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Abstract

This dissertation analyses the ways in which football, known as soccer in the United States, has historically served as a diasporic space for the articulation of black politics in the second half of the twentieth century. While modern sport is characterized as an apolitical cultural practice, I am interested in the ways it is constituted by the political regimes of race, gender, and the nation-state. This is what I am calling the "coloniality of sport"—the establishment of sporting hierarchies that privileges whiteness through the subordination and disciplining of blackness. Following the global decolonization struggles from the 1950s-1970s, black athletes engaged in a postcolonial practice I have termed "black teamwork"—diasporic formations of black sporting subjects (players and administrators) that critique, unsettle, and reveal the colonial constitution of modern sport.

Football's significance as a (de)colonial cultural practice underscores how Western nations sought to construct narratives of national strength and cohesion by the assimilation and repression of racial and cultural differences. Black athletes, however, transformed the sport from a tool of colonial discipline to a site of political and cultural contestation. By interrogating a variety of diasporic spaces during a range of post-colonial contexts—the Confederation of African Football (CAF) in the 1960s, Howard University soccer team in the 1970s, Corinthian Democracy Football Club in 1980s Brazil, and the Dutch National football team during the 1990s—I suggest that black subjects have used football as a vehicle to make political claims against colonial practices of exclusion, and create fields of diasporic conviviality that exceed the anti-black sensibilities of the nation-state.

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INTRODUCTION

On March 26, 2019, Montenegro fans racially abused black footballers on the English men's national team. It's a familiar scene. One week after the Montenegro incident, another black player, this time the Italian and Juventus footballer, Moise Keane, was racially abused by Cagliari fans. The list can go on; it happens over and over again. Players have responded, through their goal celebrations, in-game stoppages, and post-match interviews. It persists though. Anti-racist organizations, notably the British based organizations *Kick it Out* and *Football Against Racism in Europe,* have pressured the English Football Association (FA) and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) to toughen their punishments against racist acts, and yet, it continues. Moreover, racism in football is not confined to Europe. Black players in South America are constantly abused by fans and players, such as when an Afro-Brazilian player for the São Paulo football club was abused by an Argentinian player during a Copa Libertadores match in Brazil.[1] In this instance, the offending player was arrested for the night, only after cameras caught the incident. Additionally, although soccer does not receive the same journalistic coverage as American football, basketball, and baseball, instances of racism in U.S. soccer are also frequent. Los Angeles Football Club's (LAFC) Adama Diomande accused a player on Portland Timbers of making racist remarks at him, but after an MLS investigation didn't find any evidence, the claim was dismissed.[2]

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[1] "Soccer-Argentine Player Held in Brazil for Racist Insults," ESPN.com, April 14, 2005, http://www.espn.com/espn/wire/_/section/soccer/id/2036949.
[2] "LAFC's Diomande Says He Was Called Racial Slur," ESPN.com, July 19, 2018, http://www.espn.com/soccer/us-open-cup/story/3569896/lafcs-adama-diomande-says-he-was-called-racial-slur-in-portland-timbers-game.

While the styles and tactics of all these incidents differ, what connects them all is a singularity of anti-blackness. Whether black footballers are in LA, Portland, Argentina, Brazil, England, Montenegro, Italy, Cagliari, or Juventus, they are subject and vulnerable to racial abuse. But why football? Football is the "world's game," the "universal game" that brings people of all different races, classes, genders, and sexualities together to celebrate the beautiful game. As celebrated as it is for its alleged universality, football, as we have seen, has a dark side. Or, more specifically, it is constituted by it's dark side. The forms of anti-blackness manifest beyond the fans and the players, and into the public discourse surrounding black footballers. The media is also complicit in this persistent anti-blackness that seems to haunt football's supposed universal, all-inclusive game. However, football racism is not merely some contraband product smuggled in by fans and reporters that dilutes the purity of the game. Limiting football racism to the fans or the media misses the sinister, racial and colonial constitution of organized professional football itself.

My dissertation, "Black Teamwork: Football, Politics, and Diaspora" explores the colonial constitution of modern sport--what I call the coloniality of sport, and the coloniality of football in particular. The coloniality of sport is the arsenal of ideas and practices in modern sport that establishes racial hierarchies and privileges whiteness and subordinates nonwhiteness, and blackness in particular. Each chapter uncovers the colonial architecture of modern football in different locations throughout the black world and its role as a cultural accomplice to Western colonialism. The organization and popularization of football in Europe began as a way to instil an ethos of physical and moral strength amongst its citizens who could in turn defend the nation

in "the battles of modern life."[3] During their colonial conquests, however, Europeans used the game as a way to discipline, subordinate, and assimilate the colonized populations to the universal--i.e. European--world order. However, football was not a pure, universal cultural activity. It was constructed by the analytics of raciality that positioned Europe at the top of the world hierarchy, the center of universality and world culture, and thereby marked everywhere outside of Europe as territory to be conquered, civilized, assimilated. The racial hierarchy of this world order, and hence, football, was concealed however, by its representations and claims to universality.

The coloniality of sport would not remain concealed. Importantly, this dissertation analyzes how black football administrators and players made football a site of black politics. What I call 'black teamwork' denotes how black footballers revealed and resisted the 'coloniality of sport.' In each chapter, the formation of black teams--loosely organized collectives of black footballers, and administrators--occupied an antagonistic position within and against their respective governing bodies and exposed the latter's construction of racial hierarchy. While black teamwork is a tradition that has been expressed across different sports, I will focus on the significance of football as a site where black athletes generated decolonial strategies that undermined modern sport's colonial project. Indeed, contrary to an absolute form of subordination and assimilation, the different articulations of black teamwork transformed the sport into a site of political and cultural contestation. My attention to the team is to signify and explore the *collective* imperative of black politics and to intervene in the existing literature on sports and black popular culture that largely focuses on individual black athletes. My

[3] Theresa Runstedtler, *Jack Johnson, Rebel Sojourner: Boxing in the Shadow of the Global Color Line* (University of California Press, 2012), 34.

conceptualization of the 'black team' is not limited to particular athletes on a formal team, but rather a collection of diasporic subjects joined by the shared investment in deconstructing national sporting structures. Further, the *work* of the team largely represents the efforts to expose the racial hierarchies embedded in modern football. In short, it is the way in which 'black teams' complicate national affinities in their effort to expose the coloniality of sport.

Black studies scholar Richard Iton suggests that in the post-civil rights era, black politics has found its most salient expression in the realm of popular culture.[4] By tracing the trajectory of black cultural politics, Iton argues that black cultural productions hold the potential to challenge the "scripts of modernity" and thus unsettle its very foundations. Following Iton, this dissertation will seek to engage with black athletes as cultural actors and assess the different ways in which they have forged a black politics. Attention to the cultural politics of black athletes will help answer central questions that frame my dissertation: How is modern football complicit in the maintenance of coloniality and the production and reproduction of race? What techniques did black athletes deploy to critique systems of domination? How did black footballers organize identities and affinities that exceeded and deconstructed national boundaries? How have black athletes identified and disidentified with dominant representations of black masculinity? What is the significance of black sporting collectives rather than individual black athletes? While many sports writers, the broader public, and even some scholars continue to view sports as outside politics, this dissertation will highlight the deeply politicized spaces of modern sport, and football in particular.

[4] Richard Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic: Politics and Popular Culture in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Black teamwork looks and functions differently in different postcolonial geopolitical settings. In the midst of the global decolonization struggles of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, including national liberation struggles, Civil Rights and Black Power Movements and the anti-apartheid struggle, "black teamwork" became a central mode of black political expression. In the "post-colonial" context (in this case, the period following the formal end of colonial rule), Western nation-states reconfigured their social and cultural landscape to accommodate the formerly colonized populations, and second-class citizens, of Africa, the Americas, and Europe. This reconfiguration manifested in different ways, and at different rates, but I am concerned with the nationalistic discourses that surrounded football in these different national contexts. Importantly, black teamwork demonstrated that these nationalist discourses were still constituted by the logics and practices of coloniality. My understanding of postcolonialism and the problems that accompany it are informed by Stuart Hall, David Scott, and Richard Iton who all force us to question the legitimacy of postcolonial discourse that romantically assumes the structures of colonialism have been overcome by anticolonial struggles.[5] In other words, the post in postcolonialism should not be understood as a spatial-temporal indicator (a simple passage from colonialism/Jim Crow to national independence/civil rights) but rather as a critique of the ways in which coloniality sustains modernity. In this context, then, this dissertation is concerned with not merely the relationship between football and the black diaspora, but, more importantly, how black teamwork, as a postcolonial articulation of black politics, uncovers the ways in which

[5] Stuart Hall, "When Was 'the Post-Colonial'? Thinking at the Limit," in *The Postcolonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, ed. Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti (New York: Routledge, 1996), 242–60; David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2004); Richard Iton, "Still Life," *Small Axe* 17, no. 1 (March 2013): 22–39.

coloniality structures the modern political, ideological, and cultural institutions of the national project.

This dissertation analyzes the different geopolitical contexts out of which different formations of black teamwork emerged: the 1960s pan-Africanism movement in Africa, the 1970s Black Power movement in the U.S., the struggles for democratization in Latin America during the 1980s, and European multiculturalism in the 1990s.[6] The 1960s gave rise to an eruption of black athletic protest against the oppressive systems of sport. Accompanying the rise of national independence movements in Africa, was the expansion of international sporting federations and thus the potential of this black athletic protest to destabilize the monopoly of European power and influence. This threat of destabilization was initially felt in the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), when newly independent African nations challenged the hegemony of European football associations by demanding a place at the World Cup. Similar challenges to the colonial hierarchy and operation of national and international sporting federations manifested in the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

The late 1960s and 1970s black power movement in the United States saw the emergence of Muhammad Ali and the possibilities he represented for black athletes to challenge systems of racial domination on their own terms. Most significantly, Ali's refusal of the draft for the Vietnam War foregrounded a black athletic radical tradition that unsettled the popular post-World War II depiction of black athletes as national representatives of racial progress. Ali's political activism also became a rallying point for the formation of the Olympic Project for Human Rights (OPHR) in 1967. Created and led by Harry Edwards, its central aim was to

[6] Each chapter will correspond to each of these postcolonial contexts.

organize a boycott of the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City in an effort to expose the racist underpinnings of American sports, the IOC, and society at large. While they never boycotted the Games, the most memorable OPHR demonstration occurred when Tommie Smith and John Carlos raised their fists in the black power salute during their medal ceremony. This protest was more than a symbolic representation of black resistance—it was an indictment against the inequalities of U.S. society after the apparent success of civil rights legislation. Indeed, their protest was a strategic demonstration in which they wore no shoes and black socks to represent the poverty of black Americans, each black glove represented an arc of unity and black power, and their scarves and beads represented black pride and solidarity with the experiences and history of Africa. In short, the black power salute was one of the first articulations of black teamwork as it exposed the shortcomings of decolonization struggles that had been couched in the language of liberal governmental reform.

The black teamwork of the 1970s was also deeply informed by the cultural aesthetics and notions of masculinity of the Black Power/Black Arts movement. Indeed, Harry Edwards, the founder of OPHR, explained that

> "the revolt of the black athlete arises also from his new awareness of his responsibilities in an increasingly more desperate, violent, and unstable America. He is for the first time reacting in a human and masculine fashion to the disparities between the heady artificial world of newspaper clippings, photographers, and screaming spectators and the real world of degradation, humiliation, and horror that confronts the overwhelming majority of Afro-Americans."[7]

Not only is the black athlete presumed to be a black man, but Edwards only makes room for those black athletes who (re)act in a "masculine fashion," foreclosing other expressions and performativities of black masculinity. This singular way of understanding gender and black masculinity in sport has framed the dominant expression of black teamwork even beyond the

[7] Harry Edwards, *The Revolt of the Black Athlete* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018), xv.

1970s and excludes the experiences of black athletes who challenged the hegemonic representations of black athletes. Accordingly, my dissertation analyses how black male athletes identified or disidentified with these representations, and how it constituted their politics.

The struggles in Latin American countries in this era took the shape of mass movements against political authoritarianism. In Brazil, the military dictatorship that took control in 1964 fell under immense pressure during the late 1970s by labor unions, churches, student organizations, and cultural formations, like the football collective Corinthian Democracy. The 1970s and 1980s represented a time of abertura—opening—in Brazilian politics when Afro-Brazilians radically organized movements for citizenship rights. Nevertheless, these formations still faced strong repression from the Brazilian military government.[8] While the social movements were more episodic than continuous, it is still critical to interrogate how the popular appeal of *cultural* activities, and football in particular, became significant spaces for black political claims.

The postcolonial context that gave rise to black teamwork in Europe in the 1990s was the "multicultural-scape"[9] of European societies. Conceptually speaking, multiculturalism is a set of discourses aimed at absorbing the cultural differences of the "racial other" into the national imaginary. It is an effort to create a narrative of national cohesion through the celebration of cultural differences while refusing to address systemic racial inequalities.[10] This is not to suggest

[8] See Michael G. Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power: The Movimento Negro of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1945-1988* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998); Michael Hanchard, *Party/Politics: Horizons in Black Political Thought* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
[9] Barnor Hesse, ed., *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, "Transruptions"* (London: Zed Books, 2000), 20.
[10] Hesse, *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms*, 2.

that multiculturalism has not been contested. In the mid-1990s, I claim that black teamwork emerged as what Barnor Hesse conceptualizes as a "multicultural transruption:"

> "Transruptions are troubling and unsettling because any acknowledgement of their incidence or significance within a discourse threatens the coherence or validity of that discourse, its concepts or *social practices*. In one sense there is something more here than a singular interruption or an ultimate disruption. Although these qualities are sometimes apparent, a multicultural transruption is constituted by the recurrent exposure of discrepancies in the post-colonial settlement (emphasis added)."[11]

The transruptive potential of black teamwork threatens the democratic appeal of football that multicultural nations deploy to reflect their societies. Importantly, as a postcolonial formation, black teamwork in the 1990's complicated the place of the black European athlete as the "national hero."

The trajectory of multiculturalism in Europe has received considerable attention, particularly in relation to Britain. While this scholarship has produced critical and important theorizations and conceptualizations about the multicultural experience of Black Britain, it is equally important to recognize, as Stuart Hall suggests, that "multiculturalism is not a single doctrine, does not characterize one political strategy, and does not represent an already achieved state of affairs…It describes a variety of political strategies and processes which are everywhere incomplete."[12] For example, Gloria Wekker's attention to the Dutch context reveals that, in recent years, the Netherlands have been a leading example of the "failed dream of multiculturalism."[13] While Wekker and others trace this failed dream through an analysis of

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[11] Hesse, *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms,* 17.
[12] Stuart Hall, "The Multi-Cultural Question," in *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, Transruptions*, ed. Barnor Hesse (London ; New York : New York: Zed Books, 2000), 210.
[13] Gloria Wekker, "Another Dream of a Common Language: Imagining Black Europe," in *Black Europe and the African Diaspora*, ed. Darlene Clark Hine, Trica Danielle Keaton, and Stephen Small (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 285; See also, Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2016).

Dutch political and social developments, I want to suggest that attention to the cultural emergence of black teamwork in the Netherlands during the 1990s helps illuminate the uneven trajectory of multiculturalism and the tensions between nonwhite populations and the nation-state.

Football historians have traced the development of football in specific countries and offer differing analyses of the role of race and racism in constituting the structures of modern sport. Of particular interest, Peter Alegi and Paul Darby have situated the centrality of football on the African continent and its contested relationship with FIFA.[14] Alan Tomlinson and John Sugden provide critical histories of FIFA itself, as the governing body of world football, and the different power struggles that shaped the organization.[15] All of these scholars recognize FIFA's creation in the context of European colonialism, but follows the organization along a linear timeline. Although they acknowledge that inequalities persist in FIFA, the takeaway from this scholarship is that colonialism is something that happened in the past, and FIFA is free of its colonial construction. Studies of the Latin American context argue that the nation-state uses sport, and football in particular, as the cultural measuring stick of their place in modernity.[16] Sports sociologists Les Back, Tim Crabbe, and John Solomos analyze racism in English football and

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[14] Peter Alegi, *African Soccerscapes: How a Continent Changed the World's Game* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010); Peter Alegi, *Laduma!: Soccer, Politics and Society in South Africa* (Scottsville, South Africa: University Of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004); Paul Darby, *Africa, Football and FIFA: Politics, Colonialism and Resistance* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[15] John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, *FIFA and the Contest for World Football: Who Rules the Peoples' Game?* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 1998).

[16] David Goldblatt, *Futebol Nation: The Story of Brazil through Soccer* (New York, NY: Bold Type Books, 2014); Roger Kittleson, *The Country of Football: Soccer and the Making of Modern Brazil* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Dave Zirin, *Brazil's Dance with the Devil: The World Cup, the Olympics, and the Fight for Democracy* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016); For studies on football's relationship to other Latin American countries, see, Andreas Campomar, *Golazo!: The Beautiful Game from the Aztecs to the World Cup: The Complete History of How Soccer Shaped Latin America* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2014); Joshua H. Nadel, *Fútbol!: Why Soccer Matters in Latin America* (University Press of Florida, 2014).

offer a helpful argument that challenges the dominant expression of football racism in Europe as football hooliganism and highlights the institutional forms of racism.[17] Historians of soccer in the U.S. trace its emergence within European immigrant communities and in elite universities but fail to account for how soccer in the U.S. was constituted by whiteness.[18] While football historians have covered the development of the sport in different countries, black footballers are often relegated to a chapter or a footnote.

Generative conversations have emerged in the field of cultural studies around the political significance of black popular culture—and therefore sport—in the postcolonial juncture. Any study of the cultural politics of modern sports must engage C.L.R. James' seminal text, *Beyond a Boundary.* An effective synthesis of personal memoir, cricket history, and the Caribbean's racial politics, James traces the symbiotic relationship between cricket and black politics that centrally informed anticolonial movements in the Caribbean. James suggests that sports is an art form, and places it alongside theatratical, musical, visual and literary arts. The works of Ben Carrington, Richard Iton, Stuart Hall, Hazel Carby, and Sylvia Wynter, amongst others, build from James' early observations and provide a blueprint for my larger claims about the political salience of black popular culture. While neither Hall nor Iton critically engage with sport itself, their theoretical interventions into the field of black popular culture are readily applicable to the sporting terrain. Hall asserts that black popular culture is a contradictory space of "strategic

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[17] Les Back, Tim Crabbe, and John Solomos, *The Changing Face of Football: Racism, Multiculturalism and Identity in the English Game* (Oxford: Bloomsbury Academic, 2001).
[18] David Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football World: The Story of America's Forgotten Game* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008); Andrei S. Markovits and Steven L. Hellerman, *Offside: Soccer and American Exceptionalism* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2001).

contestation" that has enabled the emergence of "other forms of life, other traditions of representation," ultimately displacing the high/low cultural binary.[19]

Iton claims that it is the exclusion of black communities from the *political* mainstream that made black popular culture politically significant. Indeed "the negotiation, representation, and reimagination of black interests through cultural symbols has continued to be a major component in the making of black politics."[20] Iton argues that the aesthetic realm is deeply political and the nexus of black politics and culture has generated radical critiques about notions of black citizenship in the post-civil rights era. Wynter makes a similar claim in her analysis of James' *Beyond a Boundary*, that "the aesthetics is the politics."[21] Indeed, in her treatment of the Trinidadian cricketer, Matthew Bondsman, Wynter demonstrates how black subjects found in popular culture the means to express themselves creatively.[22]

Carby convincingly argues that these politics are gendered in the interests of patriarchal masculinity. Themes of masculinity constituted James' "understanding of the performative politics of cricket *and* his idea of how colonialism should be opposed."[23] Carby's gender analysis of James and his writings on cricket, and therefore sport itself, is critical for imagining open representations of black masculinity. Similarly, Iton and Hall, gesture towards complicating traditional representations of black masculinity. Hall cautions that the same masculinities that black men use to oppose systems of domination are the "very masculinities that are oppressive to women, that claim visibility for their hardness only at the expense of the vulnerability of black

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[19] Stuart Hall, "What Is This 'Black' in Black Popular Culture?," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, ed. Kuan-Hsing Chen and David Morley (Routledge, 2006), 108-109.
[20] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 5.
[21] Sylvia Wynter, "In Quest of Matthew Bondsman: Some Cultural Notes on the Jamesian Journey," *Urgent Tasks*, no. 12 (Summer 1981), 11, http://www.sojournertruth.net/matthewbondsman.html.
[22] Wynter, "In Quest of Matthew Bondsman," 11.
[23] Hazel V. Carby, *Race Men* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 120; See also, Michael A. Messner, *Power at Play: Sports and the Problem of Masculinity* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

women and the feminization of gay black men."[24] Iton warns that "diasporic circuits offer no specific guarantee of a progressive politics" toward challenging the masculinist and heterosexist elements of black cultural politics.[25] Nevertheless, diasporic cultural formations highlight the diversity of black masculinities and sexualities.

Carrington's *Race, Sport and Politics: The Sporting Black Diaspora* is a seminal text for understanding the field of sport as a critical site for black political expression.[26] He attends to the colonial relationship and foundation of modern sport, as well as to the ways in which sport and race are entangled in the experiences, construction, and maintenance of the black diaspora. Additionally, Carrington outlines the historical and contemporary reproduction of race through sport. His concept of "the black athlete" demonstrates the ways in which the coloniality of sport hardens racial identities, while also highlighting the potential forms of freedom that "the black athlete" can practice.

Carrington provides critical insight into the role of modern sport in the "post/colonial" moment, and postcolonial theory's broader application to the field of sports studies. Carrington's suggestion that "modern sport was born in the age of colonialism" has serious implications for the ways in which sport continues to reproduce ideologies and practices of race. According to Carrington, the "post/colonial" condition is marked by, "on the one hand, the surpassing of formal colonial governance, and on the other the continuance of neocolonial relations."[27] Yet, he suggests that as central as colonialism is to the institutionalization of Western sport, studies on race and colonialism have largely ignored the significance of sport and vice versa. Indeed,

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[24] Hall, "What is this Black in Black Popular Culture?," 112.
[25] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 259.
[26] Ben Carrington, *Race, Sport and Politics: The Sporting Black Diaspora* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2010).
[27] Carrington, *Race, Sport and Politics*, 5.

Carrington suggests that "post/colonial theory's over-reliance upon reading culture as text and treating literary texts as the sum of culture itself…means that culture often gets reduced to a purely linguistic frame, rendering forms of *physical* culture problematic, and hence largely ignored."[28] His attention to postcolonial practices, rather than texts, opens up the space for decolonial critiques that envision a means of escape from the dominant athletic representations of blackness. However, Carrington's focus on individual athletes seems to underscore the historical legacy of race and racism as a individual's body narrative, rather than as a structural over-arching operation.

Caribbean scholars offer an important account of sport in the English speaking Caribbean from a colonial to postcolonial cultural practice. Hilary Beckles provides a historical account of cricket's "colonial and anticolonial cultural imperatives" in the West Indies through the style of Viv Richards and West Indian spectator crowds.[29] While Beckles argues that the radical aesthetics of the West Indies cricket team, and Richards in particular, played a critical role in the development of Caribbean nationalism, he suggests that "neither colonialism nor nationalism sought to problematize the principle of patriarchy upon which their cultural values rested."[30] Additionally, Beckles echoes the broader sports studies scholarship by grounding his analysis in the experiences and athletic performances of individual black athletes such as Viv Richards and Brian Lara, rather than taking into account the collective conditions of possibility for their success and politics. Nevertheless, his text contributes to the broader scholarship that traces the

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[28] Carrington, *Race, Sport and Politics*, 48; For another account of the relationship between sport and postcolonialism, see John Bale and Mike Cronin, eds., *Sport and Postcolonialism* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2003).
[29] Hilary Beckles, *The Development of West Indies Cricket, Vol. 1: The Age of Nationalism* (Pluto Press, 1999).
[30] Beckles, *The Development of West Indies Cricket*, 117.

political and cultural significance of sport to black populations in diasporic postcolonial settlements.

My dissertation makes multiple contributions to the fields/disciplines of African American Studies, Critical Sport Studies, and Black Diaspora Studies. Contrary to the obscurity of black footballers in the scholarship, I center black footballers in the history of the development of football. However, this dissertation is more than an account of black people playing soccer. It interrogates the way football reproduced and reproduces race and the logics of anti-blackness, and how black footballers have responded to such structures. Additionally, while most studies have focused on individual black athletes and their struggles against racial and gender injustices, this dissertation will demonstrate the collective formations of black athletes and the ways in which they have revealed and unsettled what I have termed the coloniality of sport. Moreover, this dissertation suggests that colonial and racial practices are constitutive of modern sports rather than merely influencing it from the outside. Indeed, rather than conceptualizing sport as either a liberatory or a restrictive space for black populations, this dissertation understands the structure of sports as *both* a space where colonial legacies and practices dictate the movements of black athletes *and* a space in which black athletes can critique modern systems of power and domination.

I also intervene in Black Diaspora Studies (which marginalizes sports and remains tied to the national). The dominant scholarship continues to treat sports as a stepchild of black popular culture, in spite of its popularity throughout the diaspora. Furthermore, contrary to diasporic accounts that focus solely on black Francophone or black Anglophone cultures, my dissertation spans multiple countries, time periods, and languages. Bringing together sites—continental Africa, the U.S., Brazil, and the Netherlands—that are rarely incorporated together in a single

study of the African Diaspora, I illuminate the singularity of not only global anti-blackness, and but black politics, and black teamwork in particular. Accordingly, I center football as a critical space for Black politics that connects seemingly disarticulated structures of race in different national contexts. My dissertation analyzes how football provides an extraordinarily fertile space to understand the diasporic scope of Blackness. Finally, while scholars and sports journalists have suggested that black athletes in the aftermath of the black power salute have become de-radicalized and more concerned with the capitalistic incentives of professional sports, I claim that, in spite of its mass commodification, black teamwork has remained a salient expression of black cultural politics.

In order to understand the political significance of Black teamwork, my dissertation moves within, against, and beyond the nation-state, investigating the relationship between the coloniality of sport, and the ways Black athletes created diasporic spaces of sociality. Chapter one analyzes how the Confederation of African Football (CAF) challenged the racial hierarchy of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). I begin here because of its context within the broader movements of decolonization. Indeed, black teamwork, I argue, emerged out of this context of decolonization, not merely to expel colonial occupation and dependence, but to dismantle the *logics* of coloniality that constitutes modern sports. The coloniality of sport that framed the structure of FIFA produced a colonial hierarchy that marked newly independent African nations as inferior to the more "superior" talent of European and Latin American countries. I argue that these football administrators made football an early space for the articulation of a decolonial black politics and forced FIFA to reconstitute their order of operations based on the colonial logics of anti-blackness. They accomplished this through three campaigns: their struggle for power on the executive committee, the dismissal of South Africa

from CAF, and later FIFA, and their boycott of the 1966 World Cup Qualifiers. Importantly, these struggles amounted to more than a politics of representation. While increased representation was undoubtedly part of the outcome, CAF aimed to decolonize the coloniality of FIFA. In short, CAF sought to fundamentally transform the order of FIFA and the colonial relationship that defined their positionality within the Federation.

Having established black teamwork as a decolonial, black political formation, particularly on the bureaucratic level, chapter two traces the formation of Black teamwork on the collegiate level. I analyze Howard University's soccer team during the 1970s and their challenge to the NCAA's punitive and disciplinary practices. In 1971, Howard University won the NCAA Division 1 Soccer Championship, becoming the first Historically Black College/University (HBCU) to win a Division 1 title in the sport. Following their win, however, the NCAA launched an investigation into the eligibility of some of its international players and stripped Howard of its championship. Importantly, Howard University's soccer team threatened the racial project to Americanize and whiten collegiate soccer in the 1970s. They did this by their recruitment practices, their commitment to a diasporic identity and sociality, and their imagination of new forms of justice that exceeded the formal architecture of justice. However, Howard's black teamwork was limited and constituted by their adherence to heteronormative expressions of black masculinity.

Chapter three analyzes the ways in which Brazilian football became a space for athletes to articulate their Black politics against the military dictatorship that came to an end in the 1980s. This chapter studies the formation of Corinthians Democracy, a local club team in Sao Paulo, Brazil that challenged the dictatorial culture of the club and the broader structures that subordinated the freedom of Brazilian footballers. Led by three players, Socrates, Wladimir

Rodrigues dos Santos, and Walter Casagrande, Corinthians Democracy led a campaign to fight for the civil and human rights of Brazilians and to abolish the military dictatorship. However, the scholarship on Corinthians Democracy obscures their black politics. In this chapter, I uncover the Black teamwork of Corinthians Democracy and how Black footballers like Wladimir and Zé Maria used the movement to articulate black politics. They both engaged in formal politics that included governmental and labor union politics, and Wladimir's aesthetic politics--part of an aesthetic tradition of black footballers at Corinthians--not only recentered blackness and African culture in Brazilian football, but articulated alternative expressions of black masculinity.

Lastly, chapter four is concerned with the articulation of black teamwork on the Dutch national football team. Through the experiences of black Dutch footballers, I argue that they revealed the colonial constitution of Dutch football, and the discourse of multiculturalism in the Dutch context. Black footballers, particularly Ruud Gullit and Frank Rijkaard, in the 1980s occupied a privileged position in the Dutch national discourse as they helped lead the team to their first ever national championship. Moreover, their status as Dutch heroes, and the posterboys of Dutch multiculturalism, depended upon their complicity in obscuring Dutch racism. However, during the 1990s, a new generation of players, Edgar Davids, Clarence Seedorf, Patrick Kluivert, and Winston Bogarde, identified as a 'kabel'—a Surinamese term for friendship--and shared similar experiences of racial discrimination and segregation. The kabel unsettled dominant notions of Dutch multiculturalism by refusing to subordinate themselves to the racially constituted structures of Dutch football and exposed the team's racial logics and practices.

The epilogue to the dissertation breaks from the other chapters and analyzes black queer women's articulation of black teamwork. Returning to Africa, I highlight a network of black queer footballers throughout South Africa, and their struggles against the heteropatriarchal

constitution of modern sport, and football in particular. I argue that their black teamwork manifested in the creation of their own playing space, particularly in a homophobic environment. Much has been written about the significance of Mandela's appearance at the Rugby World Cup in Johannesburg in 1995 and the first FIFA World Cup on the continent, held in South Africa in 2010, and how these two moments apparently demonstrated the progressive potential of sport in post-apartheid South Africa. However, following the 2010 World Cup, more critical scholarship has problematized the unifying discourse of the rainbow nation, illuminating the realities of racial, gender, and sexual injustices that exist in South Africa. The epilogue uses South African women's football to explore the ways black women created alternative spaces to play football and create a sociality that is unavailable in their townships and homes. Furthermore, it sheds light on the gendered and sexist constitution of modern football and the challenges women face at the hands of their country.

Black teamwork emerged out of the decolonial struggles of the 1950s and 1960s when anti-colonial nationalists sought to reimagine the world racial hierarchy. Part of this critical struggle was football, and throughout the 50s and 60s, a cohort of football administrators committed themselves to the decolonial project by restructuring FIFA and its colonial logics.

