement of Avenida Tronco has not been completed (see CMPA, 2017), nevertheless because of this work not featuring in the official works related to the FIFA World Cup it is not regarded as a failure in hosting the event.

In a sense, when looking at the business aspect of football and in particular when analysing the hosting of a mega event as the FIFA World Cup it is inherently necessary to look at those interconnected dimensions as the social and public management and policies. What the example above showed was that whilst the business and economical dimension of the event might have been planned for providing a platform for economical and social growth under the banner of 'nationalisation of benefits', in the local social level those plans had complete unintended consequences that generated further struggles. For anyone seeking to understand the business aspect of football, it becomes absolutely necessary to look at also to the social local consequences of those decisions.

### The New Football Arenas in Brazil: Possibilities for Economic Sustainability

The hosting of sport mega-events in what could be considered the economical and social Global South is becoming a late trend for both FIFA - South Africa (2010), Brazil (2014), Russia (2018), Qatar (2022) - and the IOC - Beijing (2008), Sochi (2014), Rio (2016), Beijing (2022) -

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<sup>1</sup> Quilombos are the original settlements by slaves and freed-slaves (see Reis & Gomes, 1996)

and one of the recurrent themes in international media outlets is if all the stadia constructed for the event would still be utilised after it, or it would become white elephants (see Manfred, 2015; Pearson, 2014). In a way media discourse in a dialogical fashion (see Foucault, 1969) constructs 'reality' which in turn frame those discourses to a point where we can understand the collection of those discourses as the *épistémé* of the event, or what Petersen-Wagner (2017c) conceptualised as symbolic footprints. Nevertheless, discourses are not 'reality', neither the 'real' reality is what frames discourses. As such, in this section we will analyse the economic sustainability of one of the 12 arenas redeveloped or build specifically for the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil - the Estádio Beira-Rio in Porto Alegre - by delving into the financial reports of Sport Club Internacional (the owner of the stadium), BRio (the holding that co-manages the stadium), and interviews with the club's vice-president and two senior managers from BRio. Our analysis centres around eight main areas for income generation for the club and the stadium that are: ticket sales; catering; VIP areas; advertising; events; commercial centre; parking; and tour guides and museum.

According to a report by Deloitte (2011) football clubs in Europe generated between 40% to 13% of their operational income through sales of match-related tickets. Sport Club Internacional in the 2015 season reported an income of 26.7 million reais (£5,600,000) through sales of match-related tickets, which corresponds to 12,2% of their overall operational income (217.8 million reais - £45,738,000) (see Internacional, 2015). Nevertheless, one of the main concerns by the international media when 'Global South' countries host mega-events is that initially stadia would be unable to attract crowds, and secondly the possibility of gentrification of the stadia by increase in ticket prices and upscaling the installations by removing old popular areas. Historically, Brazil had an occupation rate of its stadia around 41% according to a report by Pluri Consultoria (2014), whereas what was seen in regards to Sport Club Internacional and its Beira-Rio stadium was a total occupation rate of 37% in the 2015 Brazilian League. Some of the possible reasons for a decline in occupation across the country (there was an increase of attendance of 234% and income generation of 392%), and specifically with Sport Club Internacional, was that many stadia increased their capacity after their renovation or construction. In respect of Sport Club Internacional, its occupation rate varied across the different tournaments it played during the 2015 season. For instance, in Brazilian Cup games it had an average occupation of 62%, whereas in the Brazilian League it was of 37%, State Championship (37%), and the Copa Libertadores (81%). Overall, the average occupation rate for 2015 for Sport Club Internacional was of 45,4%, still well below the occupation rates found in Europe. Nevertheless, just with the income generated by match-related tickets Sport Club

Internacional can cover the maintenance costs of the stadia that are calculated to be around 18,000,000 reais (£3,780,000) per year (see Internacional, 2015). Sport Club Internacional decided to licence the use of its catering spaces (66 in total) to five local companies that would in turn pay a percentage or fixed rent for the club. The information regarding the rent or percentage is omitted in the financial report of Sport Club Internacional, but we can estimate based on the figures released by FIFA in regards of fan spending during the games at Beira-Rio in the World Cup that a fan would spend around 7 reais (£1.50) per game, with a total attendance of 840,000 for the 2015 year, catering would have accounted for an income of 5,930,000 reais (£1,245,000).