CHAPTER 1:

A Team of Nations

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, administrators of African football aimed to decolonize the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, popularly known as FIFA. Through the creation of the Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF), African football administrators sought to reconstitute the world racial hierarchy of football and reconceptualize the relationship between blackness and the nation-state. It was not an easy task, and it is still an incomplete project. CAF emerged and exists in an antagonistic relationship with FIFA—a relationship between the coloniality and decoloniality of football. The early years of this relationship suggests that CAF used football as a site of anticolonial resistance against the logics and practices of FIFA's decisions that excluded and subordinated African nations in the hierarchy of the world body. To be sure, the relationship between FIFA and CAF is constituted by what scholars have termed the coloniality of power—a model of power inscribed by a racial hierarchy of European superiority and non-European subordination. The coloniality of power emerged, yet is distinct from, European colonialism, and became the condition of possibility for other articulations of racialized hierarchy, i.e. sharecropping, Jim Crow, apartheid, mass incarceration, etc. Accordingly, this chapter interrogates the coloniality of FIFA, the *governing* body of world football, and the ways it subordinated the growing contingent of African nations, particularly in the era of African decolonization. However, the coloniality of FIFA did not go unchallenged and I demonstrate the decolonial tactics used by CAF to reconstitute the footballing world order.

Through the 1950s-1970s, Africans gained independence from European colonizers. Ethiopia officially expelled the Italians in 1946, Egypt declared an end to the British military

occupation in 1952, and Sudan became a sovereign nation in 1956. However, the era of sub-Saharan African decolonization began with Ghana's independence in 1957 from Britain. Anticolonial nationalists like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria generated a mixture of nationalist and Pan-Africanist sentiment in their respective countries to dispel European colonialism. Following Adom Getachew's conceptualization of decolonization, I understand this moment of African decolonization as a project of worldmaking.[1] Getachew insists that the dominant idea of decolonization, as the appropriation of the liberal language of self-determination by anticolonial nationalists, is not accurate. Rather than mimicking and anticipating the institutional forms of the nation-state, anticolonial nationalists embarked on a project of decolonization that "required a combination of nation-building and worldmaking…that could secure the conditions of nondomination," and resist global racial hierarchy.[2] Getachew's conceptualization of decolonization as worldmaking corresponds with Richard Iton's conceptualization of diaspora and his critique of the nation-state. While he suggests that "it might be argued the nation itself, *as a modern emergence*, cannot sustain nonwhite aspirations for emancipation,"[3] he leaves conceptual room for Getachew to characterize the nation-building projects of anticolonial nationalists as a *decolonial emergence.* In this context, and created the same year of Ghana's independence, I argue that CAF emerged as a diasporic formation that decolonized FIFA's racial hierarchy and demanded an international order constituted by nondomination.

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[1] Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), 14-36.
[2] Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire*, 15.
[3] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic*, 196.

Football historians have traditionally argued that African nations used football as a tool for their anticolonial nationalistic campaigns, of which making FIFA more inclusive was a central goal. According to these scholars, FIFA exists on a continuum of "oligarchic and corporate patronage" and democratic universalism, whereby Latin American and African nations used football as an anticolonial tool of liberation and nation-building to challenge the hegemony of European countries.[4] Indeed, historians have demonstrated the ways European colonists disseminated the game to the rest of the world as a "civilizing mission," and the subsequent ways colonized societies transformed the game for their own nationalist interests. Accordingly, FIFA is celebrated for its international expansion particularly in the post-WWII era, albeit through bitter struggles that exposed Europe's resistance to reform. In this formulation, FIFA is positioned as a progressive institution that allowed "Third World" nations to join the "family" (as members of FIFA's hierarchy came to describe the organization). The *expansion* and *representational reform* of FIFA is celebrated as evidence of their democracy and egalitarian principles that conquered their prior exclusionary practices. In short, colonialism is conceptualized only through a temporal, rather than substantive framework. However, football historian Paul Darby provides a nuanced account of the political and economic legacies of European colonialism on African football. He offers a convincing argument that suggests the relationship between CAF and FIFA rests on colonial, and later neocolonial processes of "imperialism, the dependency paradigm and world system theory."[5] While I agree with Darby's

[4] John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, "Power and Resistance in the Governance of World Football: Theorizing FIFA's Transnational Impact," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 22, no. 3 (August 1, 1998): 299–316, https://doi.org/10.1177/019372398022003005; Paul Darby, "Africa's Place in FIFA's Global Order: A Theoretical Frame," *Soccer & Society* 1, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 36-61, https://doi.org/10.1080/14660970008721264.
[5] Darby, "Africa's Place in FIFA," 38.

theorizations, I want to contribute to the debate by highlighting the role that the coloniality of sport plays in the relationship between CAF and FIFA. More specifically, while Darby recognizes the economic and political legacies of European colonialism in world football, I am concerned with the racial legacy of coloniality and the decolonial option adopted by CAF.

The decolonial formation of CAF represented an early articulation of black teamwork in the post-colonial era. Black teamwork's distinctive quality is its decoloniality against antiblack logics and practices that were sanctioned by FIFA and other governing bodies of sport. This chapter is a history of black teamwork on the administrative level that charts the actions and decisions made by African footballing officials, rather than the players or coaches. The administrators that I highlight in this chapter were not simply sport enthusiasts and organizers, but must be included in the milieu of anticolonial nationalists that challenged colonial systems of domination and subordination. By centering sports and football in the history of African and Caribbean decolonization, I uncover a diasporic formation that reconstituted the relationship between the nation-state and nonwhite societies. Importantly, I argue that CAF's black teamwork sought to restructure the world racial hierarchy and resist the coloniality of sport's racial, economic, and political subordination. Indeed, by the time African football administrators created CAF, they had already established a keen understanding of the relationship between football, decoloniality, and the nation-state through years of anticolonial campaign in their respective countries.

I begin by charting the histories of the South African Soccer Federation (SASF), Abdel Halim Mohamed of Sudan, Ghana's Ohene Djan, and Ethiopia's Ydnekatchew Tessema, as they were all major players in the decolonial efforts against FIFA. The SASF consistently challenged the legitimacy of the apartheid South African Football Association (SAFA) which was the

recognized governing body of South African football according to FIFA. SASF received unwavering support from members of CAF, including Mohamed, Djan, and Tessema who simultaneously worked to nationalize football as an anticolonial force before and after European colonial rule. Abdel Halim Mohamed, in particular, is significant because he was one of the members that argued to restructure the world body of football insofar as it reflected a world free of colonial domination. He was also an initial founder of CAF in 1957, along with Tessema, although the latter and Djan adopted more central roles in the early 1960s. Once Mohamed and other African delegates secured a place on the executive committee of FIFA, and subsequently created CAF, their first action was to support the cause of SASF by expelling SAFA from the African Cup of Nations, and later from the Confederation. Djan and Tessema led the movement to expel apartheid South Africa from FIFA in 1961, and again, in 1964. Concurrently, CAF boycotted the 1966 World Cup qualifier tournament as another articulation of black teamwork that sought to restructure the hierarchy of football, and racial hierarchy itself.

Football and Anticolonialism in Africa

South Africa Soccer Federation

According to football historian Peter Alegi, the earliest documentation of football on the continent can be traced back to South Africa, whose position as a leader in African football was undoubtedly connected to its history as a settler colony.[6] British soldiers, who fought in wars against the Zulu nation and Dutch Boers in the nineteenth century, played games amongst each other and, following an influx of Britons in the late nineteenth century, led to the formation of different governing bodies of the sport. Accordingly, the first national football association on the continent was in South Africa with the creation of the all-white South African Football

[6] Alegi, *Laduma!,* 15.

Association (SAFA) in 1892. Moreover, SAFA was the first African member to join the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) in 1910. Alegi notes, however, that football's appeal among white South Africans was temporary, and was replaced by the rising popularity of rugby.[7]

Football grabbed the attention of working-class black South Africans following the migration of African laborers to the cities. The first African teams were created by the mission-educated, elite class that had access to leisure time and space. However, between the end of the Second Boer War in 1902 and the beginning of World War I in 1914, football's popularity increased among the masses of working-class black communities in South African cities. For example, as African male migrants moved to Durban to find wage-earning jobs, they created their own clubs, like the Durban Wanderers, to identify with their local conditions or rural hometowns and districts. Alegi notes that while the Wanderers probably got their name from the English club Wolverhampton Wanderers, he suggests that it also signaled the fact that Durban became a central location through which Africans travelled to find work. By the beginning of WWI, football in "Durban was too popular to remain a loosely organized affair," and in 1916, a group of African clerical employees, including T.H.D. Ngcobo, as well as white missionaries from the American Board Mission, created the Durban and District Native Football Association (DDNFA).[8]

Black South Africans used football to assert a growing African nationalism that resented white domination and the early processes of apartheid. Football officials contributed to the growing resistance to colonial rule by changing their name from the Durban and District Native

[7] Alegi, *Laduma!,* 16-17.
[8] Alegi, *Laduma!,* 22-25.

Football Association to the Durban and District African Football Association (DDAFA).[9] Football's popularity amongst black South Africans grew exponentially after the DDAFA joined with the Transvaal African Football Association (TAFA) in 1932 and founded the South Africa African Football Association (SAAFA). Regional football associations from the Orange Free State and Cape colony joined in 1934 and 1936 respectively. Contrary to the all-white South African Football Association (SAFA), SAAFA included Africans of different ethnic backgrounds and helped capture the excitement and popularity of South African football fans.[10] In April 1951, SAAFA, the South African Coloured Football Association and the South African Indian Football Association, created the South African Soccer Federation (SASF) with Dan Twalo—a former member of the African National Congress' Youth League—elected as their president. Contrary to the all-white SAFA, SASF was the largest soccer organization in South Africa, and brought together more than 46,000 African, Coloured and Indian footballers under one governing body that was opposed to apartheid.[11] As we will see later, SASF never recognized SAFA as a legitimate representative of the South African nation, and consistently mobilized support to expel SAFA from FIFA.

Ghana

Elsewhere on the continent, many football administrators also held official positions in the postcolonial governments of their respective nations. The intersection between football, and sports in general, with politics was a distinct feature of African and Caribbean postcolonial states that upset the ethical norms of FIFA. Nowhere was this more pronounced than in Ghana, where Ohene Djan emerged as a close ally to Kwame Nkrumah and helped promote Nkrumah's vision

[9] Alegi, *Laduma!,* 31.
[10] Alegi, *Laduma!,* 44.
[11] Alegi, *Laduma!*, 107.

of a unified Africa through the development and nationalization of football. Djan was a football administrator and chairman of the Ghana Amateur Football Association from 1957-1960 after Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first president, realized that football generated mass support for his anticolonial and pan-African politics.[12] Similar to countries like Sudan, Algeria, Nigeria, and the anti-apartheid segment of South African society, Nkrumah's vision of a nation was intimately tied to Djan's success in organizing football on a domestic level, while pursuing anticolonial interests abroad.[13] Accordingly, Nkrumah appointed Djan as the Executive Director of Ghana's Central Organization of Sports (COS) from 1960-1966 "to spearhead the development of sports in Ghana," and simultaneously served as the General Secretary of the Ghana Football Association during the same time period.[14] He also was the President of Ghana's National Olympics Committee during the preparation for the 1964 Summer Olympics. Moreover, Djan was appointed to FIFA's Executive Committee in 1964 and became an important voice for the international struggle against apartheid.

Djan established himself as an avid anti-apartheid activist on the international level while promoting the development of domestic sports. Djan was not only a leading voice for the expulsion of South Africa from FIFA, as we will see later, but also generated mounting support against the apartheid regime in other international venues. For example, at the opening of the "seventh British Empire and Commonwealth Games" in November of 1962, Djan represented the Ghanaian team and "minutes after the Games were formally opened, the first dispute

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[12] Yaw Larson, *Professionalism in Ghana Football: The Myth, Perception and Reality* (Accra, Ghana: BS Africa Publications Ltd, 2016), 24.
[13] For more information on Nkrumah's politicization of football as a tool for independence, see Paul Darby, "'Let us Rally Around the Flag': Football, Nation-Building, and Pan-Africanism in Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana," *The Journal of African History* 54, no. 02 (July 2013): 221–46, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021853713000236.
[14] Larson, *Professionalism in Ghana Football,* 24.

started."[15] Djan protested the use of Nat Hershmann, a South African boxing referee. At the time of the Games, South Africa had left the Commonwealth because of pressure from other Commonwealth countries to abandon their apartheid policy. Djan continued this protest at the Games and explained that "they don't allow black people to compete in their country, and now they are out of the Commonwealth, they should be right out."[16] Similarly, at a meeting of the International Olympic Committee in 1963, Djan "demanded South Africa's exclusion from Olympic sport" because of its apartheid policies.[17] On the domestic level, Djan was instrumental in the development of Ghanaian sport and made solidaristic gestures toward other athletes in the African diaspora, particularly African American athletes. When Wilma Rudolph went on a State Department-sanctioned African goodwill tour in 1963—and offered "to return to help train Ghana's track competitors"—Djan accompanied her to the West Africa Athletic track meet in Ibadan, Nigeria before returning to the U.S.[18] He was also part of the welcome party that greeted Muhammad Ali's arrival to the country in 1964. Djan's reputation was thus solidified as a leading administrator in sport and the national government, and demonstrated a desire for diasporic solidarity but more importantly an international order free of colonial domination.

Ethiopia

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[15] "50,000 Attend Ceremonies Opening Empire Games in Australia," *New York Times,* November 23, 1962, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/115639478?accountid=12861.

[16] "50,000 Attend Ceremonies," *New York Times,* November 23, 1962.
[17] "Ghana Demand Exclusion of South Africa," *The Times of India,* October 17, 1963, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/347267908?accountid=12861.
[18] "Wilma would help train Ghana track prospects," *Afro-American,* May 18, 1963, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/532122428?accountid=12861.

Ydnekatchew Tessema, from Ethiopia, is another football administrator who played a central role in the maturation of CAF's anti-apartheid politics. Born in Jimma, Ethiopia in 1921, he started playing for an Addis Ababa club, St. George, at the age of fourteen. That same year, while he experienced the sudden Italian occupation, he created the St. George's Football Club and continued to play for St. George for 23 years, "hanging up his boots at the age of 37."[19] During his tenure as a footballer, Tessema played for his country fifteen times, and "went on to coach the Ethiopian national team."[20] He also worked as a civil servant, and later created the Ethiopian Sports Office in 1943, and the Ethiopian Football Association in 1948. Tessema "held increasingly senior appointments under both Emperor Haile Selassie and the Dergue, finishing with the rank of Commissioner of Sports from 1976 until his retirement in 1981."[21] In 1952, Tessema served as the General Secretary for the Ethiopian Football Association, and later, Tessema served as the President of CAF from 1972 until he died in 1987.[22]

Up until Tessema's death in 1987, he committed himself to the development of African football and the decolonial project of CAF. Months before he died, Tessema penned the forward to a publication celebrating the 30th anniversary of CAF in which he reinforced his desire for a unified Africa, and a reconstituted world body free of political and economic domination by the European members. Tessema praised the fact that in 1987, they had "three representatives in the FIFA Executive Committee, compared with only one in 1957. We also have several members in FIFA's standing committees."[23] However, Tessema understood that token representation in the

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[19] "Interview: Tadele Ydnekatchew," *African Soccer*, no. 27 (October 1997): 16; Alegi, *African Soccerscapes*, 71.
[20] "Interview: Tadele Ydnekatchew," *African Soccer*, 16.
[21] "Interview: Tadele Ydnekatchew," *African Soccer*, 16.
[22] Tadele Ydnekatchew (son), email interview with author, December 13, 2018.
[23] Ydnekatchew Tessema, "Forward," *CAFoot: CAF Official Magazine Special Edition*, (1987): 8.

world body was "not enough." He explained that Europeans and South Americans still maintained a majority on the executive committee and the most important standing committees which made vital decisions that ultimately contributed to the underdevelopment of football in Africa. He declared that "we have to fight this injustice by all means."[24] He exposed the racial logics of "several Europeans" in the FIFA Congress and argued that "the philosophy of Hitler, which stated that an inferior race must be guided by a superior race, still stands for these people."[25] When CAF proposed any changes to the statutes that privileged the European confederation, they were "attacked by racist and backward individuals, such as Mr. Brian Clough, Manager of the English club, Nothingham Forest." For example, when CAF made an amendment to reduce Great Britain from having four individual memberships, to having one, Clough "advised us not to meddle in the affairs of world football, and to confine ourselves to throwing spears in the jungle and to devour each other, otherwise England will teach us a lesson, by sending some of its fleet."[26] Tessema believed that "in the interest of FIFA, certain zones should change their mentalities and should learn to view Africa with the eyes of the 20th century." He strongly advocated for the unification of Africa and its "total emancipation, either political, economical, social, or cultural."[27] As we will see later, Tessema spent his entire career in CAF resisting the coloniality of FIFA, and struggled for a reconstitution of the world body's racial hierarchy.

Sudan

[24] Tessema, "Forward," *CAFoot,* 8.
[25] Tessema, "Forward," *CAFoot,* 10.
[26] Tessema, "Forward," *CAFoot,* 10.
[27] Tessema, "Forward," *CAFoot,* 10.

In Sudan, the British created universities such as Gordon Memorial College (GC) in 1902 as a way to Westernize and discipline a Sudanese class that would serve minor roles in the government such as clerks, technicians, and artisans. GC was the flagship institution and specifically aimed to pacify pre-colonial and indigenous cultures, ideologies, and practices. In order to do this, GC organized "cultural nights" where students engaged with English and Arabic literature, and it became a central space for the development of Sudanese football.[28] While British authorities intended for Gordon College to pacify its students and encourage them to subscribe to the colonial system, the latter group instead adopted anticolonial ideologies, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s. The imprisonment of Ali Abd Al-Latif, a political prisoner from GC's Military School, represented the beginning of a larger anticolonial movement that was later spearheaded by the Graduates' General Congress established in 1938.[29]

One of the leaders of the Congress was Abdel Halim Mohamed. Mohamed entered Gordon College's School of Science in 1924—the same year as the *White Flag League's* rebellion and the subsequent arrest of Latif—and upon graduation, continued his education at GC's Kitchener School of Medicine where he qualified as a medical doctor in 1933.[30] In the1930s, Abdel Halim Mohamed and other GC alumni created "small study circles, and literary societies, whose members met in private houses to avoid the observation of the British administration." One of these literary societies, Al-Fajr, translates to "The Dawn," and represents the dawn of Sudanese independence. The Al-Fajr literary society included writers like Abdel Halim Mohamed and Arafat Mohamed Abdalla, founder of the Dawn magazine, which published

[28] Nowar Gaffer, "The Graduates` National Movement in Sudan, 1918-1944," *SEJARAH* 20, no. 20 (December 20, 2012): 126, https://doi.org/10.22452/sejarah.vol20no20.6.
[29] Gaffer, "The Graduates' National Movement in Sudan," 134.
[30] Ahmed Hassab ElRasoul, "Obituary: A Tribute to Dr. Abdel Halim Mohamed Abdel Halim, a Great Man," *Sudan Medical Journal* 45, no. 2 (August 2009): 12, http://www.smj.eg.net/journals/pdf/151.pdf.

political and literary topics "which were of recognizable impact in spreading modern Sudanese nationalism."[31] These secret political gatherings and corresponding literature resulted in the creation of the Graduates' General Congress in 1938. In 1942, Mohamed and the Graduates' General Congress, of which Ismail al-Azhari—Sudan's first prime minister—served as the general secretary, drafted the Memorandum of Independence, marking the initial declaration for self-determination and independence from Britain.[32]

Scholars hail the Congress as the harbingers of Sudanese anticolonialism. Importantly, football became a critical tool to organize themselves, and the masses of Sudan, around the idea of independence. Historian Heather Sharkey argues that "among students…sports forged an esprit de corps that unified early nationalists as a team against the British."[33] According to a GC graduate and leading Sudanese anticolonial nationalist, Khidir Hamad, "sport was not an end in itself. [For us], all activities were geared towards either national or political ends."[34] According to Mohamed,

> "we had our social clubs and we were talking about independence. The British had accused us of being *afendeya* (elitist and bourgeois)—that we were not with the masses of the people, that we do not represent them. As a counter to this we started football clubs as social clubs where we would talk the principles of civics to the masses—that this is their country and that they have the right to independence. This helped to show that while it was we, the intelligentsia, who were the architects of the independence movement, we were backed by the people."[35]

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[31] Gaffer, "The Graduates' National Movement in Sudan," 131.
[32] Christopher Tounsel, "Before the Bright Star: Football in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 12, no. 4 (October 2, 2018): 740, https://doi.org/10.1080/17531055.2018.1514851.
[33] Heather J. Sharkey, *Living with Colonialism: Nationalism and Culture in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 45.
[34] As quoted in Khalid alMubarak Mustafa, "Sport and Nationalism in Sudan," *Sudan Studies*, no. 27 (June: 2001): 21, http://www.sssuk.org/drupalSite/sites/default/files/sudanStudies/SS27.pdf.
[35] As quoted in, Sugden and Tomlinson, *FIFA and the Contest for World Football*, 129.

Furthermore, Mohamed served as the SFA's first president in 1953, represented Africa at the 1954 FIFA Congress, and was a founding member of CAF. As we will see, Mohamed, Tessema, Djan, and the SASF all played major roles in the decolonization of FIFA.

The Struggle for Power in FIFA's Executive Committee

At the time of FIFA's fiftieth anniversary in 1954, they had experienced a number of changes. Created in 1904 by seven European countries, Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland, FIFA emerged in the context of western modernity as an institutionalizing organization that governed football on the global scale. The founding of FIFA was equally constituted by the structures of race, European colonialism, and imperialism. Hence, FIFA was predominantly European, South American, and white for its fifty years of existence. During the presidency of Jules Rimet, 1921-1954, FIFA's membership increased from 53-85 countries, and, as a result, they needed to reorganize their statutes and regulations to accommodate these changes.[36] A heated debate ensued at the 1953 Extraordinary FIFA Congress that pitted proponents for an African and Asian spot on the executive committee against those who thought otherwise. Out of these debates emerged a cohort of African football administrators who demanded a reconstitution of FIFA's governing structure. This campaign was the first step in the decolonization of FIFA.

At the 1950 FIFA Congress in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, members discussed ideas that would alleviate the problem of FIFA's expansion. Argentina and England, in particular, wanted to decentralize FIFA's power and establish continental confederations made up of individual national FA's. This ran contrary to Rimet's initial vision of FIFA as a unified "family." Rimet believed "that for the past 50 years the Statutes had allowed a harmonious and successful

[36] Darby, *Africa, Football and FIFA*, 43.

development of International football."[37] Rimet's adherence to the familial structure of FIFA reflected the patronizing and hierarchical rhetoric of FIFA's European members. If Rimet thought FIFA was a family, its membership positioned western and northern European nations as the parents, South America as the teenagers, and Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean as the newborn babies, or even unborn. As a result of these discussions at the 1950 Congress, the executive committee decided to create a Commission of Study to interrogate two potential reforms to FIFA's organization: the reconstitution of FIFA's executive committee and the formalization of continental confederations.[38]

The Commission of Study foreshadowed the mounting resistance against African representation in FIFA. Stanley Rous, the secretary of the English FA and one of the first advocates of FIFA's decentralization, was the first advisor of the Commission of Study. They reported their findings to the 1952 FIFA Congress in Helsinki and concluded that a reconstitution of the executive committee would only be necessary "as more countries became independent and…left the National Association to which they previously belonged." Prior to national independence, colonies and territories were part of the football associations of the colonizing country and therefore had no independence to make their own decisions in FIFA. Additionally, despite his initial enthusiasm for continental confederations, Rous and the committee, largely constituted by European countries, proposed that any "changes should be kept to a minimum and that no reference should be made to the possible formation of Confederations."[39] Dissatisfied about the inaction regarding the reconstitution of the executive committee, a number of South

[37] FIFA, *Minutes of the 2nd Extraordinary Congress*, November 14-15, 1953, Paris, France, FIFA Library and Archives, Zurich, Switzerland (hereafter FIFA Archives).
[38] Darby, *Africa, Football and FIFA*, 32.
[39] As quoted in Darby, *Africa, Football and FIFA*, 32.

American nations, who already formed a continental confederation in 1916, demanded an Extraordinary Congress to be held in November of 1953 in Paris.[40]

In France, the South American Football Confederation (CONMEBOL) emerged as a political bloc that sought to decenter European hegemony in the organization.[41] Dissatisfied with the Commission of Study's initial proposals, CONMEBOL and other national FA's sent their own draft of the statutes and regulations to the Commission and the rest of FIFA. The main statutes under consideration illuminated the colonial logics and constitution of FIFA. For example, the first statute the Congress discussed was the issue of membership. According to Article 1, "the Associations in a Colony or in a Dominion may, with the consent of the National Association of their mother country, remain a group subordinated to it, or may become affiliated direct to the Federation. The same principles apply to countries under the protectorate of another country."[42] To the French delegates, this left too much of a possibility for colonies to express the same power and rights as the colonizer, thus representing the possibility of self-determination. The French delegation wanted to alter the language of the statute so that "only the Association of a Sovereign Country shall be affiliated." A dissident voice emerged from the Soviet Union as a supporter of anticolonialism. The USSR objected to the French delegation, and to the Commission of Study, and argued that "it is fundamental justice to allow the Association of each country, sovereign or not, to become a part of the Federation. This Federation has not the right to forbid the affiliation of Colonies or Dominions." The Soviets proposed that the new statute read,

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[40] This was only FIFA's second Extraordinary Congress, the first of which was held in 1908. FIFA has held a total of eight Extraordinary Congresses. Up until 1998, the Congress was a biannual meeting and then later became an annual occurrence.

[41] CONMEBOL's status as a confederation for over forty years enabled them to occupy a position of power and influence in FIFA.

[42] FIFA, *Minutes of the 2nd Extraordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.

> "the Association of each country may affiliate to the Federation. Associations of Colonial or dependent countries may become directly affiliated to the Federation with the same rights as the Associations of all the other countries. The same principles apply to countries which are under the protectorate of another country."[43]

After a final vote, however, the Congress voted 27-12, with five abstentions, to maintain the status quo, thereby denying colonies the right to directly affiliate with FIFA without their colonizer's consent.

Another statute that reflected the coloniality of FIFA was Article 17, which outlined the constitution of FIFA's executive committee, the main decision-making body of FIFA. Article 17 became the central point of contention at the Congress and, for the first time, exposed the tensions between the European powers and an emerging decolonial consciousness. While the Commission of Study's first draft recommended no changes to the makeup of the executive committee, at the Extraordinary Congress, Argentina led the discussion by proposing that both Africa and Asia should receive a place on the executive committee. The Belgian delegation, who spoke on behalf of "a group of European Associations," thought that the issue to grant Africa and Asia a spot on the committee "was not yet ripe." The Belgian delegation suggested that Congress "adhere to the status quo and to postpone the discussion…until another Congress of the FIFA." A Swiss member of the executive committee, Ernst Thommen shared the views of the Belgian delegation and thought the proposed text of Article 17 was "a bit premature." The Italian delegation had a number of "uncertainties" about the proposal, and claimed that it displayed a "certain lack of clear-sightedness." They felt there was a "lack of preparation" in the proposal and even recommended postponing the discussion of Article 17 entirely until the next Congress, "within 7 or 8 months' time." However, the new chairman of the Commission of Study, the

[43] FIFA, *Minutes of the 2nd Extraordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.

Belgian Rodolphe Seeldrayers, felt the pressure from some of the members of Congress and feared that if no reform were made, then "disillusion and disappointment would be great."[44]

The Congress proposed expanding the executive committee to one president, five vice presidents, and nine members, but disagreed over who should be allowed to join. It appears that CONMEBOL originally advocated for one vice president from the four British football Associations (England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland), one vice president from the Soviet Association, one vice president from the South American Association, and two vice presidents from the European Associations (excluding Great Britain and the Soviet Union). The nine Members were to be made up of one member each from the South American, Central American and North American Associations, four members from the European Associations, and "two seats to the future organization of the two Continents Africa and Asia." However, in the course of a discussion, the delegations of Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, and Switzerland, arrived at a compromise at the expense of Africa and Asia. They judged that "for the moment, the two Members should be freely elected by the Congress" until Africa and Asia had their own continental confederation to directly elect their member to the executive committee. In other words, rather than reserve the last two spots on the executive committee for Africa and Asia, the South American-European compromise aimed to fill those spots by a general vote of the Congress. Indeed, the decision to continue to exclude Africa and Asia reflected the patronizing and colonial logics that constituted FIFA. But the final decision had yet to be made.

Before the Congress voted on Article 17, a couple of European countries vehemently disapproved the exclusion of Africa and Asia. In many ways, the 1953 Extraordinary Congress foreshadowed the alliances between Communist countries and many national liberation struggles

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[44] FIFA, *Minutes of the 2nd Extraordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.

during the Cold War. Along with the Soviet Union's recommendation to allow colonies to directly affiliate with FIFA, Yugoslavia argued that "the basis of any organization should be the equality of rights and obligations for all the Members." To support his claim, the Yugoslav representative, Ratko Pleic, cited a study by a law professor from Limoges that concluded that "the Associations of the FIFA did not enjoy the same rights." In an effort to correct this injustice, Pleic suggested that "a democratic solution would be to abolish all privileges and to have all Members of the Executive Committee elected direct by Congress."[45] This was a rather radical claim because by 1953 FIFA had experienced a growing representational parity between the hegemonic northern European countries and the rest of the world. To abolish the unequal distribution of membership spots on the executive committee, which privileged Europe with essentially six of the nine members, was to threaten the European hegemony of FIFA and reflect the rising population of the Third World in FIFA. Nevertheless, the proposal was summarily abandoned.

After further discussion, the European and South American Associations seemed to succumb to the mounting pressure from the African and Asian Associations. Ernst Thommen, the Swiss delegate who originally argued that the issue of African and Asian representation on the executive committee was premature, "found himself, involuntarily, again on the speaker's rostrum." He explained that after further deliberation with the European Associations, "they agreed that Africa and Asia should have each a place on the Executive Committee." Thommen ridiculed the Commission of Study's second proposal advocating two reserved spots on the executive committee for Africa and Asia because "if they had taken into account [the need for African and Asian representation], it had ignored the equal fact that the Associations of these two

[45] FIFA, *Minutes of the 2nd Extraordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.

Continents had not yet an organization which would ensure the direct nomination of their representatives." This is rather ironic, considering that European Associations had yet to create their own confederation, in large part, due to the tensions following World War II. Thommen continued that while Africa and Asia would have a member on the executive committee, until they formed a confederation, their members would be elected by the Congress based upon recommendations submitted by the two continents. The proposal by Thommen seemed to have appeased most of the members of Congress. The final arguments were reserved for the national associations who were the center of this entire concern, but had yet been given the opportunity to speak.

The only representatives from Africa were Badr el Din and Abdelaziz Abdallah Salem, both from Egypt. Badr el Din had been an Egyptian referee in the 1936 Berlin Olympics,[46] while Salem was an engineer and former Minister of Agriculture in 1952.[47] In the final round of discussions about Article 17, Salem stood up and reflected upon the proceedings. He explained that when the African associations received the revised draft of the statutes and regulations, they "saw that progress had been made in admitting to the Executive Committee the representation of the National Associations from the Continents of Africa and Asia."[48] In fact, he thought that the Extraordinary Congress would be about "matters of secondary importance," and was subsequently disappointed to learn that "a compromise between the Associations of Europe and South America should result to the detriment of those of Africa and Asia." Salem was relieved

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[46] FIFA.com, "Olympic Football Tournament Berlin 1936 - Poland 3:0 (2:0) Hungary - Overview," FIFA.com, accessed November 18, 2018, http://www.fifa.com/tournaments/archive/mensolympic/berlin1936/matches/round=197043/match=32340/index.html.

[47] "Former Minister," accessed November 18, 2018, http://www.arc.sci.eg/ARCPreMinisters.aspx?TabId=0&NavId=1&lang=en.

[48] FIFA, *Minutes of the 2nd Extraordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.

that Thommen's final proposal "was in tune with our demands" and they accepted it. He concluded his speech by reminding FIFA that its statutes "should be adapted to the world situation and safeguard the interests of all its Members."[49] The Asian representatives had the final word. Luong-van-Hoa from Vietnam agreed with Salem and advocated for two seats for Africa and Asia. He assured the Congress that if "Asia did not have the organization as stated in Art. 17 of the Statutes, they would shortly create it." The representative from Laos agreed. Finally, the president of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and later manager of the Indian national football team, K. Ziauddin, was satisfied with Thommen's final proposal, but objected to the claim "that these two Continents had not got an organization to appoint the two Members for the Executive Committee." Speaking on behalf of the Asian associations, Ziauddin stressed that regardless if they had a confederation, "the size of the Continent and the number of Asian Associations justified representation on the Executive Committee."[50]

The time had come to vote on the final draft of Article 17, which stated that the executive committee was to consist of 1 president, 5 vice presidents, and 9 members. 1 vice president was reserved for the four British associations, 1 vice president from the Soviet Union, 1 vice president from South America, and 2 vice presidents from Europe. The membership included 1 member each from North, Central, and South America, four members from Europe, 1 member from Africa, and 1 member from Asia. The Congress voted affirmatively, 39-6, with one abstention (Yugoslavia).

Following the vote, FIFA president, Jules Rimet, reflected on the progress made by the Congress and demonstrated his caution about the direction of the organization. He did not

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[49] FIFA, *Minutes of the 2nd Extraordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.
[50] FIFA, *Minutes of the 2nd Extraordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.

believe FIFA should "represent regional and specific interests, but has to view the universality of the work." Nevertheless, he praised the Congress for making concessions with each other and encouraged those who would serve on the executive committee to "bring to it a sentiment of unity, harmony, and fairness."[51]

It is important to note that the early 1950's was a critical moment in the history of FIFA that revealed the ambivalent relationship between the South American associations and the Africans and Asians struggling for representation in FIFA. The South American associations, although historically superior on the field of play, felt undermined in the administration and organization of FIFA. At the 1952 Ordinary Congress in Helsinki, Finland, the South American delegation was at odds with the European associations over a number of issues. On the one hand, during the discussion about the constitution of the Commission of Study (the same commission that initially voted to not make any changes to FIFA's statutes and regulations) the Uruguayan representative, Celestino Mibelli, proposed that one representative from "Arabic, Asiatic and African Associations be appointed to the Commission."[52] According to football historian Paul Darby, this concerned the South American delegation felt that their opinions were not respected nor considered amongst the FIFA hierarchy. However, South America's ambivalence was revealed at the 1953 Extraordinary Congress. While Argentina's initial support for African and Asian representation on the executive committee represented a gesture of solidarity, their compromise with the European associations signified their "desire to maintain their privileged position in the world game."[53]

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[51] FIFA, *Minutes of the 2nd Extraordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.
[52] Darby, *Africa, Football, and FIFA,* 60.
[53] Darby, *Africa, Football, and FIFA,* 33.

South America's splintering support of African and Asian representation was on full display at the 1954 Ordinary Congress. The first order of business was to approve the Minutes of the Extraordinary Congress. Apparently, according to the Argentine Antonio Rotili, "the Minutes did not record exactly what the Extraordinary Congress decided" regarding the African and Asian membership on the executive committee. The crux of the issue was *when* Africa and Asia would be allowed to vote for their own representatives. At the Extraordinary Congress, FIFA voted that until they could conclude that the two continents established continental confederations, all the latter could do was submit recommendations to Congress who would then make the votes. In short, they could not directly vote for their own representatives. At the Ordinary Congress a year later, the South American and European delegations reneged on that ruling, and claimed that "the text voted upon should have been interpreted in another way." What the new statute meant to say was that until Congress determined that Africa and Asia were "competent to nominate directly their own representatives," Congress would elect the two members irrespective of national origin and affiliation. This gave Congress the power to continue the exclusion of Africa and Asia on the executive committee until they decided when the two continents were "competent" to make their own decisions. Indeed, while the text of Article 17 from the Extraordinary Congress assured that Congress would vote for the two representatives, "upon the proposals of the Associations concerned," in 1954, "the words 'upon the proposals of the Associations concerned' [was] to be left out."[54] What seemed to be a victory in 1953 was snatched away only a year later.

The outgoing president Rimet noted that before any votes could be cast for an African and Asian representative, however, they had to decide if the two continents had continental

[54] FIFA, *Minutes of the 29th Ordinary Congress*, June 21, 1954, Berne, Switzerland, FIFA Archives.

confederations. While "no communication reached the Executive Committee" about the creation of an African confederation, they did receive correspondence from Asia. It became apparent that FIFA's skepticism of Africa's competency for self-representation had not waivered and Rimet instructed the two continents to explain themselves. A heated argument ensued. The Argentinian delegate, Rotili, considered that "the discussion [about Africa] was not relevant," but "agreed that the Asian Associations should propose a candidate." The Belgian representative on the executive committee, Rodolph Seeldrayers, continued to single out Africa. He claimed that if the African associations could tell them "whether they had an organization and how this was constituted; when they assembled and which candidate they proposed, the Congress would examine whether this organization was competent to nominate the African candidate."[55] Seeldrayers acknowledged that "a country had proposed their own candidate, but that this had not been seconded by another African country." On the contrary, the Egyptian representative, Badr el Din, notified the Congress that the African associations nominated the Egyptian engineer Abdelaziz Abdallah Salem, and that this had been seconded by Ethiopia who gained admittance into FIFA in 1953.[56]

The 1953 and 1954 FIFA Congresses marked "the first time the football associations of Africa and Asia had registered dissatisfaction with their lack of presence in world football's corridors of power."[57] These associations were also mobilizing a challenge threat to European hegemony in FIFA. In 1954, Abdel Halim Mohamed of Sudan expressed to the FIFA Congress that their decision to exclude Africa from voting for their own representative was "a very unfortunate attitude." Mohamed asked the "Members of Congress what the criteria were by

[55] FIFA, *Minutes of the 29th Ordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.
[56] FIFA, *Minutes of the 29th Ordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.
[57] Darby, *Africa, Football, and FIFA,* 30.

which they decided any Continent was capable to elect its own Member of the Executive Committee." Refusing to wait for an answer, he declared that "the time had come for the African and Asian Associations to nominate their own representatives."[58] Abdelaziz Abdallah Salem "recalled that the Asian and African delegates fought very hard…for the right to be represented on the Executive Committee," and observed that "it seemed now that Europe and South America alone run the show." Salem explained that other associations recognized the organization of football in Africa, and Egypt in particular, and that there was no reason Africa and Asia should not elect their own representatives. Indeed, Mihailo Andrejevic, the Yugoslavian delegate, assured the Congress that whenever he visited parts of Africa and Asia with the Yugoslavian team, "matches were played under normal conditions," and that the "organization and installations were perfect." In his opinion, the two continents "were perfectly capable of nominating their Members to the Executive Committee."[59] Maintaining their position from the Extraordinary Congress, Yugoslavia proved to be a consistent supporter of African and Asian representation on the executive committee.

Mohamed denounced the paternalistic idea that Congress should decide when Africa and Asia could elect their own representatives, and strongly supported the nomination of Salem from Egypt. The U.S.S.R. supported the African delegation and argued that if the executive committee believed "the standard of play was not yet high enough" in Africa and Asia, FIFA was to be held responsible "because they were apparently not interested enough with what went on in these two Continents."[60]

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[58] FIFA, *Minutes of the 29th Ordinary Congress,* FIFA Archives.
[59] FIFA, *Minutes of the 29th Ordinary Congress*, FIFA Archives.
[60] FIFA, *Minutes of the 29th Ordinary Congress,* FIFA Archives.

Finally, the time came to vote on whether Africa and Asia had organized confederations. While the executive committee "proposed a negative reply," the rest of the Congress replied affirmatively by 23 to 17 votes, thus securing two members on the executive committee. The African delegation elected Salem of Egypt and the Asian confederation elected Jack Skinner of Hong Kong.[61]

The African delegation's fight to secure a place on FIFA's executive committee was a critical step to decolonize the coloniality of FIFA. While football historian Paul Darby uses a world systems theories to explain the position of Africa within FIFA, I draw upon theories of race and coloniality. Specifically, Darby uses Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system theory as a framework that positions European nations at the core of the world system and non-European, and African nations in particular, at the periphery. However, Darby fails to fully acknowledge *how* this core-periphery typology was constituted in the first place. While he is correct to suggest that European nations acquired this core position through their "tradition" and "economic strength" as footballing powers, he obscures the fact that centuries of colonialism and racial slavery was the condition of possibility for their position at the top of the international hierarchy. African nations were not on the periphery of FIFA because they lacked tradition and economic strength, but because they were colonized and enslaved up until the middle of the twentieth century. Accordingly, the executive committee of FIFA, and FIFA itself, was created as an institution to govern world football, and by doing so, maintain the relations of the colonial world hierarchy.

CAF and the Anti-Apartheid Campaign

[61] FIFA, *Minutes of the 29th Ordinary Congress,* FIFA Archives.

The African delegation's organization of the confederation coincided with debates about apartheid South Africa's membership in FIFA. According to Abdel Halim Mohamed, delegates from Egypt, Sudan, and South Africa met at the 1956 FIFA Congress in Lisbon and agreed to formalize a confederation, and organize a continental competition the following year in Khartoum.[62] The Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF) was officially established at their second meeting in February of 1957 in Khartoum, Sudan. The founding members were Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, and South Africa.[63] One of the first orders of business was to decide the fate of South Africa's membership in CAF. At the time of CAF's organization, South African football was represented by the all-white South African Football Association (SAFA), and the anti-apartheid, racially inclusive South African Soccer Federation (SASF). In 1951, the same year as the founding of the SASF, the SAFA reapplied for membership into FIFA after leaving the English FA. FIFA readmitted SAFA at their 1952 Congress. However, the anti-apartheid SASF declared that SAFA were not the true representatives of South African football. SASF applied for FIFA membership in August of 1952, and explained that "this this body has no race or colour restrictive rules and is in fact open to all races." However, FIFA denied their application because they already accepted SAFA's membership as the sole governing body of South African football.[64] SASF's application nevertheless led FIFA to inquire about the legitimacy of SAFA's claims to represent all of South Africa's footballers. In 1954, SASF reapplied for FIFA membership and stated that SAFA "does not embrace all sections of the South African

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[62] "CAF is Born," *CAFoot: CAF Official Magazine Special Edition* (February 2007): 12.
[63] *The African Football Confederation Handbook: Constitution and Bye-Laws and Rules of the African Cup Competition*, 1957, FIFA Archives.
[64] As quoted in Chris Bolsmann, "White Football in South Africa: Empire, Apartheid and Change, 1892-1977," *Soccer & Society* 11, no. 1/2 (January 2010): 36, https://doi.org/10.1080/14660970903331318. FIFA only allowed one football association to represent a country.

population."[65] SAFA finally offered the SASF affiliation to their body, albeit without voting rights, and SASF refused. In May of 1955, SASF secured a minor victory when FIFA finally ruled that SAFA did not represent all of South African football, and scheduled a commission to travel to South Africa to investigate the sporting conditions of the country.[66]

In January of 1956, the Lotsy Commission, headed by a Dutch football administrator, Karel Lotsy, and accompanied by Joseph McGuire of the United States, the Egyptian and African member of the Executive Committee Abdelaziz Abdallah Salem, and FIFA's Swiss secretary, Kurt Gasunann, visited South Africa to address the issue of apartheid.[67] The Lotsy Commission confirmed FIFA's earlier reports that SAFA represented only a minority of white South African footballers and ordered SAFA to remove any racist clauses from their constitution. However, the Commission excused SAFA's segregation policies and argued that they were a victim of the traditions and customs of the national government, thereby recommending that SAFA and SASF continue their negotiations.[68] Later that year in March, SAFA removed the racist clauses in their constitution, and in an attempt to portray themselves as a new and improved organization, changed their name to the Football Association of South Africa (FASA).[69]

Contrary to FIFA's indecision to accept or deny South African apartheid, CAF made their position clear. At CAF's inaugural meeting in Khartoum in 1957, the delegates from Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia decided to eliminate South Africa from the first African Cup of Nations

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[65] Bolsmann, "White Football in South Africa," 36.
[66] Bolsmann, "White Football in South Africa," 37.
[67] Alegi, *Laduma!,* 112.
[68] Alegi, *Laduma!,* 112.
[69] Alegi, *Laduma!,* 113.

after FASA refused to enter a multiracial team. South Africa entered an all-white team for the second tournament in 1959, and CAF, again, barred their participation.

At the 1960 FIFA Congress in Rome, the issue of apartheid football in South Africa took center stage. SASF again applied for FIFA membership and argued that the "Football Association of South Africa should be expelled."[70] After members of CAF, including Ohene Djan of Ghana, discussed the issue, the executive committee passed an anti-discrimination resolution stating that FIFA's members "be open to all who practice football in that country…without any racial, religious or political discrimination."[71] Moreover, the executive committee gave FASA one year to abide by the new resolution or else they would be suspended.[72] CAF did not wait a year and expelled FASA from their confederation. Finally, in 1961, FIFA suspended FASA for violating the anti-discrimination resolution.[73]

FIFA's president at the time, Stanley Rous, was nevertheless sympathetic towards FASA. In January of 1963, Rous and James McGuire visited South Africa for ten days in order to determine if "the controlling body of soccer in this country [was] furthering the cause of football to the best of its ability."[74] Indeed, Rous was a firm adherent to not mixing politics and sport, and made the intent of their visit clear. Rous explained that "politics were not the business of FIFA and if South Africa applies segregation in soccer, 'that is her concern.'"[75] After the trip, FIFA's

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[70] FIFA, *Minutes of the 32th Ordinary Congress,* August 20, 1960, Rome, Italy, FIFA Archives.
[71] FIFA, *Minutes of the 32th Ordinary Congress,* FIFA Archives.
[72] FIFA, *Minutes of the 32th Ordinary Congress,* FIFA Archives.
[73] Alegi, *African Soccerscapes*, 73.
[74] As quoted in, "Sir Stanley's Hint to S.A.," *The Irish Times,* January, 10, 1963, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/524056339?accountid=12861.
[75] "Sir Stanley's Hint to S.A.," *The Irish Times,* January, 10, 1963.

executive committee announced that "South Africa's suspension had been lifted unconditionally," after it was originally imposed "for *alleged* racial discrimination."[76]

FIFA's decision outraged CAF and worsened an already tenuous relationship between the two bodies. CAF "refused to accept that FASA was anything other than a racist organization"[77] and at the 1964 Congress, they proposed the expulsion of South Africa. Rous disagreed with the proposal, and explained that his trip to the country the year prior determined that "South Africa…did not practice discrimination."[78] Moreover, Rous criticized CAF for using the apartheid issue as a "political maneuver."[79] Ohene Djan immediately condemned Rous, and "expected the President to vacate his seat insofar as the present issue is concerned…thus saving himself from embarrassment."[80] To be sure, while FASA did allow the South African Bantu Football Association to affiliate, they did not have voting rights and could only compete in segregated competitions.[81] Indeed, CAF argued that the representation of black, white, and couloured athletes did not translate to the integration of FASA. When FASA brought non-white Africans to the 1964 Congress, CAF condemned it as a "show" and encouraged FIFA to honor the anti-discrimination resolution adopted at the 1960 Congress in Rome. During the deliberations, CAF was persuaded to alter the proposal from an expulsion to a suspension. Nevertheless, the Congress voted 48 to 15 to suspend South Africa.

CAF continued their anti-apartheid campaign for the next decade. When the time came to elect a new President of FIFA in 1974, CAF, whose President was Tessema, used the apartheid

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[76] "Fog joins snow and ice in threat to Cupties," *The Guardian,* January 24, 1963, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/184815424?accountid=12861 (accessed December 1, 2018)
[77] Darby, *Africa, Football and FIFA,* 76.
[78] FIFA, *Minutes of the 34th Ordinary Congress,* October 8, 1964, Tokyo, Japan, FIFA Archives.
[79] FIFA, *Minutes of the 34th Ordinary Congress,* FIFA Archives.
[80] FIFA, *Minutes of the 34th Ordinary Congress,* FIFA Archives.
[81] Bolsmann, "White Football in South Africa," 34.

issue to determine the outcome of the election. Rous' opponent, João Havelange from Brazil, emerged as an administrator that sympathized with CAF and supported their anti-apartheid stance against South Africa. When FASA secured approval from Rous to organize a multi-national football festival organized by Pretoria, Brazil initially accepted the invitation to participate. However, Tessema threatened to withdraw African support for Havelange's presidential bid if he did not remove Brazil from the festival. Realizing the strength of Africa's political bloc in FIFA, Havelange withdrew Brazil and denounced South Africa's apartheid policy. As a result, Havelange was elected FIFA President at the 1974 FIFA Congress in Montreal with the full support of CAF. Furthermore, in 1976, Havelange convinced the executive committee to expel South Africa from the Federation until apartheid was completely eliminated.[82]

The campaign to expel South Africa reflected a commitment to imagine alternative formations of the nation state that did not adhere to the coloniality of sport. Djan, Tessema, and other members of CAF challenged FIFA to confront its colonial constitution and abolish any semblance of racial hierarchy. Contrary to FIFA, CAF emerged as an institution constituted by nation-states that were politically, economically, and culturally against systems of domination. This is evident in CAF's formation and subsequent expulsion of South Africa. CAF's position in FIFA represented an antagonistic bloc that challenged FIFA's complicity with colonial domination and global antiblackness. Alongside the political and economic institutions that Getachew highlights, cultural institutions like CAF had an equally significant impact on the decolonization of the international racial hierarchy. CAF's formation and early campaigns

[82] Darby, *Africa, Football, and FIFA,* 81.

represented a radical rupture in the structural constitution of FIFA, that facilitated an antagonistic relationship between the coloniality of FIFA and the decoloniality of CAF.

CAF's Boycott of the 1966 World Cup

The suspension of South Africa coincided with CAF's campaign to restructure the World Cup. Indeed, by the time the 1964 Congress took place, CAF had already made it clear to FIFA that their exclusion from and subordination within the world body was coming to an end. In January 1964, the Organizing Committee of the 1966 World Cup met in Zurich to initiate plans for the tournament. At this meeting, members of the Committee, including FIFA president Stanley Rous, decided to organize a qualification tournament in order to account for the "record number of entries received" to participate—the first time Europe and South America did not constitute the sole participants of the tournament. During the discussion, the Italian delegate, Dr. Ottorino Barassi, initially suggested that the number of finalists should remain at 14, and that eight spots be allocated to the European group, two spots for the African, Asian, and Oceanic group (of which Israel and Syria were included), three spots for the South American group, and one spot for North and Central America, and the Caribbean. However, after the committee decided to include Israel and Syria with the European countries, they allocated nine spots to Europe, three spots to South America, one spot to Africa, Asia, and Oceania, and one spot to North and Central America and the Caribbean. To determine which team would qualify for the Africa, Asia, and Oceania group, the winner of the African sub-group would play the winner of the Asia/Oceania sub-group. When the committee decided how to organize the sub-groups, they took "into consideration the geographical, political and sporting problems" and included South Africa—fresh from being reinstated in 1963 and still represented by the apartheid FASA—in the Asia/Oceania group, which consisted of North Korea, South Korea, and Australia. The African

sub-group consisted of Ghana, Guinea, Sudan, Cameroon, Tunisia, Algeria, Liberia, Morocco, Senegal, Mali, Ethiopia, Gabon, UAR (Egypt), Libya, and Nigeria.

When CAF learned of the newly created qualification spots for the World Cup, they were outraged, especially considering they were in the midst of a campaign to expel South Africa. Tessema and Djan, who were both present at the 1960 Congress when FIFA passed the anti-discrimination resolution,[83] were not new to FIFA's colonial politics, and refused to accept the marginalization of CAF in FIFA's hierarchy. By the very next meeting of the World Cup organizing committee, the latter had received a letter from Djan and Tessema outlining their demands on behalf of CAF. They wanted FIFA to "reconsider the number of African teams to take part in the final competition" by accepting the winner of the African Cup of Nations as the African representative in the World Cup, and expel South Africa from FIFA for their apartheid policy.[84] After the Congress discussed CAF's proposal, they decided that the qualification groupings "must stand for the time being."[85] Importantly, Tessema and Djan used every opportunity available, including their deliberations with the organizing committee of the World Cup, to advocate for the expulsion of South Africa. In fact, to pressure FIFA into making a decision, members of CAF began to withdraw from the tournament prior to a formal decision on South Africa. For example, Ethiopia and Morocco withdrew by August,[86] and Ghana, Guinea, Tunisia, and Senegal withdrew by September.[87] At the World Cup organizing committee's next meeting in Tokyo, two days after the October 1964 FIFA Congress, CAF received a major

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[83] FIFA, *Minutes of the 32nd Ordinary Congress,* FIFA Archives.
[84] FIFA, *Minutes of Meeting No. 5 of the Organizing Committee of the 1966 World Cup*, July 3-4, 1964, London, England, FIFA Archives.
[85] Ibid.
[86] *FIFA News*, August, 14, 1964, 4, FIFA Archives.
[87] *FIFA News,* September 21, 1964, 3, FIFA Archives.

victory when the Congress voted to suspend South Africa, and thereby, expel them from participating in the 1966 World Cup.[88] However, the Congress never changed the number of qualification spots for Africa, and by the end of December 1964, all of the African Associations had withdrawn as part of the protest from the qualification rounds of the tournament.[89]

At the following World Cup Organizing Committee meeting, FIFA chose "to defer a decision concerning the withdrawals of group 16 (Africa)" to their next meeting.[90] However, the Organizing Committee's disdain for CAF was evident when they decided to reimburse South Africa the 1,000 swiss francs they paid as their entry fee into the tournament. Indeed, FIFA's apparent sympathy for South Africa was in relation to their antagonism towards the members of CAF. At the following meeting, the Organizing Committee fined each African Association 5,000 swiss francs for their boycott of the World Cup qualifying tournament.[91] The Organizing Committee dismissed CAF's boycott as being motivated by "no other serious reason," and demanded they pay the fine by the end of the year. Moreover, FIFA underestimated the organizing potential of CAF as they were ignorant to the fact that the boycott was a continent-wide campaign. FIFA assumed that because the African Associations entered the qualification tournament individually, that they were somehow immune to making decisions as a collective bloc and "decided to investigate the part played by the African Confederation."[92]

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[88] FIFA, *Minutes of Meeting No. 6 of the Organizing Committee of the 1966 World Cup*, October 10, 1964, London, England, FIFA Archives.
[89] *FIFA News,* January 26, 1965, 2, FIFA Archives.
[90] FIFA, *Minutes of Meeting No. 7 of the Organizing Committee of the 1966 World Cup*, March 19, 1965, Zurich, Switzerland, FIFA Archives.
[91] FIFA, *Minutes of Meeting No. 8 of the Organizing Committee of the 1966 World Cup*, May 22, 1965, London, England, FIFA Archives. Tunisia was not fined because they notified the committee of their withdrawal according to the rules and regulations.
[92] FIFA, *Minutes of Meeting No. 8 of the Organizing Committee of the 1966 World Cup,* FIFA Archives.

CAF was outraged at the fine and Tessema immediately challenged FIFA's decision. He made it clear that the boycott was indeed a CAF-organized protest against the coloniality of FIFA. Tessema, speaking on behalf of CAF, explained that FIFA's decision was "neither in keeping with the spirit of the Regulations governing the Competition nor even with common sense," and provided two main points to support their claims.[93] The first point centered around the technicality of the fine. According to the rules and regulations of the World Cup, member associations would be fined 5,000 Swiss francs if they withdrew from the tournament *after* "having agreed upon dates and places," which would ultimately cause "financial losses or affecting the classifications of the group." However, according to Tessema, "no African Association is in this position and…no match of the Afro-Asian Group has yet been played."[94] However, Tessema's tone became more political with his second point.

He challenged the Committee's claim that CAF had "no valid reason" for their withdrawal. In doing so, Tessema revealed the ways in which FIFA, and the World Cup in particular, was constituted by the logics of coloniality. First, he pointed out the absurdity of allocating "<u>one</u> place as finalist to three continents, combining altogether more than 65 Associations."[95] While the unjust nature of the allocations were apparent to Tessema, he used FIFA's own "Regulations of the Competition" to demonstrate its flaws. According to Article 4, Paragraph 4, Tessema highlighted that the Committee was supposed to "take into consideration the prevailing situation in sport and geographic and economic factors at the time of forming the groups." However, the Committee chose to form the "Africa-Asia-Australia Group in such a way that the African champion, after playing 10 matches from one end of the continent to the other"

[93] Letter from Ydnekatchew Tessema to Helmut Käser, September 9, 1965, FIFA Archives.
[94] Letter from Tessema to Käser, FIFA Archives.
[95] Letter from Tessema to Käser, FIFA Archives.

would meet the winner of the Asia and Australia sub-group "knowing very well that no African Association, with its amateur players and limited means…could have sufficient financial resources to enable it to make such an expensive trip." Tessema admitted that "if the facts are considered objectively, the economic and geographic absurdity of the notion is apparent."[96] Indeed, the coloniality of sport and FIFA created this "economic and geographic absurdity" through years of sporting and economic underdevelopment as a result of European colonialism. Accordingly, he drew attention to the economic and geographic challenges of post-colonial states and their respective sporting cultures, and indicted the Organizing Committee "of the injustice it has done us."

Tessema also questioned the Committee's motives about South Africa. He reminded the Committee that they included South Africa in their initial group formations, which meant that an African nation "ran the risk of playing against South Africa – a State with which no African country maintains relations."[97] He inquired why FIFA did not consider this political conflict the same way they considered the political conflict between Israel and the Arab world and moved the former from the Asian group to the European group. Tessema exposed a foundational contradiction in the logics of FIFA. While Rous and the Executive Committee consistently decried the intersection of football and politics in an effort to promote a sense of universality, FIFA's main concern was against the intersection of football and black politics. As decolonial politics, CAF's black teamwork antagonized the coloniality of FIFA and revealed the ways their apparent universalism concealed its colonial constitution. Tessema asked, "can it be honestly maintained that the African Associations had no valid motives for their action?"[98] Tessema and

[96] Letter from Tessema to Käser, FIFA Archives.
[97] Letter from Tessema to Käser, FIFA Archives.
[98] Letter from Tessema to Käser, FIFA Archives.

CAF recognized the colonial structure of FIFA, through their unwillingness to expel South Africa and the exclusion of African nations in the World Cup, and refused to participate as subordinated members. Their demands were more than simple pleas for recognition and inclusion, but rather a complete restructuring of world football. Indeed, Tessema explained that "by agreeing to withdraw from the competition…each National Association felt that it had renounced its most elementary rights and sacrificed its own interests for the sake of the unity of world football." In turn, CAF was "convinced that the lesson would be learnt (sic) and that they would receive justice and compensation."[99] Moreover, he condemned FIFA for adopting "a relentless attitude against the African Associations" and argued that their "decisions resemble methods of intimidation and repression designed to discourage any further impulses of a similar nature." Tessema felt CAF "deserved a gesture of respect rather than a fine."[100] Indeed, "if anyone is to blame, it is the Organizing Committee for creating the inextricable situation" that resulted in CAF's boycott.

Ohene Djan of Ghana echoed Tessema's desire to restructure world football. Speaking on behalf of CAF, Djan resisted their subordination by FIFA and explained that "we are not asking this as beggars. We are putting forward just and moderate demands, taking account of the huge progress made in our football."[101] FIFA maintained their position, although they agreed to reduce the fines to 1,000 swiss francs if the individual national associations "furnished explicit reasons for their withdrawal from a competition which they had nevertheless entered individually."[102] However, CAF continued their protest for the 1970 World Cup. In 1965, FIFA and CAF held a

[99] Letter from Tessema to Käser, FIFA Archives.
[100] Letter from Tessema to Käser, FIFA Archives.
[101] As quoted in Michael Katimia, "The Fight for Recognition," *Africa Soccer*, no. 35 (June 1998): 54.
[102] Letter from Helmut Käser to CAF, February 8, 1966, FIFA Archives.

number of consultative meetings "to study together any existing problems…within the framework of the development of our sport."[103] At a November meeting, the Consultative Committee discussed the preliminary groupings for the 1970 World Cup and Djan expressed that "the World Championship should really be a world-wide competition in which at least one representative from each Continental Confederation should be able to play the matches of the final competition, the other places being left to the 'best' teams."[104] Indeed, FIFA's President, Rous, conceded that the preliminary competition "would certainly be subject to alterations."[105] From 1970 onward, Africa secured it's own qualifying place, represented first by Morocco, Zaire in 1974, and Tunisia in 1978. By the 1982 World Cup, when the tournament was expanded to 24 teams, Africa had secured two automatic placements, represented by Cameroon and Algeria.

CAF's campaign to restructure the executive committee and World Cup, should be understood as a practice of black teamwork that sought to decolonize FIFA and the world order. Getachew explains how decolonization was not merely the natural and anticipated progression from colony to nation, what is imagined as the "globalization of the nation-state."[106] In this formulation, decolonization is understood as the end of alien rule and the expansion of the international order. Rather, anticolonial nationalists, including the founders and leading members of CAF, conceptualized decolonization as the reconstitution of the international world order. Getachew demonstrates how African anticolonial nationalists theorized empire as "a structure of international racial hierarchy" that persisted beyond the formal end of alien rule. Thus,

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[103] FIFA, *Minutes of Meeting No. 4 of the Consultative Committee of FIFA/African Football Confederation*, November 9, 1965, Sidi Bou Said, Tunisia, FIFA Archives.
[104] FIFA, *Minutes of Meeting No. 4 of the Consultative Committee of FIFA/African Football Confederation*, FIFA Archives.
[105] FIFA, *Minutes of Meeting No. 4 of the Consultative Committee of FIFA/African Football Confederation*, FIFA Archives.
[106] Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire*, 16.

decolonization envisioned more than the expansion of the international order, it articulated a radical transformation of hierarchy. While football historian Paul Darby convincingly demonstrates how theories of economic and political dependence constitutes the relationship between European and non-European members in FIFA, I borrow Getachew's conceptualization of "unequal integration" to describe the antagonistic relationship between CAF and FIFA.[107] Unequal integration suggests that the colonial relation between European nations and non-European colonies was characteristic of something more than "a bifurcated system with sovereign and equal members and excluded colonies." On the contrary, unequal integration positioned colonies as internal to international society, "but appeared in that space as unequal and subordinated members."[108] This understanding of unequal integration informed the methods of decolonization that anticolonial nationalists adopted in their worldmaking project. Specifically, it required a form of decolonization that did not accept mere inclusion into the international society, but a radical redistribution of power that established a relation of equality.