Estádio Beira-Rio has 70 VIP-boxes (allowing 14 to 18 fans to attend) and 55 Skyboxes (up to 24 fans), where the monthly rent per fan of those spaces varies between R\$760 (£160) and R\$1,375 (£288) depending on the location in the stadium. At the moment, Sport Club Internacional has 50% of those spaces rented out, which account for an income of 14,400,000 reais (£3,000,000) per season (see Internacional, 2015). In respect of advertising in which is still in control of clubs (pitch side boards are owned by the broadcasters), Sport Club Internacional could have generated through naming rights over 4,500,000 reais (£945,000) per season according to the current market prices paid for the naming rights of Arena Fonte Nova (Bahia) and Arena Pernambuco (Recife) that are both under a deal with the Itaipava brewery, and so known as Itaipava Arena Fonte Nova and Itaipava Arena Pernambuco respectively. Nevertheless, the approach taken by Rede Globo (the broadcasting rights owner) and other mainstream media to not mention the naming rights owners in their broadcasting or reports prevents other companies to sponsor stadia. Moreover, another source of income for Estádio Beira-Rio is the rent of its area for events as major music shows. At the moment, the stadium has four distinct areas that can be used for events, ranging from the whole stadium, one side of the stadium (amphitheater), sunset area, and the Arthur Dallegrave events centre (CEAD). It is estimated by the senior managers at BRio that Estádio Beira-Rio can host 2 full stadium events (estimated public of over 50,000) - with a rent of R\$500,000 (£105,000) per event - 8 amphitheater events (estimated public of up to 12,000) - with a rent of R\$150,000 (£31,500) - 52 sunset events - with a rent of R\$15,000 (£3,150) - and 52 CEAD events - with a rent of R\$14,000 (£2,940) per year. At the moment of our analysis in 2015, the stadium has hosted one full size event (Rolling Stones), one amphitheater event (Los Hermanos), and thirty sunset events (bike fairs, beer festivals, and parties). Similarly to the occupation rate for football games, Estádio Beira-Rio occupation in regards of events is below 50% but it still generates over R\$1,800,00 (£378,000) per financial year. Besides events, Estádio Beira-Rio has a



commercial centre with over 44 distinct spaces with an area of 6000 square meters that are rented out to a market price of R\$140,00 (£30) per square meter. At the moment of our analysis, 40% of those spaces are rented out accounting for an extra income of R\$4,000,000 (£840,000). Estádio Beira-Rio has two distinct parkings with over 5,000 spaces that are market at R\$30 (£6.3), and with an occupation rate to its major events (50 in total for football games, full stadium or amphitheater events) estimated by BRio senior managers to be around 60%, then parking generates an extra R\$4,600,000 (£966,000) per financial year. For its tour and museum, Sport Club Internacional receives around 350 and 200 daily visits respectively that are market at R\$10 each (£2.1), generating over R\$1,600,000 (£336,000) per financial year (see Internacional, 2015).

As our analysis showed, Sport Club Internacional and the holding company that manages Estádio Beira-Rio (BRio) can cover the maintenance costs of the stadium just through gate receipts for the football games. At the same time, it does generate surplus in regards to its maintenance costs even without achieving its full commercial potential contradicting the widely perceived image from the international media that stadia in 'Global South' countries are doomed to become white elephants.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we sought to present an analysis of the current condition of South American football, and in particular its business side. As we argued throughout the chapter, to understand the current business condition of South American football we need to direct our gaze not solely to this aspect but especially to the concomitant dimensions as social and political. Moreover, to understand the current condition it is imperative that we take an historical approach in order to demonstrate how the world structures have been shaped or are shaping our focus of analysis. The first argument that we put forward in this chapter was that South American football should not be understood as in opposition to European or world football, in a way that for us the historical interconnections, cultural, economical and social exchanges from the incipience of football in the late 1800s and early 1900s had configured South American and European or world football as sides of the same coin. As such, South American football should not be mechanically understood as Global South because it is the generative force behind the mechanically understood Global North (Europe). In a way, the historical experience of the organisation of South American football in light of CONMEBOL, the

prominence of football in the national imaginary across South America, and its links to how first and second generation migrant communities related to the nation and to the continent can shed light and provide clues to how Europe and world football can and should take initiatives to tackle different issues as racial discrimination and violence. Moreover, what our particular analysis of Brazil reinforced was the absolute necessity to look at the concomitant dimensions to understand the business of football, as not only the political aspect but also the social struggles can have a determinant effect in how matters take place. Besides that, our chapter by looking at the financial and economical sustainability of a particular stadium in Brazil sought to counterbalance the dominant perspective on the world media that 'Global South' experiences in hosting mega-events are doomed to fail and the sportive equipments are doomed to become white elephants. Nevertheless, South American football still faces major 'threats' to its businesses especially by the historical movement of its best players to more dominant leagues in the world that can have potentially a detrimental effect on the occupation rate as seen in our analysis. Furthermore, the wide diffusion of new information and communication technologies and the ability to constantly follow foreign clubs through social media as described by Petersen-Wagner (2017a, 2017b) might become a further point of contention for South American clubs in order to keep their fans for themselves. In a sense, the physical mobility of players might be matched by the metaphysical mobility of fans paving the way for the impoverishment of South American football culture.

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