While the coloniality of FIFA was constituted by racial hierarchy and domination, the decoloniality of CAF was constituted by diaspora and nondomination. Richard Iton is helpful to understand CAF as a diasporic formation that decolonized the coloniality of FIFA. Iton conceptualizes diaspora as an "anaformative impulse…which resists hierarchy, hegemony, and administration,"[109] and argues that the nation-state, as a modern emergence, "might be understood as intrinsically antiblack."[110] Rather than reproducing the structures, grammar, and practices of the nation-state, Iton argues that diasporic politics is not "a replacement or a

[107] Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire,* 18.
[108] Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire,* 17-18.
[109] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 200.
[110] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 197.

displacement but, again, a recontextualization of the national and the nation-state."[111] Coupled with Getachew's political theory of decolonization as a project of nation-building and worldmaking, CAF's black teamwork, as a decolonial emergence, is a diasporic formation that imagined the nation-state as free of domination and fought to dismantle the international racial hierarchy. Alongside the economic and political worldmaking projects, anticolonial nationalists also used football, and the World Cup in particular, to dismantle the international hierarchy. Indeed, as Iton identifies three "potentials" of diaspora, namely, the geoheterodox, juxtapositive, and the autodiasporic, I want to suggest that diaspora has another "form of insubordination," one that antagonizes the international order. The formation of CAF signified an "effort to establish, sustain, and institutionalize a forum for deliberation…and the representation of a community that might claim priority over or alongside state identifications."[112] CAF did not merely expand FIFA, but sought to restructure the international order and stabilize it through ideologies and practices of nondomination.

Conclusion

Football became the site through which anticolonial nationalists articulated a diasporic black politics that aimed to decolonize the footballing world order. Indeed, the demands for an automatic spot on the executive committee, and in the World Cup, and the expulsion of South Africa were part of the same struggle to decolonize FIFA and imagine a new world order in the field of football. As mentioned earlier, CAF wanted to transform FIFA into an organization whose member nations were free of racial domination. CAF's black teamwork was generated by a collective of individuals whose politics were informed by the anticolonial movements of the

[111] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 198.
[112] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 202-203.

twentieth century. Their understanding of the nation-state was fundamentally distinct from the formation of Western nation-states. That is, anticolonial nationalists in CAF imagined the international community, as free of racial domination and colonial hierarchy. During the second half the twentieth century, the decoloniality of CAF structurally antagonized the coloniality of FIFA, and initiated the radical transformation of the governing body of football. Nevertheless, the coloniality of FIFA remains, and continues to solidify the colonial hierarchy that privileges Europeanness/whiteness and subordinates non-Europeanness/non-whiteness.

The struggle to decolonize FIFA continues—albeit from a less antagonistic position. The expansion of the tournament to 16 to 24 teams in 1982 was the culmination of efforts put forth by African football administrators like Abdel Halim Mohamed, Ohene Djan, and Ydnekatchew Tessema. It is important to note, however, that CAF, of which Tessema served as President from 1972-1987, was never satisfied with FIFA's concessions and consistently exposed the economic, political, and institutional practices that constituted the coloniality of world football. As earlier stated, João Havelange, FIFA's president during the 1970s and 1980s, was more sympathetic to the African and Asian cause, and one of his major goals was to sponsor the decades long struggle to make the World Cup more representative of its member nations, of which Africa had the most. However, UEFA mounted considerable resistance and agreed to only vote for the expansion if they maintained their proportion of placements. Indeed, upon voting to allocate eight more spots for the 1982 World Cup, the distribution of spots still favored the European countries. The federations of Africa, Asia, and North, South, Central America and the Caribbean now had two automatic spots, from their previous one, Europe now had twelve automatic spots from their previous eight. Furthermore, the coloniality of football continued to marginalize African footballers to a lesser standard of play than South Americans and Europeans, which was

reflected in their isolation from the top clubs throughout the world. While African footballers, occupied a marginal position in world football, particularly in Europe, the diasporic and decolonial quality of African football was nurtured across the Atlantic at historically black colleges and universities during the 1970s. Specifically, at Howard University in Washington D.C., the football team became a diasporic formation that articulated new expressions of black politics against the whitening of soccer.

CHAPTER 2:

Triangle of Blackness at Howard University

The popularization and circulation of African football throughout the circuits of the African diaspora accelerated during the 1960s and 1970s. Many African students, who were also soccer players, travelled to the U.S. or Europe for an education. Concurrently, soccer leagues around the world slowly opened their doors to black players. Howard University in Washington, D.C. was one such institution. In 1971, Howard University became the first HBCU to win a NCAA Division 1 Championship in any sport when they beat the St. Louis Billikens soccer team. Following the win, the victorious Bisons ran around the Orange Bowl in celebration. One Howard player shouted in redemption, "where is the man from Miami Herald that called us 'upstart' Howard?"[1] Undoubtedly, the final match between Howard and St. Louis University represented a contest that had cultural, social, political, and racial implications. According to a Sports Illustrated reporter, "it was a game of multiple contrasts—not just cheeky newcomer vs. entrenched power, but also uninhibited fast break vs. tight ball control, foreigners vs. homegrown and, for those who seek significance in such face-offs, even black vs. white."[2]

The following 1972 season saw Howard and St. Louis in a rematch in the semifinals. This year, however, the NCAA threatened to suspend Howard's players who were the subjects of an investigation into their eligibility. As a result, Howard had to bench their star players and, consequently, lost the match. To make matters worse, the NCAA concluded their investigation, found them guilty for fielding ineligible players during their previous championship season, and

[1] Gwilym Brown, "Another No. 1 is settled in the Orange Bowl," *Sports Illustrated,* Jan. 10, 1972
[2] Brown, "Another No. 1," *Sports Illustrated.*

stripped them of their title from the previous year. Following the loss, Howard's head coach Lincoln Phillips explained to reporters that "the NCAA took this game away from us. But that's to be expected. It's pretty evident that *a black school is not supposed to win* (italics added)." The following night at a NCAA soccer banquet, Phillips continued his protest in front of the other soccer programs at the tournament and NCAA authorities. Phillips charged that the NCAA was "guilty of practicing racism" and that Howard "played against this entire wretched system of this society."

Indeed, Phillips understood that their championship win constituted a cultural and racial infraction of sorts, considering that in the United States, "a black school is not supposed to win" soccer competitions. The emergence of Howard University's black team presented a challenge to the existing hierarchy of NCAA soccer and the project to Americanize soccer, through the articulation of what I call 'black teamwork'—the diasporic practices of black sporting collectives that work to unsettle and reveal the colonial and racial constitution of modern sport's governing bodies--in this case the NCAA. The formation of Howard University's black team was the result of their refusal of exclusionary recruitment practices based on race, their commitment to diasporic conviviality, and the new forms of justice imagined to resist the criminalization of black athletes. Put another way, this chapter will illuminate the ways in which soccer became a space for the articulation of a 'diasporic black politics' in a post-civil rights United States.

This chapter examines the history of the racial constitution of soccer in the United States, what has been known as the Americanization of soccer, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. I'm interested in the relationship between the white constitution of American soccer and the formation of black teams in the post-Civil Rights era. While many soccer historians have paid attention to the ways American soccer was framed as an ethnic, "foreign" sport, I want to suggest

that this concern misses how race and whiteness are the defining logics of soccer and the field of modern sport more generally. Importantly, this paper will investigate how the formation of black teams in the post-Civil Rights era posed a threat to what I am calling the coloniality of sport--the ways in which modern sports establish racial hierarchies that privilege whiteness and subordinate non-whiteness, and blackness in particular. In other words, how did black teams articulate black politics in the field of American soccer? While soccer in the United States seems like an unlikely space for black political expression, its popularity throughout the spatial register of the African diaspora provides an opportunity to not only imagine how the relationship between blackness and soccer is forged through coloniality, but to imagine new black solidarities and geographies that exceed national boundaries.

Americanization of Soccer

During the early twentieth century, professional soccer in the United States had largely been associated with European immigrant communities. Many soccer historians have argued that the "foreignness" of the game is one of the main reasons it never established a privileged position in American professional and collegiate sports--along with organizational and institutional instability, and the crowding out by the three other distinctly American sports--baseball, gridiron football, and basketball. On the collegiate level, soccer exploded on campuses following World War II yet maintained the reputation as a "recreational activity," a sport for those students who didn't make the football and basketball squads. To be sure, native-born Americans made up a majority of the college teams, however, because the most talented American athletes played football and basketball, American soccer players did not receive as

much praise for their athletic talent as their international teammates.[3] The sport on the collegiate level, thus, maintained the perception as "foreign, aloof, snobby, or simply odd."[4]

However, in the age of the NCAA Soccer Championship, beginning in 1959, the soccer titles were held by teams with a majority of American athletes, rendering the college game as the prime example of the Americanization of soccer. St. Louis University, in particular, became the pride and joy of American collegiate soccer, as they won the NCAA championship the first eight out of twelve competitions. St. Louis was also celebrated for their "built-in farm system" that trained and developed home-grown St. Louisan talent. The 1970 season was particularly cause for celebration because it "saw college soccer stride firmly onto the path" of maturity and sophistication. According to Donald Yonker, editor of the *Soccer Magazine* and *The Official Soccer Guide*, SLU's achievement was "truly remarkable" considering that the "national trend" of other teams was to play with more international players.[5]According to soccer historian David Wangerin, "no US city embraced soccer more unreservedly than St. Louis," where experiments in the "Americanization" of the game helped establish a strong fan base and culture of exceptionalism.[6] Importantly, the Americanization of the game intersected with the whitening of the game, with St. Louis University's all-white team as the prototypical American soccer team.

The city of St. Louis had a reputation as a stronghold for American-born talent. The St. Louis Soccer League, created in 1903, would produce "many of the top American-born players."[7] Throughout the twentieth century, St. Louis became "America's soccer Mecca" as

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[3] Frank Zangari, "The Recruitment of International Athletes by NCAA Schools, 1970-2010" (Phd diss., St. Johns University, 2014), 59, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/1648987024?accountid=12861.
[4] Markovits and Hellerman, *Offside*, 123.
[5] Donald Yonker, "College Teams Attaining New Levels of Soccer Sophistication, Maturity," *The 1971 Official National Collegiate Athletic Association Soccer Guide* (1971): 17.
[6] Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football World*, 29.
[7] Markovits and Hellerman, *Offside*, 30.

they solidified their reputation as a city devoted to the development of American soccer. The local game grew immensely because of the institutional structures of the Catholic Church, training youth from their Catholic Youth Council (CYC) Leagues. In the mid-1960s the CYC League sponsored "447 teams with 20 to 30 players each, in addition to strong Catholic high school squads."[8] According to soccer historian David Wangerin, "no US city embraced soccer more unreservedly than St. Louis," where experiments in the "Americanization" of the game helped establish a strong fan base and culture of exceptionalism.[9] Importantly, the Americanization of the game came to depend on the whitening of the game, with St. Louis University's all-white team as the prototypical American soccer team.

The racial project to Americanize soccer comes into clearer view when analyzed through the creation of the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) in the mid-1960s. David Keyes convincingly argues that the Americanization of soccer was a three-step process, 1) the stripping of what he calls the "residual ethnicity" of soccer, 2) making soccer a "safe" sport, and 3) advertising it as a central activity of the suburban family.[10] What Keyes refers to as the stripping of the "residual ethnicity" of soccer, resembles the interlocking processes of Americanization and whitening in the lives of European immigrants and their children. More explicitly, the founders of the AYSO banned all "foreign-sounding" team names in their effort to Americanize the game, and, in an early draft of the AYSO rules, it prohibited the use of any language other than English. Moreover, the success of the Americanization of soccer "depended on two other

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[8] Joe Jares, "Local Boys Make Very Good," *Sports Illustrated,* Dec. 13, 1965, 22, https://www.si.com/vault/issue/42927/23.
[9] Wangerin, *Soccer in a Football World*, 29.
[10] David Keyes, "Futbol Americano: Immigration, Social Capital and Youth Soccer in Southern California" (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 2015), 41-51, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/1704384546?accountid=12861.

domestications—making the sport safe and connecting it to the nuclear family."[11] However, these two processes were deeply informed by the social, cultural, and racial context of the 1960s and 1970s.[12] Soccer had the perception of a violent and dangerous sport. Media reports of European players and fans engaged in riots and fights on and off the pitch were common. AYSO founders, on the other hand, marketed the American style of the game as safe for the athlete, both physically and emotionally. According to Keyes, "soccer would no longer be the sport of rioting mobs in Europe, but instead the sport that children could safely play on a Saturday morning in a supportive environment." Soccer officials subtly positioned the sport against both basketball and football, two sports that "require physical size to be successful,"[13] and coincidentally, two sports that had recently experienced an increase in black players in the mainstream sporting space, following national and local desegregation efforts.

Furthermore, soccer—as a sport for the suburban family—was racialized because postwar suburbs were created through public and private processes of racial exclusion and antiblack sensibilities. Keyes similarly suggests that race was barely beneath the surface at this key juncture in the Americanization of the sport:

> "At the same time that this new version of soccer would be distinct from the version played by unruly immigrants, soccer was also a sport largely not played by racial minorities and working-classes from whom the suburbanites fled. The Watts Riots of 1965 occurred at almost the exact same time as the founding of the AYSO, in areas that whites fled from, leaving concentrated populations of marginalized African Americans. Youth soccer was played by the middle and upper-middle classes, most of whom were white. It was an era of fears whose racial and class basis was only barely concealed."[14]

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[11] David Keyes, "Making the Mainstream: The Domestication of American Soccer," in *Soccer Culture in America: Essays on the World's Sport in Red, White and Blue*, ed. Yuya Kiuchi (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2013),16.
[12] The attention paid towards the family must be seen as part of the national discourse that pathologized black families, most notably with the publication of the Moynihan Report in 1965.
[13] Keyes, "Making the Mainstream," 17.
[14] Keyes, "Futbol Americano," 45-46.

Soccer became associated with the white suburban middle-class, while basketball and football increasingly became associated with black, urban, and poor communities. According to a 1977 U.S. News & World Report article, a "possible reason for the growth of soccer in some suburbs - one that the game's proponents do not discuss publicly, but a few say privately - is that some white youths and their parents want a sport not as dominated by blacks as football and basketball."[15] During the 1960s and 1970s, white athletes found soccer as a space to reclaim and solidify their positions within the mainstream sporting space. When one accounts for the emergence, dominance, and radicalization of black athletes in the hegemonic sporting space during the 1960s, soccer appeared as a "white hope" for white athletes whose position in the field of American sports appeared threatened by the shifting racial landscape.

The Americanization of soccer on the professional level was also shrouded in whiteness. The North American Soccer League (NASL), created in 1968, was hailed as the first legitimate effort to professionalize and Americanize the game in the U.S. However, during the 1960s, soccer supremacy was largely associated with Europe and South America, and so the majority of the recruiting for NASL teams occurred in said continents. In fact, in the context of FIFA, up until the 1970s, there were only 16 teams that could qualify for the World Cup, nine of which were allocated for European countries, three for South American countries, one for North and Central America, and one for Africa, Asia, and Oceania while the two remaining spots were reserved for the host country and the previous champion.[16] According to soccer historian Ian Plenderleith, in the NASL, Europeans and mainly British footballers performed most of the

[15] "From Kids to Pros…;Soccer Is Making It Big in U.S.," *U.S. News & World Report*, October 17, 1977, 100.
[16] Italy, Brazil, England, Germany and Uruguay were the only teams to win the World Cup prior to 1970.

coaching and operated different clinics throughout the country to help spread the game. However, Plenderleith assures us that the NASL was made up of many international players.

> "Both the Caribbean and Anglophone Africa provided numerous players, again by dint of the common language needed to explain and spread the game. Yugoslavs (cheap) and northern Europeans (available in summer, and usually able to speak English) also came in large numbers. There were of course, the token US players--much discussed in terms of the game's future, but under-used in practice. And finally, South and Central Americans, because you needed players with technical ability who could actually play the game rather than just run through it."[17]

This quote reveals a racial and sporting hierarchy that is couched in a geographically deterministic discourse that privileged white Europeans as the coaches and trainers of the game, South and Central Americans who were technically superior, white Americans who were the future of the game, and African and Caribbean players whose value was reduced to their "dint of the common language" and seeming natural ability to merely run through the game.

While the Americanization of soccer was ultimately an effort to promote the game among native-born Americans, it occurred alongside and in coordination with the active interest in the tactics, strategies, and players from European countries. During the late 1960s, an "undisputed effect" on the college game had been the "adoption of modern European coaching methods...Teams are using sound methods and players are showing the techniques of the continental performers."[18] Soccer authorities noticed that "the American boy is starting to profit from playing alongside his foreign-born teammates and, hearteningly, coaching has progressed beyond a former reluctant acceptance of over-the-water supremacy, to the point of admiring

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[17] Ian Plenderleith, *Rock "n" Roll Soccer: The Short Life and Fast Times of the North American Soccer League* (New York: St. Martins Press, 2015), 75.
[18] Donald Yonker, "The 1968 Collegiate Season," *The 1969 Official National Collegiate Athletic Association Soccer Guide* (1969): 9.

curiosity."[19] Soccer writer Gene Baker articulated a more philosophical approach, particularly in St. Louis, and undoubtedly throughout the nation, suggesting that in the St. Louis area, a "European myth" existed amongst the local players. To be sure, Baker "excluded South America because of its lesser effect in St. Louis." According to Baker, the European myth "consists of the fact that students of soccer mysteriously think that European soccer minds possess a hidden body of facts for playing and coaching, which distinguishes foreign [and European] (superior) from American (inferior) soccer."[20]

The home-grown dynasty at St. Louis University, Keyes' triple domestication of American soccer, and the logics that privileged European soccer all point to the ways in which the Americanization of soccer was complicit in the racialization and whitening of soccer. According to Keyes, "the debate about the American-ness of soccer, is, at its core, a debate about the boundaries of the nation."[21] Put another way, the Americanization of soccer is only possible by "redefining the boundaries of the foreign and the mainstream."[22] In the context of American soccer, whiteness superseded ethnic distinctions and repositioned blackness as the foreign. While Keyes suggests that this "triple domestication" aimed to make soccer American, I claim that his analysis gestures toward the ways in which soccer became a *white* sport. Ethnicity's place in American soccer, therefore, was constituted around racial processes that segregated the white mainstream from the nonwhite foreigner—so to play soccer was to be American, and to be American was to be white. The dependence upon European logics, tactics, and techniques for the successful Americanization of the game reflects the broader processes of whitening that soccer

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[19] Yonker, "The 1964 Collegiate Season," *The 1965 Official National Collegiate Athletic Association Soccer Guide* (1965): 9.
[20] Gene Baker, "Soccer in St. Louis," *Soccer Journal* 16, no. 4 (Winter 1972): 15
[21] Keyes, "Making the Mainstream," 12.
[22] Keyes, "Making the Mainstream," 12.

elites marketed to the American public. Indeed, in order to improve the quality of American soccer, coaches and administrators relied on colonial logics that privileged European minds and culture while not even thinking about African developments and innovations to the game.

The Revolt of the International Black Athlete

In the context of the Americanization of soccer, both collegiately and professionally, only a handful of teams actively recruited black footballers from the Caribbean and Africa because of the racist views that said athletes were mentally inferior compared to Europeans and South Americans.[23] According to John Bale, Africa and to some extent the Caribbean were traditionally considered "*terra incognita* as far as American college recruiting was concerned."[24] When American soccer teams did recruit international black players—in contrast to the ways in which European *minds* were valued—the Americanization of soccer exploited and dehumanized black foreign athletes whose value was grounded in their seemingly natural, raw, and hyper-physical attributes from the individualistic black athletic *body*. When Derek Tomkinson, the Caribbean scout for the Baltimore Bays, Atlanta Chiefs, and New York Generals, explained the difference between black players from the Caribbean and white players from England, he admitted that "technically the West Indies lads are just as good, it's the mental part where the English players excel."[25] Additionally, sports writers overwhelmingly focused on the speed and individual skill of Black football players in the United States and Europe. In 1967, the last year of the National Professional Soccer League, reporters compared Trinidadian footballer, Everald

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[23] Teams with a considerable amount of black players included the Atlanta Chiefs, Detroit Cougars, Baltomore Bays, New York Generals, Boston Beacons, and Cleveland Stokers.

[24] John Bale, *The Brawn Drain: Foreign Student-Athletes in American Universities* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 74.

[25] Ken Nigro, "Scout Derek Tomkinson Key Man in Bays' Plans," *Baltimore Sun,* Feb. 23, 1968, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/541497584?accountid=12861. Derek Tomkinson was from England but moved to Kingston, Jamaica in 1959.

Cummings of the Atlanta Chiefs, to a "baseball star from Latin America...with an exceptional fastball." His coach, Phil Woosnam, didn't think he was great but that "he has tremendous potential. If he's willing to work, he can make it. Right now, I'd say he needs most to develop team understanding, to blend with the other ten players."[26] When Tomkinson recruited Lincoln Phillips in 1968, he described him as "very daring and has extremely fast reflexes."[27]

Hailing from the Caribbean island of Trinidad, Phillips had a respected career as a goalkeeper for the Trinidad and Tobago Regiment Football team. Prior to the start of the season, Phillips was replaced in the starting lineup with the arrival of Carmelo, a goalkeeper from Spain. Phillips' disappointment would turn out to be an opportunity when the Baltimore Bays coach, Gordon Jago, recommended Phillips as the new head coach and goalkeeper for the Washington Darts of the professional American Soccer League (ASL). In his first season as coach (and first black coach of a professional soccer team in the US), Phillips led his team to the ASL finals and won the championship.

> "Remember, Caribbean players and African players did not play in Europe, because Europe did not open the door to Third World countries. Ok? So when I started with the Darts, the Washington Darts, I brought up two National Team players [from Trinidad]. I had two of them up here already, so we had about four, five Trinidadians on the team…And we came and we won the [1968] championship….[19]69 championship, we did the same thing...On that [19]70 team, we had seven Trinidadians! And we were the *only team*. And so in the league itself, people started to see the quality of Caribbean and African players."[28]

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[26] Ken Nigro, "Atlanta Has Budding Star in Young Trinidad Kicker," *The Baltimore Sun,* April 15, 1967, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/539396692?accountid=12861.
[27] Ken Nigro, "Change Appeals to Bays' Goalie," *The Baltimore Sun,* Feb. 25, 1968, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/541477073?accountid=12861.
[28] Lincoln Phillips, phone interview by author, Washington D.C., July 5, 2017.

Upon his arrival, "Phillips altered the Darts style of play drastically, from a short to a long passing concept." Indeed, by his second season as coach, nine out of the thirteen players on the Darts were either from Trinidad or Ghana.[29]

Similarly, when Howard University recruited Phillips in 1970 to be their new head coach of the soccer team, it marked a radical shift in the racial norms and hierarchies of the NCAA and the Americanization of soccer. The soccer program had historically been a space that reflected the diasporicity of Howard University ever since its inception in 1928. Hosea K. Nyabongo, a Ugandan prince who was a student at Howard University at the time, organized the sport with the help of head coach John H. Burr, a graduate of Springfield College in Massachusetts and "an all-New England midfielder."[30] The board of athletic control at Howard University formally recognized the soccer program in the fall of 1930 and "was equipped and provided with a coach and every other facility necessary to its development."[31] The formal recognition of Howard's soccer team was prompted by an undefeated 1929 season, and "largely as a means of promoting international goodwill" on the campus.[32] Following World War II--during which time, soccer had been essentially put on pause throughout the world including American universities--soccer regained its status on campus in 1947 with the help of coach Ted Chambers. Chambers, who had been a star American-football player at Howard in the 1920s, joined the athletic staff in 1944

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[29] Dave Morrison, "NASL Rosters," last modified Nov. 8, 2017. http://www.nasljerseys.com/Rosters/NASL_Rosters.htm

[30] "Howard Student May Rule Dad's East African Kingdom," *Baltimore Afro-American*, Feb. 2, 1929, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/530764021?accountid=12861; "Soccer Still in Ascendancy," *The New York Amsterdam News*, Jan. 13, 1932, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/226292456?accountid=12861; Ted Chambers, *The History of Athletics and Physical Education at Howard University* (New York: Vantage Press, 1986), 64.

[31] "Soccer is Made Possible at Howard by African Prince," *The Chicago Defender,* Jan. 10, 1931, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/492331851?accountid=12861.

[32] "Soccer is Made Possible at Howard by African Prince," *The Chicago Defender*.

where he would go on to coach a number of different sports, including football, boxing, track, soccer and cricket.[33] While Chambers admits that the "revival of soccer came about almost by accident," he was intentional about creating social and athletic spaces for the international students on campus. He noticed that they were "poorly represented in the other activities on the campus and decided to take steps to integrate programs at Howard."[34] After a discussion with one of the star track student-athletes from Jamaica, Basil Keane, they realized that "several players from the British Islands wanted to take part in some competitive games."[35] Throughout the years, sports like cricket and soccer provided black international students "with a sense of participation in the University's athletic program."[36] Phillips' hiring, therefore, reflected the relationship between international blackness and soccer which Howard University historically fostered.

Formation of Howard's Diasporic Team

Recruitment

Phillips' experience playing football in Trinidad, his career in the NASL with the Baltimore Bays, and even more so as a player-coach with the Washington Darts, and the black footballers he played with, provided a blueprint for recruitment that he drew upon when he arrived at Howard University in 1970. In his first year on campus, Phillips served as an assistant to the head coach, Ted Chambers. After Chambers signed Phillips, prior to the 1970 season,

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[33] Jim McCannon, "Ted Chambers Retires as Coach," *The Washington Post,* June 4, 1965, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/142617965?accountid=12861.
[34] Chambers, *History of Athletics*, 65.
[35] Ted Chambers, "Blue and White Booters, Coached by Ted Chambers, Have Never Been Beaten," *Baltimore Afro-American,* Oct. 29, 1949, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/531687558?accountid=12861.
[36] Howard University, The Bison: 1971 Yearbook, (Washington D.C., 1971), pg. 320, http://dh.howard.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1139&context=bison_yearbooks

Chambers traveled to Trinidad and recorded a television advertisement to recruit some of the best players on the island. Keith Aqui, the second highest leading goal scorer for Howard in 1970, remembered watching Chambers on TV talk about the soccer team, but gathered the impression that "they weren't that good."[37] Nevertheless, when he visited his brother and sister in Washington D.C., who both attended Howard, they advised him to apply, and he did. After he was accepted, he knew they had a soccer team and went out to practice. Once Chambers and Phillips "saw Aqui's footwork and dribbling ability, he became an immediate starter."[38] Aqui's addition to the team complemented the other players around him. Aqui explained that despite his goal-scoring ability, he sees himself more as a playmaker for his teammate Alvin Henderson, a fellow Trinidadian and the leading goal scorer on the team. "We're different ball players and we have different styles...I dribble more, while he uses more technique."[39]

Following their 1971 season, the Howard University soccer team accepted an invitation from Dr. Maurice Nelson, the president of the Howard Jamaica Alumni, to visit Jamaica to play four matches with local teams and simultaneously recruit high school players eligible to attend the University.[40] On their trip, the Bisons defeated the University of West Indies-Mona 4-0, and Boys' Town Invitational, an all-star team from the national Premier League, 7-0. However, they lost to an all-star high school team 1-2, and the Jamaican Olympic team 0-2. During Howard's visit, the team scout, Salah Yousif—who himself hailed from Ethiopia—explained that he will "be keeping an eye for schoolboy players whose skill with the ball is commensurate with their

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[37] Millard Arnold, "Aqui Gets a Boot Out of Trip to U.S.: 25-Year-Old Freshman," *Washington Post,* Nov. 22, 1970, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/147795830?accountid=12861.
[38] Arnold, "Aqui Gets a Boot Out of Trip," *Washington Post.*
[39] Arnold, "Aqui Gets a Boot Out of Trip," *Washington Post.*
[40] "Tour Sterling Drug," *The Daily Gleaner*, Jan. 8, 1972.

mental agility in the classroom."[41] Prior to a match which featured some of the best high school footballers in Jamaica, a reporter for *The Daily Gleaner* noted that "if the schoolboy players perform impressively, they may be given a scholarship to attend the University, if their work in the classroom is as impressive."[42] Indeed, at the conclusion of their tour, coach Phillips had successfully identified five players to attend Howard and declared that he would do everything in his power "to see that these boys get a degree...I will have more teachers help them if they are having trouble with their studies and if it becomes necessary, I'll stop them from playing football and give them time to concentrate on their studies."[43]

Additionally, Howard's history of fostering a relationship between black students and soccer provided an environment on campus that protected black soccer players from racist anti-black treatment. On the contrary, black soccer players at predominantly white institutions experienced racism from opponents, and on occasion, even from their own teammates. According to Peter Moses, a Jamaican student who played soccer for Carnegie Mellon University from 1970-1974, a teammate alerted him to something in the visitor's locker room:

> "So I went in there, and the changing room has like a blackboard. And they had a, kind of effigy of a player, with my number on it. Right? With *daggers* sticking into it. And the words "Kill the Nigger!" Right? And that explained the second half. How rough—they had like two or three people. They were going to lose the game, ya know? But they were intent to take me out…And I sat in that changing room for about a half hour, and just put my hands in my head."[44]

Moses' experience was subject to the Americanization of soccer even outside of collegiate play. He joined a community league in the off-season to stay fit, but his teammates proved to be more like his opponents:

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[41] "New Plan for visit of Howard," *The Daily Gleaner,* Dec. 31, 1971.
[42] "Six schoolboys on Boys' Town Invitational team," *The Daily Gleaner,* Jan. 3, 1972.
[43] "...then name 5 for scholarship consideration," *The Daily Gleaner,* Jan. 10, 1972.
[44] Peter Moses, personal interview by author, Kingston, Jamaica, November 16, 2017.

> "We went and played a game—the community team—and I did well. I can't say I won the game, but, I scored goals and, we won the game. And after the game, I'm coming out of the changing rooms, and the other team is waiting for me and starts beating me up, call me all kind of something. And *my teammates* stand up there and watch that. Right? So the following weekend—what [the team] used to do was blow the horn, in the car park, and I would come down. [Well] them out there a blow horn all 'til all now. [I] never went back to them. Okay, it's one thing to say, alright they didn't come and fight, but at least try and break it up."[45]

Moses was the only black player on the soccer team during his four years at Carnegie Mellon. The cultural shock arriving in Pittsburgh from Kingston, Jamaica literally made him sick. "Within the first week, I was in the hospital for ten days" after he fainted because of the foul smells from the steel mills in the city. His deteriorating physical health was accompanied by his mental health that suffered from feelings of alienation and estrangement. "Every night, my biggest thing was crossing an X over the end of that day. Just counting down the days." Moses' brightest moments came when he was able to cultivate trans-national experiences with other students. "My room became a mini-United Nations…especially when I had the Jamaican White Rum and Jamaican pudding. You had the white Americans, you have Asians, you have Africans, you have Black Americans, you have Indians, all in ah the same place. And them all talking to each other, and laughing, but once them go outside, them gone again."[46] The recruitment practices at Howard University provided a more anti-racist and hospitable environment. While Howard's soccer team still faced racial discrimination throughout the 1970s, they found ways to create new socialities across nationalities, that centered around the circulation of black cultures and identities.

Diasporic Conviviality

[45] Moses, personal interview by author, November 16, 2017.
[46] Moses, personal interview by author, November 16, 2017.

Their overseas recruitment trips also became potential opportunities for diasporic solidarity. For example, prior to Howard University's final match against the Jamaican Olympic team, they were introduced to Michael Manley, the leader of the People's National Party, and the future Prime Minister of Jamaica, at the University of West Indies-Mona.[47] While there is no record of what occurred at the meeting, it is important to note Michael Manley's avid interest in the political significance of sports, particularly as it related to diasporic black teams. For example, he wrote an exhaustive and definitive account of the West Indies Cricket team that details the history of the sport in the context of Caribbean political and cultural history.[48] For Manley, West Indies cricket is, "at a political level...the most completely regional activity undertaken by the people of the member states of the Caribbean Community, CARICOM. It is also the most successful co-operative endeavour and, as such, is a constant reminder to a people of otherwise wayward insularity of the value of collaboration."[49] With this in mind, we can suggest that the political and diasporic importance of Howard University's soccer team was rather apparent to Manley, and their recruitment trip to Jamaica represented a prime example of their commitment to this politics of collaboration, or black teamwork.

More explicitly, when the soccer team travelled to Nigeria in the summer of 1974, they endorsed "the venture in an attempt to improve the human relations between all people of African heritage, to *practicalize* the rhetoric of Pan-Africanism, and to recruit top Black athletes throughout the "Triangle of Blackness" which includes Africa, South America and the West

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[47] "Bisons End Tour on Losing Note," *The Daily Gleaner,* Jan. 10, 1972.
[48] Michael Manley, *A History of West Indies Cricket* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1988).
[49] Manley, *A History of West Indies Cricket,* xii. See also, James, *Beyond a Boundary*. Indeed, the West Indies Cricket team, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s provide an equally fruitful example of the formation and articulation of black teams and black teamwork.

Indies, and the United States" (italics added).[50] When Phillips arrived in Nigeria, the chairman of the Nigerian Football Association, Shola Rhodes, served as Phillips' tour guide and took him to club games and introduced him to players. According to Phillips, "I'd sent the Nigerians detailed questionnaires on their favourite food, music, and movies. I also knew their nicknames in advance." For Howard University, the diasporic recruitment of black footballers did more than improve the soccer program, it contributed "to the establishment of a closer relationship between black peoples situated all over the world. [Phillips] believes that by maintaining a multinational squad he will be more effective in tying together cultural gaps."[51]

At Howard University, their desire to form a multinational squad produced moments when their national classifications were dismissed altogether. During their championship season in 1971, Phillips explained that he practiced his team so hard "that they would forget about their nationalities."[52] Indeed, "instead of forming nationality cliques and hanging together as Jamaicans or Africans, the guys began to form a soccer clique and began having parties as a team."[53] On the Howard soccer pitch, the fluidity of black idioms and languages were often heard in seamless dialogue. "Some say 'that man is a beast;' others say 'him bad to raated' or 'him bad no raas;' while yet others say he is an 'Eranko,' a Nigerian word that conveys the same idea. Coach Lincoln Phillips is known by his players as a hard taskmaster."[54] Stan Smith, captain

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[50] "Howard U. Soccer Team Looks to African Tour," *Atlanta Daily World,* Apr. 25, 1974, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/491421020?accountid=12861.
[51] "Will Howard Booters Rise Again?," *Chicago Defender*, October 26, 1974, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/493937351?accountid=12861.
[52] Ewart Brown, "Howard's Nationality Cliques Now Devoted Just to Kicks," *The Washington Post,* Oct. 31, 1971, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/148116419?accountid=12861.
[53] Brown, "Howard's Nationality Cliques Now Devoted Just to Kicks," *The Washington Post.*
[54] Winston Yallery-Arthur, "Coach Phillips- 'The Beast,'" *The Hilltop,* Oct. 12, 1972.

of the 1970 team and a student from Bermuda, explained that Coach Phillips helped bring the team together, "he instilled unity and determination into us and that's what carried us through the latter part of last season [in 1970]."[55]

As previously mentioned, the diasporization of Howard's black team was a political process, rather than a natural formation around the commonality of black skin. In 1970, many Howard students and administrators, perceived soccer to be a "foreign sport," and thus paid very little attention to the successes of the soccer team which reached the semi-finals of the NCAA soccer tournament. Stan Smith expressed his disappointment "with the way soccer is treated on [Howard's] campus. It is second best to all other varsity sports, and we don't have enough equipment although we are by far the most victorious squad."[56] The soccer team even scheduled their own homecoming games in 1969 and 1970 because "of a general feeling of alienation from the rest of the campus community."[57] However, in the following 1971 season, the Howard student body "awakened to the efforts and mood of their soccer players," which could be observed by "the overall turnouts for the team's practice sessions and games."[58]

With the increased support, the diasporicity of Howard's black teams cannot be reduced to the players and coaches, but rather extended to include the student body, including the University marching band and cheerleaders, who became energetic fans of their team. The Howard players communicated through the school newspaper, *The Hilltop,* a desire for the student body to continue "to come out to the games to support them."[59] Particularly, Lena Williams*,* the sports editor of *The Hilltop*, took an official "position of support of the team" and

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[55] Brown, "Howard's Nationality Cliques Now Devoted Just to Kicks."
[56] "Victory without support," *The Hilltop,* Oct. 23, 1970.
[57] Jeff MacQuarrie, "Soccer: No longer a foreign sport," *The Hilltop,* Oct. 15, 1971.
[58] MacQuarrie, "Soccer: No longer a foreign sport," *The Hilltop.*
[59] Lena Williams, "Howard defeats Maryland 2-0 for an undefeated season finale," *The Hilltop,* Nov. 19, 1971

"stuck to that position" by devoting "at least one or two soccer articles" per issue, which represented a drastic improvement "in comparison to last year."[60] At the beginning of the 1971 school year, Williams highlighted the many accomplishments Howard athletics made during the 1970 season, including the soccer program, "an almost dormant sport on Howard's campus."[61] She hoped that 1971 would be the "Year of the Black Athlete" in Howard's "ultimate goal of becoming a Black University," and soccer was a critical sport in the achievement of that goal.[62] For sure, in the days leading up to the 1971 NCAA finals in Miami, Williams predicted that "our soccer team will return from Miami victorious," and "that their performance will, as it is presently doing, help bridge the gap between Pan African sisters and brothers on campus."[63] These gestures of diasporic solidarity did not go unanswered. Throughout the 1971 season, thousands of Howard students attended soccer games and nearly 250 students traveled to Miami for the NCAA Championship.[64] In the locker room after their 1971 Championship win, a reporter asked Ian Bain, a Howard University midfielder from Trinidad, what the victory meant to him, Bain tried to explain that he anticipated "the victory would bring brothers and sisters on Howard's campus closer together." The reporter looked confused and Bain clarified that "this was a victory for *our* people, Black people."[65] The choice of pronouns—ours, instead of theirs (African Americans)—points to the ways in which the team's success is bound up with the

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[60] Lena Williams, "Say listen…," *The Hilltop,* Dec. 10, 1971.
[61] Lena Williams, "Say listen…," *The Hilltop,* Sept. 17, 1971.
[62] Williams, "Say listen…," *The Hilltop,* Sept. 17, 1971.
[63] Lena Williams, "Lena Predicts," *The Hilltop,* Dec. 17, 1971.
[64] See, Williams, "Howard defeats Maryland," where she describes the game against the University of Maryland as having "approximately 1,200 Howard booters" to support the team. In a separate article, Williams reported that "about 1,000 supporters" attended the game against Catholic University, see Lena Williams, "Soccer Team Continues Winning Streak," *The Hilltop,* Nov. 5, 1971.
[65] Richard Douglas, "R.D. raps with Ian," *The Hilltop,* Jan. 28, 1972.

success of other black subjects, dissolving national differences and recognizing the common positionality of blackness in relation to the West.

The diasporicity of Howard's black teams also manifested in a soundtrack of the black diaspora. On several occasions, Howard students would "dance to calypso tunes" provided by the University Marching Band, and even added "a little half-time entertainment to support them."[66] During two games against the Navy in 1970 and 1971, the band played a critical role in the team's success. In 1970, the team played at the Naval Academy and, according to Phillips, they "deliberately locked us out of their dressing rooms and we were forced to hustle to our bus for a little warmth at half-time." However, the support the team needed came in the form of their marching band "which appeared from nowhere in the second half."[67] In the 1971 rematch, the game was held at Howard's stadium, and the Navy "were greeted at the Howard campus by the menacing sound of African drums and a pumped-up crowd that knew all about the icy lockout. For some of the young West Indian and African players who had failed to grasp the racial significance of Howard's rise, this was the match that made it all sink in."[68] When Lena Williams interviewed three players from the team, Mori Diane, Sam Tettah, and Winston Yallery-Arthur, after they won the 1971 NCAA championship, "the brothers admitted that the band gave them an added lift in Miami. They believed that the presence of the band "psyched" the minds of many spectators and helped us especially in that first game."[69] At the 1970 championship banquet, Howard University's black team adopted the visual aesthetics of the African diaspora and "entered the banquet hall dressed in colorful African dashikis." As Phillips

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[66] Douglas, "R.D. raps with Ian," *The Hilltop.*
[67] Lincoln A. Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar: The Life Story of Lincoln Tiger Phillips* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2014), 70.
[68] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 70.
[69] Lena Williams, "Three champions in retrospect, *The Hilltop,* Feb. 4, 1972.

recalls, the room was stunned as they were probably thinking "Why the hell did we invite these people here in the first place."[70]

These expressions of diasporic consciousness—the dismissal of nationalities, the increased support from Howard's student body and newspaper staff, a recognition of commonalities through the use of pronouns, and the musical and visual aesthetics of the African diaspora—demonstrate the ways in which soccer became a space for black subjects to escape colonial ideologies and national differences, and create diasporic identities and solidarities. The recruitment of Trinidadian, Jamaican, and Nigerian students marked a shift away from traditional NCAA recruitment practices that excluded and commodified black athletes. Chambers' and Phillips' decision to personally recruit in these nations challenged colonial logics that marked African and Caribbean athletes as individualistic and incapable of understanding team concepts. For Howard University, the talents of black athletes represented a fusion of body and mind. Their recruitment practices were constituted by a different epistemology of blackness and black athletes, one that rejected tropes of black hyper-physicality and bodily excess that find its originary conception in nineteenth and twentieth century codes of colonial racial science. In short, their recruitment practices constituted a diasporic black politics that challenged the presumptions of the "European myth."

Howard's black team also created new spaces of diasporic sociality where national differences appeared fleeting, and diasporic identities appeared prioritized. Richard Iton is helpful to think about fleeting nationalities. He suggests that for nonwhites, "nationality is not only doubtful and improbable but indeed impossible and, furthermore, that these impossibilities

[70] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar*, 72.

themselves might be seen as desirable and appealing."[71] Iton argues that the "model of the nation-state was not designed to apply to these entities constituted by nonwhites," and that such arrangements should at the very least be recontextualized by black communities. Iton's conceptualization of diaspora as an anaformative and alternative culture of (dis)location that "resists hierarchy, hegemony, and administration"[72] and Stuart Hall's attention to the "play of 'difference' within identity" helps us understand the diasporic identity of Howard's black team. While Iton interrogates the different potentials of diaspora as a "rediscursive albeit agonistic *field of play* that might denaturalize the hegemonic representations of modernity…and bring into view its repressed, colonial subscript,"[73] Hall uses the word play because "it suggests, on the one hand, the instability, the permanent unsettlement, [and] the lack of any final resolution" as it relates to identities.[74] At Howard University, the black team was constituted by black subjects of the diaspora whose relationship to the nation-state, was at the very least recontextualized in a way that revealed their common positionality of marginalization in relation to the West, and modern sport in particular. This is not to suggest that their individual national blacknesses lose significance, but rather demonstrates the ways diaspora "works across, within, and against, states."[75] Hall's double use of the word play is meant to highlight the ways in which this fluidity of black diasporic identity is "'playing' within the varieties of Caribbean musics."[76] However, I want to suggest that the 'playing' of football, and the social context in which it is played—is also a central space where hybrid diasporic identities are forged. My conceptualization of diasporic

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[71] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar*, 195.
[72] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar*, 200.
[73] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar*, 201.
[74] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 228, http://muse.jhu.edu/book/34784.
[75] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 201.
[76] Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," 228.

fields of play, then, refer to the spaces of antagonism, and sociality, from which black athletes resist racial hierarchies, complicate national allegiances, and attack colonial institutions of modern sport. The articulation of black teamwork at Howard University mobilized these diasporic fields of play and its anaformative potential against the Americanization of soccer through the techinques, sounds and aesthetics of the African diaspora.

However, the recruitment of players from different black nations did not inevitably result in a utopian collective where all members unified across national differences. According to Phillips, rivalries emerged between players for starting positions, and disagreements often occurred along national distinctions. He explained that, "the more we went along, the more diverse the team became, and the more difficult it was."[77] He recalls that for the first two years, in 1970-71, the team was predominantly made up of Trinidadians. In 1972-73, following the recruitment of more Jamaican players, regional rivalries threatened the previously established team chemistry. However, the addition of "six talented Nigerians and one Ghanaian proved one thing: Any previous tension between Trinidadians and Jamaicans had been a joke."[78] With the arrival of new athletes from different countries, a lot of the veteran players on Howard's team were cut and efforts to mobilize around a diasporic identity were blocked because of national and cultural tensions. Phillips remembered how "the Nigerians had a harsh way of talking, and the Jamaicans were sensitive to perceived slights. Guys fought in the dressing room," and when the team captain, Ian Bain, tried to break up a locker room fight, he "took a serious right hand that left him with a black eye."[79] At times, subgroups formed along ethnic lines. When Phillips recruited the cohort of Nigerians in 1974, he was completely unaware of the intra-national

[77] Phillips, interview by author, July 5, 2017
[78] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar*, 88.
[79] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar*, 88.

divisions that existed among them. Indeed, one of the Nigerian players admitted to Phillips that "he couldn't understand his fellow Nigerian, because of the different dialects...I figured they would have problems understanding a Jamaican, but they had problems within themselves! One was a Yoruba, one was an Ibo, and they didn't particularly like each other. And when they mixed with the Jamaicans, *wow! It was volatile.*"[80] For Phillips, he was more concerned with managing the team, than coaching them. One way they dealt with internal problems was to have what Phillips called "manos manos," which he loosely translated to "man to man" talks. These were deliberative sessions where the players could "speak in any language they wanted to...Sometimes they would get mad, they would curse and all of that."[81] Phillips undoubtedly occupied a position of authority on the team, yet these were one of the moments when the players could "cut loose."[82]

Coloniality of NCAA Soccer

Regardless of their internal struggles, Howard's black team faced more threating challenges from their external opponents. Indeed, during the 1971 finals, a Sports Illustrated writer labelled them "a mysterious outsider" in the field of collegiate soccer, even though Howard had already won a National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) championship in 1961 and reached the NCAA semifinals in 1970. From as early as 1970, the white teams and disciplinary institutions of the NCAA demonstrated a concern about the emergence of Howard University. During their time of dominance, the soccer team had "run into the age old problem; if you're Black, get back."[83] Coaches complained about playing at

[80] Phillips, interview by author, July 5, 2017.
[81] Phillips, interview by author, July 5, 2017.
[82] Phillips, interview by author, July 5, 2017.
[83] Millard Arnold, "...And Another Thing," *The Hilltop*, Dec. 4, 1970.

Howard's stadium because of the field's poor conditions, while other coaches remarked on their "insolent behavior," and felt they had a "chip on their shoulder."[84] Referees also officiated their games unfairly, rarely stopping play when an opposing team fouled one of the Howard players. According to one of the players on the team, "they don't want a black team in the nationals. They don't want us to win."[85] On one occasion, against Philadelphia Textile, the officiating got so bad that "fighting finally broke out (which underdog Howard won)."[86] Accordingly, the referees were not the only authorities positioned against Howard. The Philadelphia Police were also present at the game "to protect the good white folks in case there was anymore trouble out of those 'savages' from Howard University."[87] The Philadelphia Textile's coach referred to Howard as "animals" and "savages" and declared that "he would never play Howard again."[88] Similarly, at the Orange Bowl in Miami during the 1971 finals, "the scene...was enough to rival Dempsey's long count over Jack Johnson, and the early racist treatment of Jackie Robinson, as a new low in American sports. As the hostile Orange Bowl crowd jeered the foreign-born players, and a Florida police dog roamed the Bison's sideline."[89]

Phillips recites occasions where white teams would call his players niggers, intentionally try to physically injure them, and discriminated against their program by refusing to play games at Howard's stadium. Phillips recalls that "on an American soccer pitch in the 1970s, that string of vowels and consonants, arranged just-so and *bearing the odious power of centuries of accumulated hate*, was not uncommon" (italics added).[90] However, Phillips stressed to the team

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[84] Arnold, "...And Another Thing," *The Hilltop*.
[85] Arnold, "...And Another Thing," *The Hilltop*.
[86] Arnold, "...And Another Thing," *The Hilltop*.
[87] Millard Arnold, "Howard advances to NCAA semifinals, face UCLA," *The Hilltop,* Dec. 4, 1970.
[88] Arnold, "...And Another Thing," Dec. 4, 1970
[89] Tony Brown, *Black Journal,* "Why Play Fair?," episode in author's possession, directed by Stan Lathan (New York: Educational Broadcasting Corporation, 1973).
[90] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar*, 68.

"don't let the n-word throw you off."[91] According to Phillips, when their opponents called them niggers he would tell them *not to get mad*, "get smart. Put the ball in the back of the net and come back and say 'take *that* from the nigger.'"[92]

The unwelcomed success of the outsider/nigger, and the decentering of the epitome of American soccer, St. Louis University, put pressure on the racial hierarchies and exclusions of the NCAA. Following their championship victory in 1971, the NCAA received letters of concern about the eligibility of some of Howard University's players, which led to an official investigation in 1972. As Phillips explained to *Ebony Magazine,* "soccer has always been a game dominated by white Europeans, and the local schools are a little jealous." The team felt that "it seemed *white* foreigners were alright—the University of Maryland had won the championship with a team full of them—but *black* foreigners weren't."[93] During the fall season of 1972, NCAA officials investigated the eligibility of four players, Keith Aqui, Winston Yallery-Arthur, Mori Diane, and Tony Martin. This investigation occurred during the 1972 season in which Howard University had hoped to defend their championship. Before the semifinals match against familiar foe, St. Louis University, Howard's Athletic Director, Leo Miles instructed Coach Phillips "not to play four more players…(to be on the safe side of the NCAA rules)."[94] Prior to the match, NCAA officials warned Miles that they could be disqualified for playing the athletes under investigation. This action not only resulted in a Howard defeat, but "a rising tide of vicious rhetoric" aimed at Miles, whom Howard students charged with using a "'Tommish' attitude in

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[91] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar*, 86.
[92] Mark Wright, *Redemption Song,* online documentary, directed by Kenan Holley (2016; ESPN Films, 2016), digital release, http://theundefeated.com/videos/redemption-song/
[93] "Bisons Kick Their Way to Top," *Ebony,* January 1973, 52, https://books.google.com/books?id=atcDAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA42&dq=bisons+kick+their+way+to+the+top+ebony&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjbu5eE5d_hAhWpiOAKHdAOD3QQ6wEIKzAA#v=onepage&q=bisons%20kick%20their%20way%20to%20the%20top%20ebony&f=false
[94] Jeffrey MacQuarrie, "Tribute to a championship team," *The Hilltop,* Jan. 19, 1973.

dealing with the NCAA investigation." As another student reported, "when Brother Miles did that, it was an admission of guilt to the NCAA; it was a display of fear of the superstructure; it was debilitating to the morale of the team; it was simply fucked up."[95] While many expressed their anger toward Miles, other students pointed toward the racist nature of the NCAA as the real source of blame. "The NCAA is a racist organization...However, they have a monopoly on the athletic situation in this country and they must be dealt with. They are our problem…not Leo F. Miles."[96] Mori Diane suggested that "the NCAA...have tried in a lot of ways to keep us away from the championship."[97] At the championship banquet that followed the Howard defeat, Phillips declared that,

> "St. Louis did not beat Howard University last night. They beat the remnants of what was left of Howard University. And, I think the NCAA were the strongest team we had to play this year. I must admit that they're a good team, they tackle very hard, and they hit you from all sides, and it's pretty tough to get yourself back together. Anytime they decide to get together to deprive any people of what is due to them, I think that this is racism. I would say that the NCAA is guilty of practicing racism against Howard University. We lost the game but we won the battle. You see? This is serving to make us stronger and stronger all the time. Because we played against this entire wretched system of this society. We played *against* the system."[98]

Phillips, with the support of the team, articulated a black politics that revealed the racial practices of the NCAA.

Shortly after the banquet, in January of 1973, the NCAA completed their investigation and found that from 1970-1972 the university's soccer team committed three violations. The first, known as the "five-year rule" required that student-athletes must complete their seasons of participation within five years from the beginning of their first semester of their freshman year.

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[95] Oswin Rose, "Miles, NCAA and system defeat a smiling Coach Phillips," *The Hilltop,* Jan. 19, 1973
[96] MacQuarrie, "Tribute to a championship team."
[97] As quoted in, Brown, *Black Journal,* "Why Play Fair?"
[98] As quoted in, Brown, *Black Journal,* "Why Play Fair?"

The second law, known as the "foreign-student rule," disqualified foreign student-athletes who participated in athletic competition in their home country for at least three seasons after their nineteenth birthday and prior to their NCAA membership. The final law is known as the "1.600 rule" which requires institutions to limit scholarships to students who predicted at least a 1.600 grade point average as determined by the SAT and ACT.[99] As their punishment, the NCAA stripped Howard University of their 1970 semifinals placement, their 1971 championship, and suspended them from post-season play during the 1973 season.

From the moment Howard lost in the 1972 semifinals, after being hit "from all sides," they consistently questioned the motives behind the NCAA's actions and challenged the charges. President of Howard University, James Cheek, responded to the charges as being "not only unintelligible and ambiguous but are vague and invidiously discriminatory since they establish one set of standards for American athletes and another set of standards for foreign athletes." However, Cheek argued that the NCAA discriminated against the *blackness* of the foreign student-athlete. "This discrimination in the present instance is heightened by the fact that the student athletes in question are natives of Black Nations."[100] Aside from the formal charges, Howard's soccer team was guilty of being a dominant black team that interrupted the project to Americanize soccer. Indeed, Phillips was convinced that the NCAA was "discriminating against our school…Our big mistake was to win the NCAA soccer title. Last year we did exactly the

[99] Howard University v. National Collegiate Athletic Ass'n, 367 F. Supp. 926 (D.D.C. 1973), https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/367/926/1425636/.
[100] "Cheek questions NCAA, terms action discriminatory," Statement by James Cheek, *The Hilltop,* Jan. 19, 1973.

things we have been doing for 100 years, but after we won the championship they tell us we are wrong."[101]

The investigation of Howard University's soccer team should also be understood in a wider context of the NCAA's backlash against the rise and politicization of black athletes in the late 1960s and 1970s. Howard's critique against the NCAA was not just in response to their particular situation, as Cheek noted, "a number of institutions of higher education have expressed grave concern about the NCAA's eligibility rules especially as they are applied to Black athletes."[102] This concern was even expressed in the Senate by Marlow Cook, a white Republican from Kentucky, who asked "why every investigation that I have heard about over the past few years has involved only black athletes?"[103] Listing a number of black players who had recently been the subject of NCAA investigations—"Duke and North Carolina State over David Thompson, Southwest Louisiana over Dwight Lamar...Western Kentucky over Jim McDaniels and his teammates"—Cook added to an increasing chorus that began to point out the racial governance of the NCAA and its investment in policing and denying the rights and humanity of blacks, particularly in the wake of the revolt of the black athlete. Additionally, former sports columnist of the Washington Post, David Dupree, highlighted that black colleges that had been admitted to the NCAA with nearly undefeated records were "mysteriously excluded" from major basketball tournaments. During the same time NCAA officials penalized Howard University,

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[101] Alex Yannis, "Howard is Upset by Loss of Title: Soccer Coach Calls Action of N.C.A.A. Discrimination," *New York Times*, Jan. 14, 1973, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/119707638?accountid=12861.
[102] "Cheek questions NCAA," *The Hilltop.*
[103] As quoted in, "N.C.A.A. Gets a Question: Why Are Only Blacks Investigated?," *New York Times,* Mar. 29, 1973, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/119638753?accountid=12861.

Southern Louisiana obtained a restraining order against the NCAA, as they felt they were being "persecuted for heavy recruiting of black players in the South."[104]

After the NCAA charged Howard University with the infractions, Cheek declared that they would appeal the charges. "Until this matter is finally resolved, Howard University has no intention of surrendering its 1971 Intercollegiate Soccer Championship."[105] In 1973, Howard appealed the charges in the District Court of Washington D.C. following the NCAA's decision. Mori Diane, a Guinean student and member of the soccer team, along with University representatives, argued that the NCAA ruling "denied freedom of association, due process of law and imposes a badge of servitude" in violation of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments.[106] On the other hand, the NCAA believed "the case should be dismissed for lack of jurisdiction."[107] The NCAA argued that they were a private institution and therefore, student athletes, particularly at Howard University, another private institution, were not protected by the Fourteenth Amendment. However, the courts declared that because the member institutions of the NCAA, and even the executive board of the NCAA were represented by a majority of public institutions, the influence of the state was "pervasive" in the constitution of the NCAA. Moreover, in a decision that represented a victory of sorts for Howard, District Judge Gerhard Gesell ruled that the "foreign-student rule" was indeed unconstitutional and that it discriminated against foreign

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[104] "Howard Put on Probation, Stripped of '71 Soccer Title: NCAA Slaps Howard," *The Washington Post,* January 11, 1973, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/148489824?accountid=12861.

[105] "Cheek questions NCAA, terms action discriminatory," Statement by James Cheek, *The Hilltop,* Jan. 19, 1973.

[106] Tim Robinson, "NCAA Suit Filed by Howard," *The Washington Post*, June 8, 1973, http://turing.library.northwestern.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/docview/148465498?accountid=12861; See also, Gesell, "Howard University v. NCAA."

[107] Edward Tamm, "Howard University v. National Collegiate Athletic Association Howard University," 510 F.2d 213 (D.C. Cir. 1975), https://openjurist.org/510/f2d/213/howard-university-v-national-collegiate-athletic-association-howard-university.

student-athletes. However, that was not the only violation charged against Howard, and Judge Gesell nevertheless maintained that the University violated the "1.600 rule" and "five-year rule" and upheld their punishment to return the Championship. According to the Judge, although the NCAA rules "need to be tightened and simplified," this does not "lead to the conclusion that their implementation has been discriminatory...or that in this particular case there is any justifiable ground for Howard's unintentional but admitted violations."[108] He took a similar stance against the grievances brought by Diane related to the denial of due process charges. Gesell argued that "the due process complaint of Diane is also without merit, for he has not even pursued the remedy which the NCAA sincerely and openly continues to tender to him. An individual athlete may obtain a hearing on any penalty imposed upon him...but Diane has never requested such a hearing."[109] In other words, according to Gesell, Diane's complaint is reflective of his own fault.

The athletic success of Howard University, within the context of the coloniality of sport, was policed and managed through the dehumanization and criminalization of blackness. Similar to the process of racial epidermalization, NCAA soccer became a space where race was made, and blackness was subjected. In this sense, the opponents who marked them as animals, savages, and niggers, the racial governance of officials, and the physical policing of the team—which is to say, the coloniality of NCAA soccer—made Howard's soccer team a "black team," where they were "denied [their] specificity, dissected, fixed, [and] imprisoned by the white gaze."[110] As we

[108] Gesell, "Howard University v. NCAA."
[109] Gesell, "Howard University v. NCAA."
[110] Simone Browne, *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2015), 97.

have seen, however, Howard's soccer team mobilized around their blackness and diasporicity to resist the coloniality of sport.

Furthermore, I want to suggest that the failure of the courts to provide justice for Howard's black team was also "to be expected." Returning to Iton's discussion about the incompatibility of nation-states and black citizenship, we can also imagine how the national institutions which oppress black peoples, in this case the NCAA and state governments, cannot be the same systems that provide redress and grievance. Scholars of fugitivity have explained the ways in which narratives of freedom and liberty are imbricated with practices of bondage and resubordination, thereby eliminating any possibility of justice, in the liberal lexicon, for black subjects.[111] As Saidiya Hartman and Stephen Best argue, "judicial models of redress often require that claims fit a legal paradigm of individual rights."[112] However, aside from making difficult claims to justice that focus on "group oppression and structural inequalities," the problem with the paradigm of individual rights, as it pertains to black demands for justice, is that it places "temporal limits...upon the duration and finality of a wrong," hence "African Americans are guilty of their own wrong" because of their "unreasonable delay or negligence in pursuing a right or claim."[113] When Howard University appealed the NCAA's charges, these were the very obstacles they faced in receiving said justice. To be clear, Howard's soccer players did not self-identify as niggers, nor did they idly sit back and accept this violent racialization and legal shortcomings. Rather they deployed techniques that recognized the thriving potential of

[111] Stephen Best and Saidiya Hartman, "Fugitive Justice," *Representations* 92, no. 1 (November 1, 2005): 1–15; Barnor Hesse, "Escaping Liberty: Western Hegemony, Black Fugitivity," *Political Theory* 42, no. 3 (June 2014): 288–313.
[112] Best and Hartman, "Fugitive Justice," 8.
[113] Best and Hartman, "Fugitive Justice," 8.

occupying the positionality of the nigger, or as Christina Sharpe and Frank Wilderson encourage, inhabiting the space of the hold.[114]

Howard's black teamwork consisted of a set of diasporic practices that unsettled and revealed the colonial and racial constitution of modern sport's governing bodies--in this case the NCAA. Importantly, the emergence of Howard's black team occurred in spatial arrangements that we can think of as diasporic fields of play, the spaces of antagonism that generated decolonial critiques of modern sport, and modernity itself. The construction of diasporic fields of play and black teams at Howard University took place in relation to three interrelated processes of the coloniality of sport; the exclusion, commodification, and criminalization of black athletes. Paradoxically, sporting governing bodies commodified and policed black athletes precisely because of their structural positioning outside the bounds of humanity. The black soccer teams at Howard University during the 1970s articulated an expression of black teamwork that challenged the racialized exclusionary practices of the coloniality of sport, refused the capitalistic and national logics of commodification, and imagined alternative forms of racial justice that redeemed the shortcomings of the post-civil rights era.

Gendered Constitution of Howard's Black Teamwork

Howard's diasporic black politics, however, did not absolve them from the problematic ways in which they organized around other identities, particularly gender and sexuality. Howard's black team represents the gendered and sexualized construction of what Hazel Carby has conceptualized as race men, and the ways masculinity is "connected to ideas of race and

[114] Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2016); Frank B. Wilderson III, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2010), 2.

nation."[115] Carby's critical intervention allows us to complicate the utopian undertones of black solidarities which tends to associate leadership and agency with black masculinity, while black women are relegated to the background, and black queer subjects foreclosed altogether.

The black team at Howard University adopted a narrative of leadership that was constituted by hegemonic expressions of black masculinity. Particularly, the team's Pan-African mission was only possible with black men, particularly from Howard University, as the "ambassadors" of the black race, "and ambassadors must be at their best--not often, but always."[116] Lincoln Phillips imagined the Pan-African world "on this field--African and Caribbean people, surrounded by their American brothers."[117] The Pan-African struggle in the triangle of blackness was one that involved the physical activity of black men.

Notably, in the context of a sports stadium, the gendered hierarchy is revealed as masculinity is associated with the active players on the field, while femininity is mapped onto the Howard University cheerleaders, and the broader "supporting" crowd on the sidelines. Describing the scene at the 1971 finals, Phillips mentions how the stands were filled with their "traveling supporters, many of them from the West Indies...On the sidelines, pretty Howard cheerleaders in short skirts bobbed and pranced. The starting eleven was seven Trinidadians, two Bermudans, one Guinean, and one Ghanaian...Our team was black; theirs was all white."[118] It appears the blackness of the team is dependent upon a gendered hierarchy where black women and femininity more generally, are relegated to the margins. If the position of the ambassador was constituted by black masculinity, the position of the supporter was constituted by black

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[115] Carby, *Race Men*, 5.
[116] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 71.
[117] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 71-72.
[118] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 73.

femininity. As previously mentioned, if we account for the ways in which those positions of support--the marching band, cheerleaders, and general fans--constituted the black team, then it is necessary to highlight how this constitution is gendered in ways that feminizes supporters and masculinizes leadership. In the 1970 game at Naval Academy, the support by the band only appears significant, not because of the music they provided--in fact, their musical performances were never mentioned in his account of the game--but because they were "stocked with long-legged girls."[119] Accordingly, the cohesion and sociality of the black team was only possible through the sexual objectification of black women. In the aftermath of their 1971 championship, Howard's team was rated number one and,

> "Were very popular with the ladies. The sororities auctioned dates with hand-picked soccer players. Even our non-playing manager crowed about getting his fair share. Howard's campus was like any other tertiary education institution's--there was lots of sexual tension and, undoubtedly, lots of sex. And it wasn't only the Howard campus where our boys were stars. Whenever we traveled to a school with a small number of black students, they turned out to cheer for us rather than the home team. The women always cheered harder."[120]

Phillips reveals the relationship between diasporic solidarity and the sexual objectification of black women. Indeed, the solidarity was the objectification. These sexist and gendered constructions of the black team at Howard University exposes the limits of their particular articulation of black teamwork.

Moreover, the black team adhered to heteronormative structures of sexuality that reinforced heterosexuality and excluded queer black masculinities. Phillips recalls how his team respected him because he "was married, and they respected [him] as a parent."[121] Some of the players even considered Phillips and his wife Linda as their parents. Some of the players "loved"

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[119] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 70.
[120] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 78.
[121] Phillips, interview by author, July 5, 2017.

Phillips because he "took them home for feeding."[122] Apparently, Linda would protest whenever he "called on short notice to say that the gang was coming," because she did not "have food for twenty men."[123] The players respected Phillips because he represented dominant heteronormative representations of black masculinity, and the black family, that relegated black women to the domestic realm where their labor is at the expense of black men. The framing of Linda's role as the wife of Coach Phillips reflects the broader scholarship that frames the wives and girlfriends of male athletes as "fulfilling the expectations of mainstream femininity, and thus affirming compulsory heterosexuality and archetypal manliness."[124] The appreciation for heteronormativity was also reflected in Howard University's recruitment trip to Nigeria in 1974. During his recruitment efforts, Shola Rhodes, who was the chairman of the Nigeria Football Association, agreed to be Phillips scout and took him to club games and introduced to him to players. However, a difficulty arose when some of the players "tried to stay clear of [Rhodes]. It was rumoured that he was gay, and they were all quite homophobic. Being in Rhodes's company, they believed at first that I was also homosexual."[125]

The anti-queer sensibilities not only constitutes the black team at Howard University, but they reflect what Richard Iton conceptualized as thin black solidarities. According to Iton, the main chasm within contemporary black discourse and politics, is the difference between thick and thin solidarities. These solidarities emerge in the collective pursuit of black interiority, particularly in the post-1965 period. Thick solidarities are those sensibilities that "seek to

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[122] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 66.
[123] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 66.
[124] Mariann Vaczi, "Dangerous Liaisons, Fatal Women: The Fear and Fantasy of Soccer Wives and Girlfriends in Spain," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 51, no. 3 (March 4, 2014): 304, https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690214524756.
[125] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 86-87.

challenge and disrupt conservative constructions of the relationship among the properties of race, sexuality, gender, class, and nationality." Thick solidarities imagine spaces of conviviality that are allergic to exclusive practices, transcending "the modernity/colonialiality complex with its related hegemonic and suppressed conceptual fields."[126] Thin solidarities, in contrast, represent a more narrow set of possibilities. They correlate with "the circulation and promotion of respectability discourses and attempts to represent the black community as a closed, coherent and manageable text."[127] The diasporic fields of play and the formation of black teams at Howard University in the 1970s, while threatening the Americanization of soccer and the racial hierarchies of the coloniality of sport in general, left in place and was complicit in the marginalization, sexualization, and objectification of black women and black queer men. In short, while national differences disappeared, Howard's black team maintained gendered and sexual differences, enacting discursive and exclusionary violence to those not in the central field of play.

Conclusion

Howard's team created alternative spatial forms of justice that resisted anti-black practices and the coloniality of sport. They balanced their racialization as a black team, with their identification as a black diasporic team. In an effort to escape the stranglehold and racial constitution of modern sport, and the Americanization of soccer in particular, Howard's black team embraced their diasporic formation and made gestures of diasporic solidarity throughout

[126] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 149.
[127] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 149; Elsewhere, Iton refers to these two sets of sensibilities of black political thought and practice as "open- and closed-text blaccknesses," where open-text blackness represents a "reflexive" mode of black politics, while closed-text blackness adheres to a "teleological" form of black politics, see Iton, "Still Life," 30.

the campus. Throughout the fights, disagreements, and court cases, Howard University's soccer team emerged as a black team of the diaspora. Prior to the 1974 season, Phillips

> "felt the moment where we invited one of our professors, Dr. Dom Basil Matthews, to address the team was when everything fell into place for the staff and players. In that discussion, Dr. Matthews talked about the Atlantic slave trade and the triangular trek slave ships took from Europe to Africa to pick up slaves, to the Americas to drop off the slaves and pick up raw materials to then return to Europe for manufacturing. Dr. Matthews explained that our team represented a reversal of that triangular journey our ancestors endured and the players were engaged in what he called a "Triangle of Blackness," designed to win and achieve as the descendants of those who were historically beaten down in a country where the struggle to be respected and relevant continued. It was some fairly heady stuff that blew everyone away."[128]

The Triangle of Blackness is a helpful starting point to conceptualize the diasporicity of black teams, particularly at Howard University. Similar to Paul Gilroy's Black Atlantic, the Triangle of Blackness is constituted by the routes and roots of racial slavery, rejecting claims to national fixity, and revealing the circulation of blackness throughout the Atlantic world. However, with and beyond the roots/routes dichotomy, the Triangle of Blackness appears more to what Richard Iton refers to as an "alternative culture of location and identification to the state,"[129] or what Christina Sharpe may identify as "black being in the wake."[130] Matthews' conceptualization of the Triangle of Blackness accounts for the histories of racial slavery and colonialism that haunt and, indeed constitute the present of black life. Matthews' reference to slave ships, and the institution of Atlantic slavery marks the ontological emergence of blackness, and the ongoing structures that continue to subordinate and dehumanize black communities. Sharpe suggests that living in the wake, or, as I am suggesting, the Triangle of Blackness, "means living the history and present of terror, from slavery to the present, as the ground of our everyday Black

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[128] Tom Dunmore, "Q. and A. With Lincoln Phillips," *The New York Times,* Jan. 4, 2013, https://goal.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/01/04/q-a-with-lincoln-phillips/.
[129] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic*, 200.
[130] Sharpe, *In the Wake.*

existence."[131] The black team at Howard University positioned themselves within the Triangle of Blackness, playing for the conviviality of black communities, and against the persistent existence of the coloniality of sport, and the Americanization in particular. The Triangle of Blackness is a spatial imagining of the black diaspora that emerges from the Atlantic slave trade but not reducible to the geography of the Atlantic world. As Edouard Glissant reminds us, "the West is not in the West. It is a project"[132] that is complicit in maintaining modern representations of white superiority and nonwhite subalterneity. Accordingly, the Triangle of Blackness is an effort to conceptualize "a theory and a praxis of Black being in diaspora."[133]

To inhabit the Triangle of Blackness is not a problem to be resolved and overcome, but rather a promising option with which to live. While efforts to realize justice within the justice system are important (even if they seem counter-intuitive at times), equally important are the ways in which to dwell in the space where legal justice is always already unavailable for black subjects. After Matthews' introduced the team to his concept of the Triangle of Blackness, they adopted a quote from poet William Cullen Bryant "that had often been repeated by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in his civil rights speeches:" Truth crushed to earth shall rise again.[134] Phillips explained that "the truth was that we were the best college team in the United States. The truth was that the forces of the NCAA had been arrayed against us ever since we'd humbled the soccer powerhouses. The truth was that we'd been crushed by an unfair interpretation of the rules, and we would rise again."[135] Indeed, at the end of the 1974 season, Howard University faced off

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[131] Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 15.
[132] Edouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*, Caraf Books (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1992); 2, footnote 1.
[133] Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 19.
[134] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 98.
[135] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 98.

against St. Louis University, again. After a match that went into triple over-time, Howard University scored the golden goal to win their second championship in three years. On this occasion—and thanks to the prior ruling that deemed the "foreign-student rule" unconstitutional—the NCAA had nothing to say. This is why soccer, diasporic fields of play, and black teamwork are indeed vital. They provide an alternative sociality where black athletes can exist as humans and realize new forms of justice that resemble the likes of physical revenge and articulate collective grievances around racial injustice.

Phillips returned from the Nigeria trip with six new players on scholarship. Apparently, the questions about his "sexuality didn't bother any of them enough to keep them away."[136] That season, the Howard University Bisons seeked "revenge" from the unfair treatment they faced the past 2 seasons by the NCAA. Disrupting the Americanization of soccer, Howard University's black team in 1974 was the "best college team ever to play on American soil."[137] Throughout the entire season, the team adopted the theme, "truth crushed to earth shall rise again," and was motivated by a desire to win the championship again. In 1974, Howard boasted a 17-0 record in the regular season and won the NCAA championship for a second time, finishing with a 19-0 record, the best NCAA soccer record to date.[138] According to Phillips, "we didn't just win it; we took it."[139] For Howard University, the win represented a moment of redemption that restored their place as NCAA champions and struck "a blow against injustice."[140]

While the achievement of the 1974 championship is to be celebrated, not least because it represented a major disruption in the project to Americanize and whiten soccer, it is still subject

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[136] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 87.
[137] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 91.
[138] Wright, *Redemption Song.*
[139] As quoted in, Wright, *Redemption Song.*
[140] Phillips, *Rising Above and Beyond the Crossbar,* 72.

to criticism. I want to complicate the redemption narrative and the celebration of the championship by suggesting that its achievement was only possible through the anti-queer politics of the black team. Indeed, the recruitment of players who "were all quite homophobic" raises questions about the boundaries of diasporic fields of play and the requirements of membership. While the formation of black team's at Howard University during the 1970s represents a major shift and departure from hegemonic representations of blackness, and black athletes, it nevertheless remains embedded in the gendered and sexualized structures that constitute the dominant expressions of black masculinity.

Pelé's arrival in New York represented a major shift in the ways the U.S. positioned black soccer players. Contrary to the exclusionary practices of the NCAA against Howard, there was now a desire to include blackness in the game. While Pelé was undoubtedly the best soccer player during the 1960s, he was infamous for his political neutrality and rarely had a critique against race and racism. In this context, his departure from Brazil was timely because during the late 1970s and early 1980s, black footballers started to articulate a form of black politics that resisted the military dictatorship and institutional anti-blackness.

CHAPTER 3:

Black Corinthians Democracy

Although the North American Soccer League (NASL) featured black players from the Caribbean and Africa, it was not until the arrival of a black Brazilian, Edson Arantes do Nascimento, better known as Pelé, that the NASL became a national sporting phenomenon. Pelé specifically joined the New York Cosmos to help popularize the game in the United States. Soccer enthusiasts considered Pelé the best footballer of all time, not only because he won three World Cups (1958, 1962, and 1970), but also because of his dominance on the club level in São Paulo. Indeed, his time at Santos football club was filled with state and national championships as they unseated the other most dominant São Paulo club prior to his emergence, the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista (simply known as Corinthians). For 23 years, Corinthians witnessed the dominance of Pelé, but could do nothing to stop him, until he left for New York in 1975. Immediately following his departure, Corinthians regained control of the state championships.

The Corinthians resurrection also coincided with the political *abertura* (opening) in Brazil that accelerated the brewing democratization of society. Their play on the field reflected this opening, and players began to play with more freedom and style. However, their play off the field took on a more serious project. From 1981-1985, the Corinthians football team reconstituted themselves as a democratic team that challenged the military dictatorship and the oppressive structures of Brazilian football, what we can understand as the coloniality of football. Rebranded as Corinthians Democracy, the team embarked on democratization project that included everybody in the club on matters specific to the organization. From the players, to the coaches, to the masseur, to the bus driver, everyone was given a vote on the club's operations.

Furthermore, the Corinthians Democracy movement emerged out of the context of the workers movement of the late 1970s, and the leadership of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (better known as Lula)--the future president of Brazil. While the dominant history of Corinthians Democracy frames the movement as democratic, it equally frames the movement as colorblind to racial hierarchies--obscuring the role black players had in the democratization of football.

In this chapter, I argue that Corinthians Democracy was an articulation of black politics, and black teamwork in particular. In the early 1980s, members of Corinthians Democracy deployed two techniques to prioritize the representation and participation of blackness within and against the Brazilian nation-state. These techniques were their black style of play, and their participation within and against governmental politics. In each instance, Afro-Brazilian footballers exposed the occlusion of blackness within the city and state of Sao Paulo, imagining an alternative order where blackness is not reduced to commodification, but rather articulated along a continuum of black resistance. I trace the trajectory of Afro-Brazilian football, particularly at Corinthians, to situate it as black aesthetic politics. In the 1930s, these stylistic politics countered the dominant discourse of racial democracy that framed this style as "mulatto football." According to the discourse of racial democracy, mulatto football represented the cohesion of a racially mixed Brazilian nation. Yet a critical reading of this style suggests a different effect. In the 1980s, the Afro-Brazilian style of play not only challenged racial discourses, but gender and sexuality discourses as well, offering an alternative expression of black athletic masculinity. The black aesthetic politics of the 1980s also merged with the black formal politics of Afro-Brazilian footballers. Black players on the Corinthians believed their best medium for black politics was to engage with formal--governmental and labor--politics. Utilizing the stylistic and formal grounds of black politics, black footballers in Corinthians envisioned a

society that centered blackness, not just as entertainment, but as a viable articulation of resistance.

Sport Club Corinthians Paulista, Racial Democracy, and Afro-Brazilian *Craques*

The early football clubs in Brazil were created by early European settlers in the nineteenth century. The "mythical introduction of soccer to Brazil" begins with Charles Miller, the son of a Scottish father and Brazilian mother, who travelled to England for school and learned the rules of the game.[1] Upon his return to Brazil, the game had "a small and scattered presence in Brazil," however Miller is traditionally celebrated as the "father of Brazilian soccer" for his efforts to institutionalize the sport throughout the country.[2] While Miller is celebrated for his efforts, particularly in São Paulo, a similar trajectory unfolded throughout the country. Indeed, Oscar Cox went to school in Switzerland, his father's home country, and returned to Rio excited to spread the rules and ethics of the game. Similarly, Cox's schoolmate in Switzerland, Antônio Casemiro da Costa, returned to São Paulo and assisted the efforts of Miller to spread the game. In São Paulo, the big clubs were formed around an elite class of different ethnic groups yet sought to maintain a general sense of Europeanness in football affairs. The game alone was not enough to win the hearts of the local elite. More so was the game's "set of values"--fair play, teamwork, and an amateur spirit--that appealed to Brazil's elite society.[3]

During the first decade of the twentieth century, São Paulo and Rio became major centers of "big soccer" (*futebol grande).* A major characteristic of this organization of football was its social exclusivity to white elites. The Rio club, Fluminese, members had to be "all established men, heads of firms, high ranking employees of the great [business] houses, sons of rich fathers,

[1] Kittleson, *The Country of Football*, 16.
[2] Kittleson, *The Country of Football*, 17.
[3] Kittleson, *The Country of Football*, 17-18.

educated in Europe, accustomed to spending."[4] Membership into São Paulo AC and Paulistano, for example, was restricted to "men of 'good family' and ample resources."[5] Indeed, in São Paulo, "First Division clubs demanded that their associated players be literate, at a time when illiteracy was enormous."[6] Miller proposed football be included in the São Paulo Athletic Club, and by 1895, began to organize a number of football matches. While Miller and São Paulo AC had an English cohort of footballers, additional elite teams emerged throughout the city centered around different ethnic European identities. German immigrant, Hans Nobiling, for example, created his own team with some friends and, accordingly, called themselves the Hans Nobiling Team. Following a match against a team from Colégio Mackenzie in 1899, Nobiling wanted to re-name his team Germania. However, considering the team contained players from a range of ethnicities, they decided to call themselves Sport Club Internacionale. Nobiling would get his way after he, along with other Germans and German-Brazilians, left the club and formed SC Germânia. By the start of the twentieth century, the *futebol grande* clubs of São Paulo organized themselves and created the Liga Paulista de Futebol (Paulista Football League), where they would enjoy the exclusivity of elite participation for nearly a decade.

Gradually, *futebol grande* was threatened by a more socially inclusive organization of the sport, known as "small soccer" (*futebol pequeno*). Soccer historian Roger Kittleson demonstrates how elite Brazilians experimented with other sports such as cricket, horse-racing, and the "king of sports," rowing.[7] These sports served as social activities for white men, and promoted "a

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[4] Mário Rodrigues Filho, *O negro no futebol brasileiro* (Mauad Editora Ltda, 2003), 34. All the translations for this chapter were conducted by the author.
[5] Filho, *O negro no futebol brasileiro*, 21.
[6] "A primera grande festa da 'Fiel,'" *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 1, (1979): 4.
[7] Kittleson, *The Country of Football*, 20.

particular sort of man, one unafraid of showing off his modern physique." Moreover, the social exclusivity of rowing was more pronounced than in football, where Afro-Brazilian and white working-class immigrant communities organized the game outside the official jurisdiction of the *futebol grande* leagues. Football's simplicity and accessibility, with the minimal equipment required to play--a ball and open space--solidified football as the dominant leisure activity of the *povo* (people, common folk) in Brazil by the 1910s. The mainstream press criminalized football on the working-class level, and disparaged matches that occurred in open lots (*várzeas*). Specifically, this form of the game was most popular among poor white and Afro-Brazilian communities.

The white *futebol pequeno* clubs of the *várzeas* were formed around different identities, such as ethnicity, occupation, or general friendship. Football quickly spread throughout the country, and the European football tours throughout Rio and São Paulo during the early twentieth century helped popularize the game amongst poor white European immigrants and their children. In the ethnically diverse district of Lapa in São Paulo, the Lapa Athletic Association was "the English of the neighborhood," while Italian immigrants in Lapa and the Bom Retiro district created Palestra Italia in 1914, and would later become the famed Sociedade Esportivo Palmeiras. In 1910, the Rio club, Fluminese, invited the Corinthian Football Club from England to play a number of exhibition matches. During their tour, the English club played in Sao Paulo and played against the local teams of the LPF. Following their win against the Associação Atlética das Palmeiras (not to be confused with the Palmeiras club formed from Palestra Italia), a group of five friends--a painter, a taxi driver, and three general workers—

decided to materialize their weeks-long mission of forming a football club.[8] Inspired by the impressive play of the English club, the friends decided to name their club the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista, and in the following days, established a board of "14 people, all poor. There were 7 Italians, 5 Portuguese, and two Brazilians."[9] According to Antonio Pereira, one of the original founders of Corinthians, they originally played in Botafogo, but when "the police closed it down," they "had no team" and needed to reorganize. While Pereira argued that they should have a Brazilian name, rather than a European one, the rest of the members all agreed upon Corinthians.

The club's origin myth is steeped in a discourse of social cohesion that unified the working-class communities that lived in the Bom Retiro neighborhood near the São Paulo Railway. Their working class origins and ethos were reflected in their uniforms, as their shorts were "made of bags of flour," and their cream-colored shirts became white after successive washes. Corinthians prided itself on being a club that represented the masses of Brazilians, and their fan base, *Fiel* ("the Faithful"), was "formed by people of the people, people who did not have access to other clubs, all of which were elite." While they were "a team with no money," they "intended to transform football [and] massify a sport of the elites."[10] After three years of playing their matches in the *várzeas* of Bom Retiro, they earned a spot in the Paulista Football League after they defeated two of the best teams in São Paulo at the time, Minas Gerais and São Paulo Football Club. Corinthians became the first popular working-class football club in the

[8] "E assim nasceu o Corinthians," *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 1, (1979): 3.
[9] "O Corinthians, por seu fundador," *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 1: 5.
[10] "A primera grande festa da 'Fiel,'" 4.

Paulista Football League and proceeded to win twelve state championships (Campeonato Paulista) in the next three decades.[11]

However, the formation of Corinthians emerged during a project of whitening the Brazilian nation. Indeed, Brazil passed legislation that restricted immigration based on race, prioritizing European immigration while they "prohibited the entry of 'Africans.'"[12] Indeed, the neighborhoods of São Paulo were made up of a range of European immigrants, including Germans, English, and Italians who moved to the neighborhood for employment opportunities on the São Paulo Railway as a result of this "whitening-through-immigration" initiative. Moreover, political scientist Tianna Paschel argues that Brazil promoted European immigration not only to address a declining labor supply, but also because of their adherence to discourses of racial eugenics that circulated during the early twentieth century. Brazil, in particular, was a central site for debates in the eugenics movement, and discussions about how to 'improve' the human race.[13] Football was central to this project to produce "healthy citizens" which was restricted to the domain of whiteness. In Brazil, "issues of health and degeneracy were largely inseparable from pseudo-scientific ideas of racial difference."[14]

In the face of social and political exclusion, and the broader project to de-blacken the nation, Afro-Brazilians created their own social organizations. These recreational clubs hosted local dances and created a sense of sociality amongst communities.[15] Indeed, following the end of slavery, many of the displaced freed Africans migrated to the city center of São Paulo where

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[11] "16 vezes campeão," *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 4 (1979): 51.
[12] Tianna S. Paschel, *Becoming Black Political Subjects: Movements and Ethno-Racial Rights in Colombia and Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 31.
[13] Paschel, *Becoming Black Political Subjects*, 32.
[14] Paschel, *Becoming Black Political Subjects*, 32.
[15] Kim D. Butler, "Up from Slavery: Afro-Brazilian Activism in São Paulo, 1888-1938," *The Americas* 49, no. 2 (1992): 181, https://doi.org/10.2307/1006990.

they hoped to secure employment. By 1890, blacks comprised 17% of the city's population, and gradually constructed social networks that promoted a sense of racial uplift and respectability.[16] The publication of Afro-Brazilian newspapers in the 1920s connected this network of black social spaces and activities. In the state of São Paulo, three important publications represented an outlet for Afro-Brazilians to create a sense of cultural and political identity: *Getulino, Clarim d'Alvorada,* and *Progresso*. While these publications started as literary journals, they quickly began to mobilize around social advocacy. For example, the co-founder of *Clarim,* Jose Correia Leite, wanted to organize all of the São Paulo recreational and social clubs into a unified confederation to advocate for their rights. These networks of racial uplift were bolstered by organizations such as the Centro Cívico Palmares and, later, the Frente Negra Brasileira (FNB) in 1931.[17] The name of the former group reflects the ways Afro-Brazilian politics identified with a history of slave resistance, specifically through the memory of Afro-Brazilian quilombos--communities of fugitive slaves in Brazil--and Palmares, in particular, the largest and most organized quilombo that existed from 1604-1696. These publications and organizations was part of the growing landscape of black communities in São Paulo, and also reported on the different sporting achievements of Afro-Brazilians.

Athletic clubs also garnered support and became a popular outlet for most Afro-Brazilians. According to Roger Kittleson, historian of Brazilian football, "soccer became part of alternative 'black worlds' within cities like São Paulo and Salvador."[18] Indeed, black Brazilians established their own clubs and leagues operated outside the governance of the first and second divisions of Brazilian football. For example, one of the oldest Afro-Brazilian athletic clubs was

[16] Butler, "Up from Slavery," 182.
[17] Butler, "Up from Slavery," 192-197.
[18] Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 24.

the Associação Athletica São Geraldo of Barra Funda--a neighborhood in the city of São Paulo--created by the working-class black community, usually manual laborers, packers, and porters. For sure, the most popular sport in the Associação was football.[19] In 1929, "black youths [created] an association for the practice of football" called the "Clube Onze Gallos Pretos" (the Club of Eleven Black Roosters), and organized themselves based on the racial uplift model of São Geraldo and another all-black club, Club Atlético Brasil.[20] In Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, former slaves in the Navagentes neighborhood and the Colônia Africana near downtown, took over the old playing grounds of SC Internacional when the latter secured a new lot to build a stadium. In 1920, these footballers created the Liga das Canelas Pretas (Black Shins League), in response to their exclusion from the first and second divisions of Porto Alegre.[21] Similar to clubs throughout Africa, Afro-Brazilian football clubs in Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul, and Campinas, São Paulo chose names that reflected an anti-colonial and revolutionary past. Particularly, "the mulatto hero of abolitionism," José do Patrocínio, became a popular name for black football clubs. Such clubs competed amongst themselves, but occasionally played against white *várzea* teams, especially as matches that celebrated the history of abolition. For example, the black newspaper, *Progresso*, reported on the "traditional encounter" between "Preto x Branco" (Black vs. White), "instituted...by the athletes themselves...with the aim of celebrating Abolition."[22] Similarly, Club Atlético Brasil played a white team to commemorate the centennial of the black abolitionist Luiz Gama's birth.[23] Indeed, racial integration began to define Brazilian

[19] Butler, "Up from Slavery," 188.
[20] José Paulo Florenzano, *A democracia corinthiana: práticas de liberdade no futebol brasileiro* (EDUC, 2009), 147.
[21] Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 24.
[22] Florenzano, *A democracia corinthiana,* 147.
[23] Butler, "Up from Slavery," 188.

social relations during the 1930s as the slow decline of the eugenics movement in the 1920s and the threat posed by Nazi Germany encouraged Brazil to conceptualize racial mixture, or *mestizaje,* as a positive rather than a negative component of Brazilian society.

In response to these international developments, Brazil embarked on a national project of tropical modernity through the discourse of racial democracy. Rather than construct their nation in the image of Europe, they recognized the racial diversity, or mixture, of Brazilian society and centered this *mestizaje* at the center of *brasilidade* (Brazilianness). The publication of Gilberto Freyre's *Casa Grande e Senzala* (*Masters and Slaves*) in 1933 popularized the doctrine of racial democracy in Brazilian society. This doctrine included Afro-Brazilian culture in the official representation of the nation and portrayed to the world an image of Brazil as a "homogenous race with the virtues of Europeans, Africans, and indigenous peoples combined."[24] Indeed, this made Brazil's articulation of "mestizaje" different from other Latin American nations. The dominant expression of mestizaje throughout Latin America emphasized the mixture of European with Indigenous communities and completely ignored the African constitution of Latin American identity. In theory, racial democracy was a highly inclusive enterprise that sought to decenter whiteness as the organizing race of the nation, nevertheless, Brazil's construction as a modern nation-state was intimately related to blackness and indigeneity.

Freyre identified the materiality of racial democracy in the field of Brazilian culture, and football in particular. Brazil's new embrace of Afro-Brazilian culture coincided with the formation of the World Cup during the 1930s. The World Cup convinced national governments, particularly in Latin America, to adopt football as a medium for nationalism and to secure their place in modernity. Importantly, the performances of defender Domingos da Guia and center

[24] Paschel, *Becoming Black Political Subjects,* 34.

forward Leônidas da Silva in the national team led to an association of Brazilian football with the *povo*, and Afro-Brazilians in particular. In an article written after the 1938 World Cup, Freyre reflected on the style and contributions of the black players on the team, calling it "mulatto football."[25] He praised Brazil for having "the courage to send a strong Afro-Brazilian team to Europe," and connected this fact to their strong performance. According to Freyre, the Brazilian style of play, which is to say, "the great mulatto style," was constituted "by a set of qualities of surprise, cunning, ingenuity, looseness and at the same time of individual spontaneity." He related this "mulatto style" to dance, and capoeira in particular--a martial art created by enslaved Africans in Brazil as a form of resistance. According to Kittleson, "it was Leônidas as much as anyone who inspired the formulations of Brazilian soccer as essentially Afro-Brazilian."[26] Moreover, Da Guia, Da Silva, and Afro-Brazilian football became central symbols of Brazilian racial democracy. The centering of the *povo* in the national culture was a radical departure from the earlier period of whitening, and imagined the cohesive nation characterized by the diversity of the population.

Similar processes of racial democracy on the Brazilian national team (*Seleção),* also occurred on the local level, particularly in São Paulo. At Corinthians, the identification with the Afro-Brazilian population fully developed during the 1930s. Corinthians' location made it a convenient club to integrate the diverse communities of São Paulo, including the Afro-Brazilians, particularly during the embrace of racial democracy. While Bom Retiro was a largely Italian neighborhood, the Corinthians organized themselves at the intersection of Jose Paulino and Conego Martins streets, near the São Paulo Railway. The railroads separated Bom Retiro on

[25] Gilberto Freyre, "Football mulato," *Diario de Pernambuco,* June 17, 1938.
[26] Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 40.

the east, from the Barra Funda neighborhood to the south-west. The railroads were a major employer of Italian, Portuguese and Afro-Brazilian men, usually as porters and packers. Importantly, the Afro-Brazilian workers who lived alongside the tracks "created athletic clubs and informal samba parties," and would have been aware of the popularity of Corinthians.[27] Football anthropologist, José Paulo Florenzano, suggests that the black community in São Paulo identified with Corinthians, particularly after Getulio Várgas' Estado Novo banned racially particular clubs such as the Associação Athletica São Geraldo of Barra Funda. According to Florenzano, the historic rivalry between Palmeiras (formerly Palestra Italia) and Corinthians, especially during the 1930s, "would constitute the expressive metaphor of the conflict inscribed in the heart of the metropolis of São Paulo between Italian immigrants and the descendants of slaves."[28] Indeed, during the 1930s, "the decade of football" in Corinthians history, a number of black footballers played for Corinthians and led the team to years of success.

Afro-Brazilian athletes popularized themselves amongst the Corinthians fans, the *Fiel* (Faithful), as top goal scorers (*artilheiros).* Two players that symbolized racial democracy on the local level, by way of their goal scoring prowess, were Teléco and Servílio.[29] Born Uriel Fernandes in Curitiba, Paraná in 1913, his grandmother gave him the nickname Teléco, whose meaning she couldn't explain, and originally played for the Curitiba club, Britânia. Corinthians became aware of Teléco during the 1934 Brazilian State Championships when he represented the Paraná state team and scored three goals against the São Paulo state team.[30] Although Teléco's side lost, his performance impressed the Corinthian representatives on the São Paulo team and

[27] Butler, "Up from Slavery," 184
[28] Florenzano, *A democracia corinthiana,* 148.
[29] Other black Corinthian players during the 1930s include the center forward Zeca Lopes, and the midfielder Brandão, both of which travelled to France to participate in the 1938 World Cup, albeit in reserve roles.
[30] Celso Unzelte, *Timão: 100 anos, 100 jogos, 100 ídolos* (Gutenberg, 2013), 43.

quickly signed him to a contract later that year.[31] The Corinthians fan base called him the "goal-man" (*homem-gol*), because of the title he held as the top goal scorer (*artilheiro*) in the São Paulo first division league (*Campeonato Paulistano* or simply the *Paulistão*) for five out seven years from 1935-1941. He had 9 goals in 1935, 28 goals in 1936, 15 goals in 1937, 32 goals in 1939, and 26 goals in 1941. In total, Teléco scored more goals (243) than he played games (234), averaging 1.03 goals per game, the highest scoring average of any Corinthians player. To understand the difficulty of this feat, Pelé, regarded as the greatest footballer of all time, had a scoring average of 0.93 throughout his career.[32] Teléco's performances made Corinthians the three-time Paulistão champion (*tricampeão*) from 1937-1939, their first championship in the era of professionalism.

Figure 1: Teléco, http://corinthiansotimedopovo.blogspot.com/2010/07/teleco.html

[31] "Coisas Esportivas," *Correio Paulistano,* December, 15, 1934.
[32] "Os artilheiros," *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 5, (1979): 69. While Teleco has the highest scoring average, the highest goal scorer in Corinthians history is Cláudio with 295 goals. There is also dispute as to whether Teleco retired with 243 goals or 255 goals.

Another *artilheiro* that Corinthians celebrated was Servílio de Jesus. Born in 1915 in São Félix, Bahia, Servílio joined Corinthians in 1938, and helped them win the Paulistão in 1938, 1939, and 1941. Following Teléco's dominance as the center forward, Servílio continued the goal scoring tradition in the 1940s, and became the top goal scorer of the Paulistão in 1945 (17 goals), 1946 (19 goals), and 1947 (20 goals).[33] At the end of his career, he finished as the fifth highest goal scorer in Corinthians history. Although Corinthians did not win the state championship from 1941-1951, Servílio led the team to become runners-up in 1942, 1943, 1945, 1946, 1947.[34] He also played for the *Seleção* six times, during the 1942 and 1945 Sul Americano tournament. Servílio arrived at Corinthians from the Bahian club, Galicia, but always "dreamed of being able to play for Corinthians."[35] Moreover, the racial constitution of the Corinthians-Palmeiras rivalry, as Florenzano gestures toward, was articulated by Servílio when he told reporters after a derby, "I don't like these Italians."[36]

More than their goals, the Corinthians fans adored Teléco and Servílio for their style. Teléco's signature move was the turn (*virada*). During games, "with his back to the goal, he turned his body in the air and kicked to goal."[37] Reporters admired the fact that he was "a tall mulatto" who "arranged himself and gave the ball a certain direction: the nets."[38] His signature style allowed him to create space in the penalty area, catch "the ball in fantastic turns, placing it in the net. So he quickly earned a nickname from the *Fiel*: King of Turn (Rei da Virada)."[39] Yet

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[33] "Os artilheiros," 69.
[34] "Servílio: O Bailarino Corintiano," *Placar,* July 1992, 42, Latin American and Caribbean Sport: Special Collections, University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign (hereafter UIUC).
[35] "O bailarino artilheiro," *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 5, (1979): 70.
[36] "Servílio," *Placar,* July 1992, 42, UIUC. A derby is a term for a game between two rivals.
[37] Unzelte, *Timão,* 43.
[38] "Teléco: 8 anos de gols," *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 5, (1979): 70.
[39] "Teléco: O Mais Fiel Dos Centroavantes," *Placar,* July 1992, 36, UIUC.

it was Servílio who "filled the crowd's eyes" with his spectacular style of play. He played alongside Teléco and won the 1938, 1939, and 1941 championships together. The player that usually distributed the ball to Teléco was Servílio. He was an unmistakably "tall, elegant black man who did what he wanted with the ball."[40] Nicknamed "the dancer" (*bailarino*) by fans and journalists, Servílio earned a reputation for "dancing in the field" and left his "opponents open-mouthed with his magic."[41] His dancing style was punctuated by "his long legs giving real ballet passes," and "his choreography in the field was only stopped to score goals."[42] Although Corinthians failed to win a state championship between 1941-1951, the *bailarino* "remained forever in the Corinthian minds as an artist, who charmed the fields of São Paulo and filled with joy all the fans who accompanied him on the field."[43]

Figure 2: Servílio, the dancer (bailarino), Placar, July 1992

[40] "O tri, pela 3° vez," *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 1, (1979): 14.
[41] "O bailarino artilheiro," *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 5, (1979): 70.
[42] "O bailarino artilheiro," 70.
[43] "Servílio: O Bailarino Corintiana," *Placar,* July 1992, 42, UIUC.

Figure 3: Servílio, Placar, July 1992

While the *futebol grande* clubs were separated from the teams of the *várzeas* based on class, they were both constituted by similar logics of race. Big or small, Brazilian football tended to be organized around ideas and practices of anti-blackness. The Corinthian idolization of Teléco and Servílio during the late 1930s and 1940s, suggests the club was an early pioneer in representing the predominantly Afro-Brazilian *povo*. However, the coloniality of football that constituted Corinthians was evident in its treatment of Euclides Barbosa, also known as Jaú, who played with Corinthians from 1932-1937.[44] Born in December of 1909, Barbosa worked as a carpenter and then a bricklayer in the construction of the Martinelli Building in São Paulo during the 1920s. He started playing for *várzea* teams in Barra Funda, and then as a backup goalkeeper for the second division team, Antarctica FC, of the Companhia Antarctica Paulista, a Brazilian brewing company. Frustrated with a lack of playing time, he switched his position and earned his reputation as a defender. It were Corinthian fans that gave Barbosa the nickname Jaú. One of his

[44] "'77, o ano da redenção," *Corinthião: Official Organ of the Sport Club Corinthians Paulista* 4, (1979): 61; Ronald Kotscho, "Quanto Tempo, Meu Deus," *Placar*, June 13, 1975, 34-37, UIUC.

strengths as a defender was his ability to head the ball, and one game a member of the crowd shouted "this negro even looks like that plane, Jaú," referring to the first Brazilian plane to cross the Atlantic.[45] Jaú's nickname reflects the way, as previously mentioned, Brazilians exoticized and fetishized blackness through the celebration of their allegedly inherent "corporal qualities."[46] Yet it was the overt racial discrimination that affected Barbosa the most.

Barbosa "lived moments of glory in the Parque São Jorge (the Corinthians' stadium)," but also "suffered disappointments."[47] After the journalist Tomás Mazzoni--who noted, after the Corinthians first championship in 1914, that the club excluded the "extraordinary midfielder David for being a 'colored.'"[48]--saw Barbosa play, he gave Barbosa a recommendation letter so he could play with the first division club. According to Barbosa, "it was the beginning of my martyrdom."[49] In an interview with *Placar Magazine*, with "eyes full of tears," he recalled his first disappointment with the club: "I arrived at Parque São Jorge on a Tuesday in November, 1932. Antoninho, the doorman, would not let me in. His justification was dry: 'Blacks do not enter here.' I sent for a director. The answer was the same. I left Mazzoni's letter and left." After Corinthians lost to Santos 8-0, "Corinthian leaders came to get Jaú at [his] home." He saw this as "the opportunity to comfort his wife and two children," and accepted the position. On his first day at the club, he "was met with ugly faces," and the players gave him a pair of football cleats that were "much bigger than my feet, pure clownery." As the team laughed at him, he realized, "this team is into politics," and knew that if he resisted, they would kick him off the team, "but rightly so." His only friend was José Pereira Guimarães who played with him in Barra Funda.

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[45] Kotscho, "Quanto Tempo," 36.
[46] Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 50. For this reason, I choose to refer to Barbosa by his real name.
[47] Kotscho, "Quanto Tempo," 36.
[48] As quoted in, Florenzano, *A democracia corinthiana,* 148.
[49] Kotscho, "Quanto Tempo," 36.

After further training, he signed a contract that was "exactly half of what he received in Antarctica," yet continued to play for the team for the next five years as he "hoped to receive more [money] over time."[50] While Barbosa "earned great prestige within the club"--he even became captain in 1934--the Corinthians organization never forgave him after he allegedly accepted a bribe from Palestra Italia before a derby in 1937. Although he never received the bribe, and Corinthians won the match, Barbosa was blamed for "softening the game...making it easier" for his opponents. After the club won the state championship at the end of 1937--with a hat-trick by Teléco in the final game--Corinthians released Barbosa and he signed a more lucrative contract with Vasco da Gama in Rio.

The discourse of racial democracy at Corinthians has its limitations. Not only did players like Barbosa suffer racial discrimination from the club, but even the apparent idolization of Teléco and Servílio were rooted in logics of anti-blackness. A central paradox of racial democracy was the simultaneous celebration of African culture in an allegedly raceless society. In order to project itself as a racially harmonious nation, Brazil symbolically included Afro-Brazilians, but politically subordinated them. According to Tiana Paschell, "the cost of inclusion...was the silencing of race and class-based dissent." Indeed, mulatto football highlighted the inclusion and stylistic innovations of Afro-Brazilians in the name of a unified mixed-race community. In short, racial democracy, and mulatto football in particular, "connects racial mixture to style," obscuring the ways black style, in particular, emerged out of a tradition of aesthetic resistance against racial hierarchies.[51]

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[50] Kotscho, "Quanto Tempo," 36.
[51] Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 47.

Contrary to the discourse of racial democracy that positions the aesthetics of Afro-Brazilian football as a utopian representative of the nation's racial transcendence, I argue that these aesthetics constitute a singularly black style. Afro-Brazilian football has its origins in the resistance of enslaved Africans on the sugar and coffee plantations of Brazil. As Gilberto Freyre notes, albeit in an essentialist rather than political way, "Brazilian *mulatismo* is marked by a taste of bending, of surprise, of flourishing that resembles steps of dance and capoeira. But mostly dance."[52] This quasi recognition of capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian martial art that enslaved Africans used for self-defense and resistance, reveals the politics of black style. The assertion of black aesthetics into a game that was meant to stunt black politics, was indeed political. Sylvia Wynter makes this point when she explains that "the art of cricket or of any sports is seen as a creative activity in its own right and one intimately linked to human existence...In other words the aesthetic ceases to be merely a residual social activity; it becomes centrally meaningful."[53] Wynter understands black style as generated not by "the code of technological rationality" but rather "the imperatives of the popular underground counterculture...derived from Africa, yet toughened, suffered a sea-change." The same underground culture that created the style of Afro-Brazilian football is the same "archipelago which gave rise to the Calypsoes of Sparrow; to the Jazz popular culture, the first universal music culture; to the Rastafarian reggae." Put another way, black style emerged from the "aesthetics of being alive."[54] Black style in Brazilian football is a space of black politics because it challenged the colorblind image of Brazil by centering the histories of racial slavery and the aesthetic tradition of black resistance. Indeed, "the aesthetics is

[52] Freyre, "Football mulato."
[53] Wynter, "In Quest of Matthew Bondsman," 12.
[54] Wynter, "In Quest of Matthew Bondsman," 12.

the politics."[55] The political nature of Afro-Brazilian football would become more clear in the 1980s.

Corinthians Democracy and Black Politics

The black aesthetic politics of players like Teléco and Servílio during the 1930s merged with the formal black politics of black footballers at Corinthians during the 1980s. What is commonly celebrated as "Corinthians Democracy" (1981-1985) was a movement of the Corinthians to formally democratize football. Led by the director of football, Adílson Monteiro Alves, and most notably, Sócrates, and to a lesser extent Wladimir, and Casagrande, Corinthians Democracy transformed the football club from what was once a dictatorial regime ruled by Vicente Matheus. The democratization project included every person--players, coaching and managerial staff, even the masseur--that was part of the club to have voting rights in their decisions. These included minor decisions such as which jersey to wear, to major decisions like abolishing the *concentração*--the system that kept players together in isolation the night before a game. Corinthians Democracy also generated a consistent stream of critics. "Leaders" emerged in the movement, although the players maintained everyone was involved. Two of the most impactful players of Corinthians Democracy--two players who don't receive as much credit in the historical record as a player like Sócrates--is Wladimir Rodrigues dos Santos (Wladimir), and José Maria Rodrigues Alves (Zé Maria). By 1982, Wladimir and Zé Maria had already secured their place in the hearts of Corinthians' fans, having started for the club as the left and right defenders, respectively, for over a decade. While Corinthians Democracy is rightly described as a democratic revolution of the club, albeit momentarily, the dominant history has failed to recognize it as a black political project that sought to position Afro-Brazilian culture within and

[55] Wynter, "In Quest of Matthew Bondsman," 12.

against the Brazilian state. Indeed, the careers of Zé Maria, and especially Wladimir, recentered football as a critical site for black politics--a relationship that was initiated by black Corinthians footballers from the 1930s-1950s. They did this by coupling their aesthetic with their formal politics, and, for a time, made football a cultural site for the articulation of a burgeoning black power movement in Brazil.

Following the artistic displays and goal scoring feats of black players like Teléco and Servílio that won the club seven state championships in seventeen years, Corinthians experienced a 23 year title drought from 1954-1977. If the Corinthians' fans equated the success of the team to the blackness of the Afro-Brazilian style, they just as passionately denigrated blackness and Afro-Brazilians for their failures. The Corinthians' "odyssey in search of a title" located the fault with Euclides Barbosa, the same athlete who suffered racial discrimination upon his arrival at Corinthians in 1932, and his departure in 1937. After his career with Corinthians, Barbosa became a journeyman footballer, playing with different clubs into the late 1940s. After he retired from football, Barbosa became an Umbandista--a priest of the Brazilian religion, Umbanda--in São Paulo. The religion is a hybrid between Candomblé, Kardecism, and Roman Catholicism, and has a minority of followers in Brazil across race and class although it is considered an Afro-Brazilian religion. Umbanda is a religion based on the possession of the body by Afro-Brazilian and indigenous spirits that offer advice to the possessed mediums. Moreover, umbandistas believe in the Orixás, the deities of the Yoruba religion of Nigeria and Benin. Enslaved Africans created hybrid religious systems based on the Orixás, and served as the spiritual center for many Afro-Brazilians. In the late 1950s, Barbosa was "one of the creators of the Iemanjá festival on the coast of São Paulo," an annual festival created in Salvador to honor the Orixá queen of the waters. By the early 1970s, Barbosa, or Father Jaú (Pai Jaú), had become

"one of the most traditional figures of São Paulo Umbandism."[56] Umbanda's identification as an Afro-Brazilian religion attracted the attention of the repressive Brazilian police who persecuted umbandistas throughout the major centers of the religion like Salvador, Rio, and São Paulo.[57] "One famous victim of the police was Euclides Barbosa," and among his contemporaries, "few priests took so much and were arrested as many times as he, to the point of being considered by some leaders 'the great martyr' of [Umbanda]."[58]

His martyrdom extended beyond his spirituality. Barbosa's spirituality and association with a religion that was largely stigmatized by Brazilian society coincided with the Corinthians title drought from 1954-1977. Indeed, a myth developed amongst the Fiel that Barbosa cursed the club because he sought revenge after Corinthians released him in 1937. Barbosa felt that the club targeted him "because of his fame as an [Umbanda] priest (*pai-de-santo*)."[59] Specifically, the *Fiel* believed Barbosa buried a frog under the field which, apparently, prohibited them from winning a championship. According to Barbosa, the accusation was "pure evil. My religion, the Umbanda, only teaches to do good. I do not deny that I was wronged by the Corinthians. But I still love them."[60] Nevertheless, Barbosa called it an "injustice," and highlighted the irrationality behind the claims. He explained that he left the club in 1937, and the club continued to win three titles afterwards, ceasing to win titles only after 1954. The Corinthians contempt for Barbosa revealed the coloniality of sport that constituted the logics of the club. Indeed, the Corinthians community targeted Barbosa for the blackness of his religion as the reason for their failures. The

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[56] Kotscho, "Quanto Tempo," 36; See also, Steven Engler, "Umbanda and Africa," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 15, no. 4 (May 2012): 13–35, https://doi.org/10.1525/nr.2012.15.4.13.
[57] Marcelo Beraba, "O Terreiro da Contradição," *Folha de São Paulo,* March 30, 2008.
[58] Beraba, "O Terreiro da Contradição."
[59] Kotscho, "Quanto Tempo," 35.
[60] Kotscho, "Quanto Tempo," 35.

story that he buried a frog under the field as a curse was a racialized demonization and fetishization of his spiritual beliefs that reflected the state sanctioned repression against Barbosa, other Umbandistas, and black religions in general. In reality, the cause for the Corinthians downfall was because of the rise of the club Santos, whose star player, Pelé, elevated as the best Brazilian footballer during the 1960s. Additionally, a dictatorial president ruled over Corinthians for a decade.

The club's presidency of Vicente Matheus was marred with allegations of corruption and criticisms from the *Fiel* about the overall management of the club. Matheus first served as president from 1959-1961, when his vice-president Wadih Helu, secretly organized against him and became president throughout the 1960s. In 1971, Matheus regained the presidency until 1981. Characterized as a "folkloric" figure, many Corinthianos considered him as "someone who cheated but did not steal and who was always ready to fight for the club."[61] However, the players considered his style to be dictatorial, which, at the time, reflected the broader political environment in Brazil. Indeed, he was close friends with the military dictator at the time, João Figueiredo, whom he invited to help celebrate the club's 69th birthday.[62] It was Matheus' contract negotiations, or lack thereof, that dissatisfied the players the most. This was because "Matheus strove to make the club revolve around himself," and used "most of his own money to fund the purchase of players."[63] In 1981, however, the club's regulations prohibited Matheus from running for another term, so he arranged for his vice-president Waldemar Pires to run as President and Matheus would continue to run the organization through his position as the new vice-president. In April, when it came time for the elections, "although they swapped roles on the

[61] Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 141.
[62] Andrew Downie, *Doctor Socrates: Footballer, Philosopher, Legend* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2017), 82.
[63] Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 141.

ballot paper, they planned to continue the same as before, with Matheus in charge and Pires his assistant."[64]

Pires was Matheus' straw-man for only a couple of months before he decided the club needed to move in a new direction. Matheus humiliated Pires and abused his power, refusing "to give up the president's office or parking space," and at one game, ordered his security to block Pires from sitting in the directors' box.[65] In August, three months after the elections, Pires demanded his rightful spot as president and ordered Matheus to finally step down. While Matheus initially resisted, he succumbed to the pressure and resigned. Pires hired Orlando Monteiro Alves as the new vice-president, and in November of 1981, Alves hired his son, Adílson as the director of football. The hiring of Adílson was an unusual choice because he was a sociology student at the University of São Paulo, and the fact that he was "bearded" symbolized his political identification with the left.[66] More importantly, however, he related with the players and created a more open environment where they could express their grievances.

Upon his arrival, Adílson immediately "endeared himself to Sócrates." Born in 1954, Sócrates Brasileiro Sampaio de Souza Vieira de Oliveira, better known as Sócrates grew up in a middle-class family and later moved to Ribeirão Preto, one of the richest cities in the state of São Paulo, when he was six. Sócrates' first football team was Raio de Ouro, and it was "his first taste of how tough things were outside his own little [middle-class] bubble."[67] He later joined the football club Botafogo in 1970, but was also studying to take the university entrance exams so he could fulfil his dream of becoming a doctor. Football in Brazil at this time was a game played by

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[64] Downie, *Doctor Socrates,* 133.
[65] Downie, *Doctor Socrates,* 133.
[66] Pedro Asbeg, *Democracia em Preto e Branco,* (TvZero 2014), online documentary, https://vimeo.com/106540322.
[67] Downie, *Doctor Socrates,* 12.

the lower classes, and Sócrates' father encouraged him to value education over his football career. In 1972, Sócrates enrolled in the University of São Paulo-Ribeirão Preto while he was still playing for Botafogo. Although the club was not enthusiastic about his arrangement to split time between football and school, he was one of their star players and they did not want to lose him. Indeed, Sócrates proved himself to be a valued footballer especially following the 10-0 defeat over Portuguesa Santista, a game in which he scored seven goals.

Sócrates was a player that exhibited a tendency to disobey the norms of the traditional footballer in Brazil. Aside from his medical career, Sócrates loved to drink and he lived an unapologetically bohemian lifestyle. After games, he would "go out with friends...or invite people round to his place where they would drink into the wee hours."[68] When he woke up with hangovers, he would "invent niggles and injuries and spend the morning on the massage table or in the sauna" to avoid practice. According to his teammate Basílio, "that happened all the time, it was very common."[69] Sócrates talked about his drinking and smoking in political terms. He exhibited the right to control his own body and equated his behavior to freedom of thought.[70] Adílson was attracted to Sócrates, his ideas, but also his political initiative. For example, in the beginning of 1981, he led a campaign amongst the players to get more shirts from their sponsors, Topper. The players were only given two shirts, and if they wanted more they needed to pay. Sócrates organized the players to "turn their training gear inside out so that Topper's name wouldn't appear on TV or in the newspapers. They all agreed and it instantly had the desired

[68] Downie, *Doctor Socrates,* 69.
[69] Downie, *Doctor Socrates,* 69.
[70] Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 144.

effect." Following their protest, Topper agreed to give the players ten shirts a month for their own use.[71]

Adílson gave the Corinthians players the freedom to express their grievances. When Waldemar Pires introduced Adílson to the team, what should have been a ten minute meeting lasted three hours.[72] This meeting laid the groundwork for the democratization of the club during the first half of the 1980s. They discussed concerns like bad contracts and the *concentração*--the system that isolated players the night before games. According to the athletes, they welcomed the change with open arms. The right defender, Zé Maria, "confessed not to have seen anything like it in his 12 years at Corinthians,"[73] because "we came from that closed archaic structure."[74] The left defender, Wladimir, wished the club made this change when he started playing with them at age 15. Indeed, the opening of Corinthians reflected the broader political environment of the *abertura* (opening) of Brazilian society. Adílson explained that they did "not have to accept life as it stands. We should question it, discuss it. Change, if need be. This is how the Brazilian people got the opening."[75] The movement amongst the Corinthians players was named "Corinthians Democracy" after the journalist Juca Kfouri summarized the movement at a debate in November of 1982. Kfouri felt that "if the players keep participating in decisions at the club, if the directors don't stop them, and if the enlightened media give them support, then what we'll see here is a democracy, a Corinthians democracy."[76] The PR man Washington Olivetto scribbled down the name on a sheet of paper and told Adílson, "I've got a name."[77]

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[71] Downie, *Doctor Socrates,* 136.
[72] Asbeg, *Democracia.*
[73] Jose Maria de Aquino, *Placar,* November 27, 1981, 61, UIUC.
[74] Asbeg, *Democracia.*
[75] Asbeg, *Democracia.*
[76] As quoted in Downie, *Doctor Sócrates,* 197.
[77] Downie, *Doctor Sócrates,* 197.

Between 1982-1983, Corinthians Democracy helped mobilize the São Paulo community at a time when the labor union movement, led by the future Brazilian president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, asserted their rights as workers against the military regime. They used their uniforms to convey their political messages. For example, prior to the 1982 Parliamentary elections, the first elections featuring legitimate opposition parties since the military dictatorship began, the team entered the field wearing jerseys with the phrase "Vote on the 15th." Moreover, after the team decided upon the name of the movement, they had it printed on the back of their jerseys in the beginning of 1983. In no time, "the government quickly banned the use of political propaganda on uniforms, and soon Corinthians players appeared with the logos of cleaning products or car parts."[78] In April 1983, players like Sócrates, Casagrande, and Wladimir participated in the "Diretas Já!" (Direct Elections Now) campaign to help pass the amendment that would secure direct national elections. According to Sócrates, if the amendment did not pass, he would play professionally in Italy. Indeed, the amendment failed to pass, and Sócrates signed a contract with the Italian club Fiorentina. The political maturation of Sócrates is notable, and historians have praised his efforts as the leader of Corinthians Democracy. In actuality, however, more players participated and to a larger extent than what historical and popular accounts suggest.

Although the press labeled Sócrates as the main leader of Corinthians Democracy, Wladimir Rodrigues dos Santos (Wladimir) played an equally important role in the Corinthians Democracy movement. Not only was he an Afro-Brazilian footballer who was radicalized by the São Paulo Movimento Negro in 1978, but he used Corinthians Democracy as a space to articulate the intersection between black aesthetic and formal politics. The erasure of Wladimir's

[78] Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 146; See also, Marco Aurélio Borba, "O Timão Cheia de Bossas," *Placar,* November 5, 1982, 50-53 UIUC.

politics from the dominant history of Corinthians Democracy, reflects the way the movement has been articulated through the logics of racial democracy. That is, the historical account of Corinthians Democracy as a racially inclusive movement obscures the specific ways it became a space to express a black political project, rooted in the histories and aesthetics of Afro-Brazilian resistance. To be clear, Wladimir is rightly regarded by football historians as one of the four leaders of Corinthians Democracy, along with Sócrates, Adílson, and the 19 year old center forward, Walter Casagrande Júnior (Casagrande). However, Wladimir's participation has yet to be studied with critical attention, resulting in the subordination of black politics within the larger Corinthians Democracy movement. To a lesser extent, yet equally important, Zé Maria, another Afro-Brazilian Corintiano, similarly used Corinthians Democracy as a space to engage with formal and informal black politics. His career as a city councilman and the sociality he created with other black footballers were critical in his articulation of black politics. Taken together, Wladimir and Zé Maria articulated a form of black teamwork that sought to participate in and against the Brazilian state--a state constituted by the logics and practices of anti-blackness.

Before the Corinthians Democracy movement, Wladimir gained popularity amongst the Corinthian fan base for his consistency and style as a left defender. Born on August 29, 1954, Wladimir was a home-grown Corintiano, making his first team debut in 1973, after he started in their youth system as a forward.[79] When he was selected to play for the first team, at just 18 years old, fans placed a certain amount of pressure on him. He represented one of "the first players of a generation that was born exactly at the same time when the Corinthians was champion for the last time," and the coach was fearful of not giving him a chance. Wladimir shouldered the pressure of the *Fiel*, however, and became a regular starter for club throughout

[79] Carlos Maranhão, "Sonho ou pesadelo," *Placar*, July 27, 1973, 20-21, UIUC.

the 1970s. Although he was a defender, Wladimir enjoyed advancing up the field to support the offensive attack. Under coach Milton Buzetto, Wladimir excelled at the position and technique, and caught the attention of Osvaldo Brandão, the coach of the Brazilian national team.[80] However, Wladimir only played one game in 1977 for the Seleção after he was cut from the team following the firing of Brandão and the hiring of Claudio Coutinho, a coach that stressed a doctrine of the *futebol-força* philosophy, and criticized the *futebol-arte* style of which Wladimir displayed.[81] Nevertheless, Wladimir's positional play helped Corinthians win their first title in 1977 Paulista state championship, ending the 23 year drought, and again--this time with the help of Sócrates--in 1979.

More important than his reputation as a Corinthians idol, however, was his commitment to racial and class politics. A couple of years before the emergence of Corinthians Democracy, Wladimir already exhibited a political awareness that was uncommon among most footballers. During a trying time in his career, when he was cut from the Seleção, suffered an ankle and foot injury, and even temporarily lost his starting position in Corinthians, he reflected on whether or not he wanted to continue to play football. He was "overwhelmed by the totalitarian structure of football that makes the player a victim of frequent injustices," so he prepared to take the entrance examinations for the School of Social Sciences at the University of São Paulo "interested in understanding 'the relations of the individual with society.'"[82] Unlike most Brazilian footballers, Wladimir did not consider the Seleção a goal. Instead, his dream was "to see my class freed from the structures and injustices that oppress it."[83]

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[80] José Maria de Aquino, "A Retranca Vai à Frente," *Placar*, November 14, 1975, 39-41, UIUC.
[81] For more information on the debate between *futebol-força* and *futebol-arte*, see Kittleson, *The Country of Football,* 93-129.
[82] As quoted in Mauricio Cardoso, "O garotinho com os pés no chão," *Placar*, October 26, 1979, 8, UIUC.
[83] Cardoso, "O garotinho com os pés no chão."

Indeed, Wladimir developed an analysis that understood race and class as mutually constitutive processes of oppression. In an interview with *Placar Magazine*, he articulated his politics in depth for the first time. In the late 1970s, he came "to the conclusion that prejudice is much more social than racial. I mean, poor creoles suffer more than rich creoles." Although this statement appears to suggest that Wladimir thinks class is more important than race, his evidence is explicitly racial. "From 1978 on - I never spoke about this - I began to be aware of the arbitrariness committed against the blacks."[84] Specifically, he cited "the case of the five black boys expelled from the Tietê Club...in São Paulo," which really "revolted me." He also noticed "the hidden prejudice" behind some of the criticisms he received from coaches and the press. Wladimir spoke from personal experience. In 1972, when he arrived at the club's stadium, the coach and former commander of the Military Police, Colonel Nilo Floriano Peixoto, prohibited him from entering because Wladimir forgot his athlete's identification card--although Peixoto knew Wladimir and always said hi when they saw each other.[85] He received similar racist treatment outside of football. While Wladimir drove home one night in 1974, the police pulled him over and balked "Hey, little blackie, where's the paperwork?" After they realized it Wladimir, they instantly asked for his autograph.[86] He "became more critical, lived with a staff from the University of São Paulo and read some books that influenced me, such as 'Negras Raízes' and a story by Décio Freitas about Quilombo de Palmares."[87] Wladimir's radicalization was deeply informed by the burgeoning movimento negro in São Paulo that stressed the importance of African history and culture. During *concentraãço,* Wladimir did "not like playing

[84] As quoted in Carlos Maranhão, "Vladimir abre o jogo da vida," *Placar*, May 16, 1980, 56, UIUC.
[85] Fábio Sormani, "Os dois mundos de Vladimir," *Placar*, June 26, 1981, 20, UIUC.
[86] Sormani, "Os dois mundos de Vladimir."
[87] Maranhão, "Vladimir abre o jogo da vida," 56.

cards. I take the time to read...and study." Specifically, he enjoyed the book *Roots*, and also took "a course on African language and culture...learning Yoruba, an African dialect."[88] Wladimir was deeply inspired by black histories of resistance and considered Martin Luther King, Jr., Che Guevara, and Bob Marley amongst his idols. Additionally, most likely inspired by his readings about Palmares, Wladimir identified with the Afro-Brazilian maroon leader, Zumbi, who was the King of Palmares. According to Wladimir, he identified with Zumbi because "he constantly fought for the liberation of the black race."[89] The racialization and radicalization of Wladimir's politics during the late 1970s, is critical in understanding his role in the Corinthians Democracy movement in the early 1980s. Particularly, Wladimir articulated black aesthetic and formal politics as a way to resist the cultural and political constraints on footballers, and black footballers in particular, during the 1970s and 1980s.

Wladimir's politicization encouraged him to play with more freedom and style as a defender. As previously mentioned, by the mid-1970s, he was known for joining the attack by advancing up the field and scoring goals. To his dismay, that role did not last, and he suffered a rather depressing time following his dismissal from the Seleção. He regained his passion for the game, however, in 1981. His teammate at Corinthians, Pita, explained that "[Wladimir] had two stages: one prior to the Seleção and another later...At first, he was only worried about his career, carrying himself as a good boy. This was good for his career and bad for him. After all, there is not only the player, but the person as well. With the disappointment he suffered in 1977, when he was cut from the Brazilian team that would go to the World Cup, he changed...He thought more about his private life. Then he found the balance."[90] Wladimir found this balance when "he

[88] Maranhão, "Vladimir abre o jogo da vida," 56.
[89] Asbeg, *Democracia.*
[90] Sormani, "Os dois mundos de Vladimir," 21.

decided to set up a dance academy...at Vila Maria in the north of São Paulo."[91] Wladimir explained that he's been "taking capoeira classes and my reflexes and agility have increased within the field. In fact, I think every player should practice capoeira as well." The school had "200 students instructed by three teachers, in a variety of dance activities: classic and children's ballet, jazz and capoeira, rhythmic gymnastics [and] yoga." Wladimir attends the dance academy "almost daily...to see how things are going," and even considered expanding the facilities to accommodate the increasing popularity of the institution. The Brazilian football media, however, constituted by logics of racial democracy and scientific racism, ceased the opportunity to fetishize black bodies and reduce the relationship between dance and Afro-Brazilian footballers to a natural and corporal association. *Placar* argued that "football...is a dance done in the nick of time," so it is no surprise "that blacks, sound and rhythm in the blood, prove to be stars."[92]

As he predicted, the dance school and capoeira lessons had an immediate effect on Wladimir's play. The agility, reflexes, and quick thinking developed by his capoeira training prepared him for two "sensations of football" he had never experienced: "to score a goal outside the penalty area, and face [the Rio club] Flamengo."[93] Although the game ended in a tie, Wladimir scored "a wonderful kick, precise, perfect." After 27 minutes, "a rebound was left for Vladimir on the right side of the Flamengo midfield," and "suddenly, instead of...setting aside a mate, I kicked it!" As he reflected on the shot after the game, he explained how "it's amazing how football resolves in a fraction of a second."[94] Wladimir's most memorable goal, however, was a bicycle kick against the Tiradentes football club in a 10-1 victory in February of 1983. At

[91] Sormani, "Os dois mundos de Vladimir," 21.
[92] Fábio Sormani, "Dance com Vladimir," *Placar*, September 4, 1981, 22-24, UIUC.
[93] Carlos Maranhão, "A conquista da confiança," *Placar*, March 5, 1982, 6, UIUC.
[94] Maranhão, "A conquista da confiança."

28 years old, he felt "more conscious and loose on the pitch, with a greater vision of the game and...the freedom to dare."[95]

If the black aesthetic politics of Afro-Brazilian footballers in the 1930s and 1940s revealed the histories of racial slavery and the tradition of aesthetic resistance, Wladimir's aesthetic politics revealed that part of that tradition was to challenge hegemonic representations of black athletic masculinity. The racialized masculinization of black male athletes reduced their value to their corporal achievements, and positioned them as hyper-physical, brute, and uncontrollable savages. Historically, black athletic masculinity has been framed through the sports of boxing and American football--two sports that celebrate and heighten the brute physicality that is allegedly inherent to black men. Moreover, football in Brazil was a largely masculine enterprise, as sports media, and the reign of military dictatorships repressed women's soccer in Brazil until the 1980s.[96] Yet, sports provides a space, albeit limited, to "forge alternative masculinities and assert a black male identity distinct from the stereotype."[97] While football in Brazil became a space to articulate a heteronormative, and heterosexual masculinity, dance, on the contrary, was associated with femininity. Wladimir's dance academy did not excite his teammates, who "provoke[d] the black Vladimir" for his "inconsequential machismo."[98] However, Wladimir no longer cared what his teammates thought about his alternative masculinity. He declared that "it's very beautiful," especially considering that "gymnastics and dance are good for the body."[99] In a separate interview, he explained to *Placar*, "I'm enjoying

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[95] Emmanuel Mattos, "Um futuro para Vladimir," *Placar,* March 4, 1983, 19-20, UIUC.
[96] David Wood, "The Beautiful Game? Hegemonic Masculinity, Women and Football in Brazil and Argentina," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 37, no. 5 (2018): 567–81, https://doi.org/10.1111/blar.12633.
[97] bell hooks, *We Real Cool: Black Men and Musculinity* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 21.
[98] Sormani, "Dance com Vladimir," 24.
[99] Sormani, "Dance com Vladimir," 24.

music to dance. My disco season is over, but I still like to move my body. It's important for us to know how to cultivate it. And have you noticed that there are things in common between dance and football?"[100] He also articulated his alternative masculinity in regards to women and gay rights. In the same interview, *Placar Magazine* appeared interested in his gender and sexuality politics. When they asked him what he thought about "the feminists movements," he believed that "the woman has to claim her rights," especially because "we live in a macho society." Similarly, when he was asked if he "condemn[ed] homosexuality," he flatly said "not at all...The homosexual is a human being like any other."[101] Contrary to his teammates like Sócrates and Casagrande who were known for their affairs with multiple women, even outside marriage in the case of Sócrates, Wladimir exhibited a masculinity that openly challenged the hegemonic representations of Brazilian footballers, and black athletes in general.

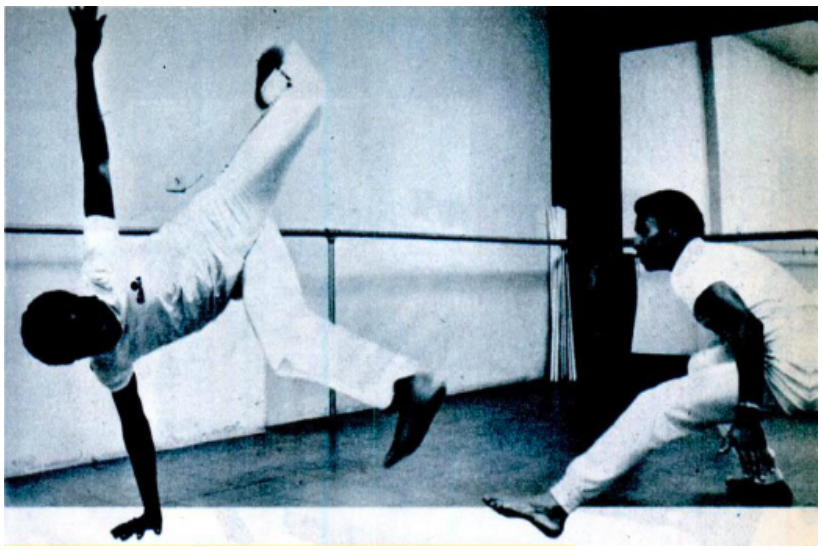

Figure 4: Placar, September 4, 1981

[100] Maranhão, "Vladimir abre o jogo da vida," 56.
[101] Maranhão, "Vladimir abre o jogo da vida," 56.

Wladimir's stylistic politics was coupled with his formal politics. His political education fostered his racial and class consciousness and identified labor unions as a potential medium through which to articulate his black politics. When *Placar* asked him about his thoughts on the metalworkers strike in the ABC suburbs of São Paulo, Wladimir felt the "workers' claims are fair. The people who produce and help the country to develop have the right to participate in the results of this production," and considered Lula to be "a born union leader."[102] Similarly, Wladimir used labor unions to organize and mobilize athletes against the oppressive structure of football. By the time Corinthians Democracy fully blossomed in 1982, Wladimir had already been an active member in the Union of Athletes in the State of São Paulo for four years.[103] He first joined the union after Palhinha, his Corinthians teammate and the president of the union, invited him in 1978. By 1980, Wladimir was the treasurer, and in 1984, he was elected president. The three main issues for Wladimir's administration was an increase in membership, the pass law, and the implementation of a minimum wage. One of the first initiatives of his administration was to create a newspaper in order to popularize the discussions about workers' conditions and increase membership in the union. Indeed, membership increased from 600 to 3,000 during Wladimir's presidency, and they "intended...to strengthen the legal department and establish health care, especially for unemployed players."[104] Another point of contention for the union was the pass law, which restricted the movement of players at the completion of their contracts. The only way players could leave the team, according to the pass law, was if another club "bought" their pass. For the union, "the pass law has to be revoked" without jeopardizing the job security

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[102] Maranhão, "Vladimir abre o jogo da vida," 56.
[103] Heloisa Helena Baldy dos Reis and Mariana Zuaneti Martins, "Corinthians' Democracy and Unionism: The Narrative of the Integration between Corinthians' Movement and the Football Players' Labor Union," *Movimento* 20, no. 4 (December 2014): 1358.
[104] Baldy dos Reis and Martins, 1361.

of players. Wladimir recognized that while the pass law appears to offer a sense of job security, it was indeed "false security." However, he still recognized the necessity of protecting the rights and employment opportunities of the the players.[105] Furthermore, Wladimir and the union advocated for a minimum wage for all the players. Although the union did not come to a consensus about this topic, Wladimir exhibited a politics that represented the majority of São Paulo players, rather than just the *craques.*

Wladimir also engaged with the internal politics of the club. When it was time to elect the new administration of Corinthians in 1983, voters had a choice to return to the ticket (*plaque*) of the former dictatorial president, Vicente Matheus, or continue with the current Corinthians Democracy administration. As a "logical consequence of the opening times in Corinthians," the current president Waldemar Pires, asked Wladimir to be "a candidate for one of the 150 seats on the Deliberative Council of Corinthians."[106] He explained that he agreed to be a candidate after he realized that Matheus was on the opposition ticket. Wladimir represented a radicalization of Brazilian athletes, and wanted to show that "the football player is already prepared to exercise ideas of democracy and participation."[107] While Wladimir was known for his extravagant playing style, the early 1980s marked a shift in his self-representation as an athlete. His campaign for a seat on the Deliberative Council included a platform based on full democracy, which reflected the larger movement of "Corinthianism," against the "authoritarianism" of Matheus. According to Wladimir, players under Matheus' rule did not experience a sense of freedom, participation, and equality, and this was what he wanted to change if he was elected.

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[105] João Carlos Rodriguez, "O desafio de um novo jogo," *Placar*, March 2, 1984, 23, UIUC.
[106] Mattos, "Um futuro para Vladimir," 19.
[107] Mattos, "Um futuro para Vladimir," 19.

The relationship between Wladimir and Matheus was hostile. Wladimir explained that they never got along for the entirety of Matheus' eight year term as president. During his time with the club, Wladimir "became better aware of the employer-employee relations" and stated that he "did not have to be submissive or a doormat to anybody, as [Matheus] tried to do with me." Wladimir "rebelled against the state of affairs" that resulted in "poor contracts and being practically humiliated." He was confident that Corinthians Democracy would succeed. "They planted seeds of democracy and freedom, whose fruits depend solely on the united work of the whole community."[108] The black politics of Corinthians Democracy, however, did not stop with Wladimir.

Figure 5: Wladimir, Placar, March 3, 1984

Another Corinthian veteran that experienced the transformation of the club from a closed organization to an open democratic project, was Zé Maria. Born in Botucatu, São Paulo on May 18, 1949, Zé Maria became a "corinthian legend" for his *raça* (literally race, but figuratively fighting spirit) as the starting right defender, opposite Wladimir. He was on the 1970 World Cup

[108] Mattos, "Um futuro para Vladimir," 20.

championship team as a reserve, but became a regular starter for the *Seleção* throughout the 1970s. In the 1974 World Cup he made a memorable assist to the forward Jairzinho in the game against Argentina. His father, who was also his manager, encouraged him to sign with Corinthians in 1970, "where Zé Maria, theoretically, would earn more."[109] However, after his father died in 1973, "he stopped signing really good contracts." Indeed, he never received a contract that reflected his value to the club. When he renewed his contract in 1980, "after ten years of being with the club, Zé Maria earned only 76,000 cruzeiros ($1,168) per month. Very little in regards to a world champion and one of the best right defenders of the country."[110] By the time Corinthians Democracy transformed the club, Zé Maria was close to retirement and considered the possibility of affecting the club and sport from outside the field.

Zé Maria entered the arena of formal politics in 1982. As previously mentioned, one of the major campaigns of Corinthians Democracy was to encourage the city of São Paulo to vote in the Parliamentary elections in November of 1982. The team had an added interest in the elections because Zé Maria was on the ticket for city councilman. Zé Maria only got seriously interested in formal politics in 1981, during the political *abertura* of the country. Former politicians of São Paulo invited Zé Maria to a number of meetings, and "after reflecting for a long time," he decided to join the Popular Party, which later was incorporated into the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB) in 1981.[111] According to Zé Maria, he was always somebody who "engaged in philanthropic activity" and believed that politics would be a natural transition. As the team captain, "the Corinthians nation" always asked him "to get tickets, to pay for funeral

[109] José Maria de Aquino, "Seu erro foi ser bom demais," *Placar*, January 16, 1981, 64, UIUC.
[110] Maria de Aquino, "Seu erro foi ser bom demais, 64."
[111] José Maria Rodrigues Alves, "As paixões do futebol e da política," *Placar*, February 25, 1983, 40, UIUC.

expenses, to attend birthdays, baptisms and weddings, and even to animate sports tournaments in penitentiaries." However, formal politics proved to be a different challenge altogether.

As city councilman, Zé Maria was concerned with the redistribution of resources and power to the predominantly black masses. For example, he believed that the sports equipment in City Hall should be "used as leisure equipment for an entire neighborhood and not only a half-dozen practitioners."[112] He was not interested in the "construction of a pebble patch here or there. It would be silly. What I want are works aimed at communities on the periphery, run by these communities themselves." Similar to Wladimir, Zé Maria was also concerned with the athletes union. He felt that the "professional player is helpless," so he "formed a commission, made up of goalkeeper Leão, defender Wladimir, [who were his] Corinthians teammates, and the striker, Pita from [the São Paulo club] Portuguesa...to make concrete proposals to broaden the work of our union." Furthermore, he joined Wladimir on the ticket to serve as an advisor on the Deliberative Council of Corinthians so he could be a "link between the team and the club." However, Zé Maria's political platform also attended to the black communities in São Paulo. He recognized that "there is much to do, especially as a black city councilman."[113] He admitted that he "never felt barriers" as a player, but after several meetings with his "FENAP brothers, a Frente Ampla da Comunidade Negra (the Black Community Broad Front), this issue has been on the list of my concerns." He admitted that "discrimination exists and in discussions with Fenap staff I hope to contribute to the solution of the problem." Indeed, he was excited "to represent them," especially considering "that many of my votes came from the black community of São Paulo."

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[112] Alves, "As paixões do futebol e da política," 41.
[113] Alves, "As paixões do futebol e da política," 41.

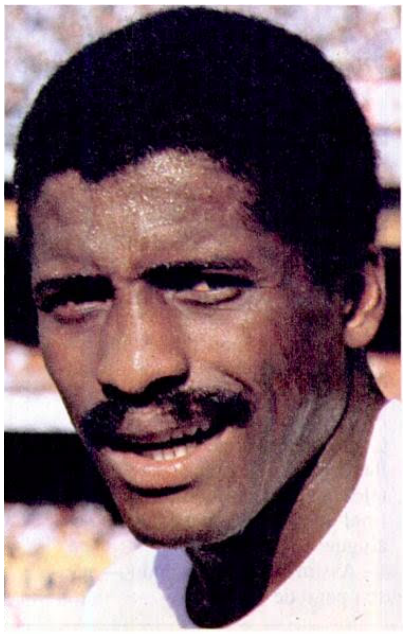

Figure 6: Zé Maria, Placar, January 16, 1981

Conclusion

Although the Corinthians Democracy movement was short-lived--following the departure of Sócrates to Italy--it was indeed a radical moment in the history of Brazil, and Brazilian football. After nearly 15 years under military dictatorship, the political *abertura* in Brazil presented new possibilities for citizenship and a better living standard. Importantly, Brazilian footballers took advantage of the *abertura* and asserted their rights as workers, popularizing a discourse of democracy that got lost during the dictatorship. Corinthians Democracy was at the heart of this radicalization of footballers and generated a mass following in São Paulo and throughout the country. The movement began as a challenge to the internal dictatorial administration of Vicente Matheus, but later expanded to represent large swaths of the nation.

Unknown to this movement, were the ways it became a space of black politics. Taken together, Wladimir and Zé Maria articulated a form of black teamwork that merged black

aesthetic and formal politics within and against Brazilian football. Wladimir and Zé Maria challenged their doubly subordinated position as Afro-Brazilian footballers and centered claims of racial equality on the Corinthians Democracy agenda. While Wladimir represented the new attacking defender, with his stylistic shots and alternative masculinity, Zé Maria signified the traditional more conservative defender. Both defenders, however, agreed that their politics on and off the field, as black footballers, contributed to the discourse of democracy. Sócrates himself, the apparent leader of Corinthians Democracy, could not deny the importance of players like Wladimir and Zé Maria to the movement. According to Sócrates, Wladimir--and I would include Zé Maria-- was "perhaps the strongest arm in the process. First because his story is intricately linked to Corinthians. Second because he's black. This is fundamentally important in everything we believe in. A country as racist as ours, whose skin color is synonymous with wealth and poverty. It is essential to have someone representing most of the nation."

Moreover, the Afro-Brazilian style of football, introduced by players like Teléco and Servílio, and later popularized by players like Pelé and Wladimir, circulated throughout South America. However, it gained particular traction in its northern neighbor, Suriname, a former Dutch colony whose predominantly black population adopted the Afro-Brazilian style with much enthusiasm. So much so, that the Netherlands national team began to include Surinamese-Dutch footballers. Similar to Brazil's racial democracy, the Netherlands highlighted their football team as a shining example of Dutch multiculturalism in the 1980s. The black players that joined the national team in the early 1990s, however, explicitly challenged this national image and revealed the global scope of anti-black racism and the coloniality of sport.

CHAPTER 4:

'The Storm Hasn't Calmed Down Yet:' Black Teamwork and the Coloniality of Dutch Football

The distinct style of Brazilian football, popularized by Black Brazilians and Corinthians Democracy during the 1980s, circulated throughout the African Diaspora, particularly with their northern neighbors Suriname. However, the Brazilian style of Surinamese footballers was not recognized in Suriname, but rather in their former colonizer, the Netherlands. In 1988, the Dutch national team won the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) European Football Championship (Euro '88) with the leadership of two Surinamese Dutch athletes, Ruud Gullit and Frank Rijkaard. Their footballing success solidified them as representatives of a democratic and multicultural society, free of racism and discrimination. However, in the 1990s, the representation of Surinamese Dutch footballers drastically changed. During the Euro '96 tournament, the Dutch national football team, colloquially referred to as the *Orange*, was rocked with "racial rows" that pitted Black players against white players. Particularly, a collective of Surinamese-Dutch footballers, known as 'the kabel,' revealed the coloniality of Dutch football and exposed the myth of Dutch multiculturalism. Moreover, I claim that the coloniality of Dutch football—constituted by the white Dutch media, players, and coaching staff—described Black footballers through athletic representations of Blackness and masculinity. Accordingly, this chapter interrogates the ways in which Black footballers negotiated these representations.

This chapter begins with a history of Surinamese-Dutch footballers and their position in the national imaginary of the Dutch nation-state. The first generation of Black footballers in the Netherlands was sparse, and represented an early image of a multi-ethnic society. The generation of Black Dutch footballers that emerged in the 1980s, led by Frank Rijkaard and particularly,

Ruud Gullit, signaled the highpoint of Dutch multiculturalism through representations of a safe Black masculinity. During the 1990s however, I argue that the kabel's dominance on the field and outspoken personalities off the field unsettled Dutch multiculturalism and pressured the coloniality of Dutch football. The word kabel was first introduced to the Dutch media when Patrick Kluivert, a Surinamese Dutch footballer, used the term to describe the close friendship between the young Black players who led the national team to qualify for Euro '96. While Gullit and the kabel both adopted anti-racist politics, they differed, both in form and content. Gullit's politics fit nicely in the context of the institutionalization of football anti-racism in the early 1990s. The kabel's techniques, on the other hand, were more spontaneous and less censored. Moreover, I argue that the concept of racism is insufficient to describe what Black athletes experienced in Dutch football and must be re-conceptualized if one is to account for the paradigmatic function of coloniality and anti-Blackness that constitutes European football. Accordingly, I turn to the players, rather than the mainstream anti-racist campaigns, to understand the techniques of resistance they adopted to counter the coloniality of Dutch football. To be sure, the kabel's Black teamwork had limitations as they mobilized around homosocial and sexist masculinities that raised concerns about the kabel's belonging in the national team.

Orange and Black

While scholars have largely focused on race and racism in European football in the geopolitical contexts of Britain, Italy, and France, I interrogate the role of race and racism in the history of Dutch football.[1] The history of Surinamese footballers in the Netherlands emerged in

[1] Back, Crabbe, Solomos, *The Changing Face of Football*; Laurent Dubois, *Soccer Empire: The World Cup and the Future of France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).; Jon Garland and Michael Rowe, *Racism and Anti-Racism in Football* (London: Palgrave, 2001).; Christos Kassimeris, ed., *Anti-Racism in European Football: Fair Play for All* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009),

the context of a multi-ethnic and postcolonial society that took shape in the post-World War II era. Dutch Indonesians migrated to the Netherlands in the 1940s and 1950s as a result of political tensions after independence in 1945, followed by Eastern European laborers from the Mediterranean region in the 1960s. In the 1970s, immigrants arrived from Suriname, a former Dutch colony located north of the Brazilian border in between Guyana and French Guiana. The Afro-Surinamese, also known as Creoles, are descendants of enslaved Africans, and the Indo-Surinamese, known as Hindustanis, are descendants of contract laborers brought from India by the Dutch after the abolition of slavery in 1863.[2] Prior to the mass Surinamese arrival in the Netherlands during the 1970s, migration circuits had already existed, particularly for the well-educated elite. During the 1950s and 1960s, there were less than 10,000 Surinamese immigrants in the Netherlands. A handful of these migrants were footballers. According to Humberto Tan, a Surinamese-Dutch journalist, between 1956-1960, at least nineteen professional Surinamese footballers signed contracts with Eredivisie clubs, the first division of professional Dutch football.[3] In 1956, Humphrey Mijnals, widely considered to be the best footballer in Surinam, signed a contract with an Eredivisie club from the city of Utrecht, USV Elinkwijk. Following the recruitment of Mijnals, other Eredivisie clubs started to recruit Surinamese players, including Mijnals' brother Frank, Michel Kruin, Erwin Sparendam, Charly Marbach, Cyrus Nelis "Cornelis" Johnson, Reneé Letterboom, and Herman Rijkaard, to name a few.

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http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/northwestern/detail.action?docID=1331604.; Alberto Testa and Gary Armstrong, *Football, Fascism and Fandom: The UltraS of Italian Football* (London: A&C Black, 2010).

[2] Floris Vermeulen and Anja van Heelsum, "Group-Related or Host State-Related? Understanding the Historical Development of Surinamese Organisations in Amsterdam, 1965-2000," in *Post-Colonial Immigrants and Identity Formations in the Netherlands*, ed. Ulbe Bosma (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012)., 78.

[3] Humberto Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen: Surinaamse Voetballers in de Eredivisie 1954-2000* (Schoorl, Netherlands: CONSERVE, 2000), https://www.bol.com/nl/p/het-surinaamse-legioen/666820388/. 19; All quotations have been translated by the author and Yannick Coenders.

From the moment Surinamese migrants arrived in the Netherlands, they disrupted and contributed to the style of Dutch football. Particularly at the club Elinkwijk, five Surinamese players dominated the team. Mijnals convinced the club to sign four more Surinamese athletes, his brother Frank Mijnals, Michel Kruin, Erwin Sparendam, and Charly Marbach. Football writers argued that they had an immediate impact on Elinkwijk's style of play.[4] On May 29, 1957, in a match between Elinkwijk and a Dutch military team, the former trailed the military squad 3-0 at the end of the first half. During the intermission, Humphrey and Kruin spoke with the coach, Tim van der Laan, because they "wanted to change the line-up."[5] According to Tan, they wanted to play with the Surinamese style which featured short, rather than long passing, and more spontaneous movements.[6] Of equal importance, "they spoke to each other in Sranan, to confuse the opponent even more. 'Go, lit dja, bakka sé (walk, here, behind you).'"[7] The military team was stunned and Elinkwijk won the match 5-3. However, after the game, the governing body of Dutch football, the Koninklijk Nederlandse Voetbalbond [The Royal Dutch Football Association] (KNVB) sent a letter to the club's board of directors and requested that Elinkwijk "never…play a game again in this way."[8] The KNVB thought that such a style "ridiculed" the opponent and ruined the "intention of the football game."[9] Indeed, the tactics were the politics. The KNVB's response revealed that "the first layer of adoration for the overseas citizens began to show signs of bursting."[10]

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[4] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*; David Winner, *Brilliant Orange: The Neurotic Genius of Dutch Soccer* (Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 2008), 221-222.
[5] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen,* 41.
[6] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 41.
[7] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 41. Sranan Tongo is a lingua franca used by Surinamese communities.
[8] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 42.
[9] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 42.
[10] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 42.

In 1960, Humphrey Mijnals became the first Black footballer to play for the Dutch national team. In his first match, he contributed greatly to their 4-2 victory over Bulgaria and even saved a potential goal with a bicycle kick off the goal-line.[11] According to Mijnals, "it seemed as if all the Surinamese from Amsterdam and Utrecht" had come to see his debut.[12] Yet he also felt proud "during the Dutch national anthem."[13] However, in Mijnals' second match, a 2-1 defeat to Belgium, the media criticized his performance in particular. In a weekly Dutch magazine, *Sport en Sportwereld,* created by sports journalists Christiaan Hendrik "Kick" Geudeker and Ad van Emmenes, the latter declared that "we can hardly imagine that there may have been only one person in the ten thousand Dutch spectators who sees the designated stopperspil (center defender) of our national team in the Surinamese. It is hard to say, but for us it is certain that [head coach] Elek Schwartz can no longer put him in the line-up."[14] The selection committee of the KNVB answered that call and did not select Mijnals for their next match against Switzerland. The Dutch lost 3-1. Mijnals was chosen to travel with the team to Mexico, Curaçao, and Suriname, and he made an agreement with Schwartz that he would not play against Mexico, play one half against Curaçao, and the full 90 minutes against Surinam. However, when they made the trip, Mijnals didn't play against Mexico nor Curaçao, and only played the second half against Suriname. Following the trip, Mijnals told reporters that he felt the trip was "pretty crap…I never hope to experience anything like that again."[15] The KNVB never again selected Mijnals to play for the Orange.

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[11] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 67-68.
[12] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 66-67.
[13] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 66-67.
[14] As quoted in Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 70.
[15] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 72

In the 1960s, the recruitment and presence of Surinamese footballers in the Eredivisie all but disappeared. According to Tan, a number of reasons explained this phenomenon. The increased professionalization of Dutch football in the 1960s outpaced the professionalization of Surinamese football, and as a result, "Surinamese footballers in the Eredivisie were literally counted on a hand." Another reason was racial discrimination. The experiences of Stuart Oosthuizen and Orlando Rijzenburg were typical of most Surinamese footballers. Through a former Eredivisie footballer of Surinamese descent, André Kilian, Oosthuizen and Rijzenburg were invited to train with Barry Hughes, the head coach at HFC Haarlem. While Hughes selected both of the players, Oosthuizen noticed "the board [of Haarlem] just did not take us seriously."[16] Rijzenburg and Oosthuizen remembered a number of moments when they realized Haarlem treated them unfairly. On the second day of training, the clubhouse called for the two players "through the loudspeakers…because there were police."[17] A witness reported a fight between "two dark boys" at a club in the center of the city, and apparently Oosthuizen and Rijzenburg fit the description. According to Oosthuizen, "we had never been there! Nothing else happened…but it typified the circumstances of that time."[18] Hughes characterized "the board in Haarlem as always suspicious of Surinamese players. Until [Ruud] Gullit! They had the idea that if you gave 'those guys' a contract, it would go wrong."[19] Indeed, it was not until players like Gullit, Frank Rijkaard, and Gerald Vanenburg, that Dutch football clubs started to regularly include Surinamese players.

[16] As quoted in Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 87.
[17] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 88.
[18] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 88.
[19] As quoted in Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 91.

Football Multiculturalism

The successes of "[Gullit] and his peers Rijkaard and Vanenburg also contributed to a more positive image of Surinamese" communities in the Netherlands, and should be understood in the context of the Dutch policy of multiculturalism in the 1980s.[20] The image of Vanenburg, Rijkaard, and particularly Gullit contrasted drastically with the media's representation of Surinamese communities during the 1960s and 1970s. During the mass Surinamese migration to the Netherlands in the 1970s, the Dutch media associated Surinamese communities "with drug crime and violence."[21] According to critical race theorist Philomena Essed, when large groups of Surinamese migrants arrived in the Netherlands, they were "portrayed as criminals, as people who complain too much, as violent, as a nuisance for Dutch society."[22] The criminalization of the Surinamese Dutch even haunted footballers, demonstrated by the experience of Oosthuizen and Rijzenburg at HFC Haarlem. The Dutch government adopted a "'charitable' tolerance of the temporary presence of ethnic groups," and subsidized autonomous Surinamese welfare organizations in the 1970s to address their own problems of drug addiction and criminality.[23] In 1983, however, the Dutch government reluctantly realized that the Surinamese communities were a permanent part of the Dutch society and shifted away from a policy of cultural tolerance to integration, "whereby the autonomous organization of ethnic minorities was to be gradually restricted in favor of their integration into the Dutch system."[24]

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[20] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen,* 118.
[21] Vermeulen and Van Heelsum, "Group-related or host state-related?," 80.
[22] Philomena Essed, *Understanding Everyday Racism: An Interdisciplinary Theory* (London: SAGE Publications, Inc, 1991)., 21.
[23] Philomena Essed, *Everyday Racism: Reports from Women of Two Cultures* (Claremont, CA: Hunter House, 1990), 40; Vermeulen and Van Heelsum, "Group-related or host state-related?," 78-80.
[24] Essed, *Everyday Racism,* 40.

The new social policy of integration emerged in the political context of a Dutch society that started to recognize itself as a multicultural society in the 1980s. While scholars have researched the effects of the Minorities Amendment of 1983 on the organizational, educational, and political institutions of Dutch society, similar results were visible in the social and cultural arena, particularly football. According to Joke Hermes, "multiculturalism in Dutch experience is easily tied to footballer Ruud Gullit."[25] In the late 1980s he reached the height of his career when he won the European Footballer of the Year and World Footballer of the Year awards in 1987.[26] Gullit captained the Dutch national team during Euro '88, and Dutch fans walked the streets of West Germany in Orange outfits and wore Gullit wigs—Rastafarian caps with fake dreadlocks—to support their team. This tournament was particularly significant for Dutch fans because it was their first European tournament since Euro '80—missing the 1982 World Cup, Euro '84, and the 1986 World Cup. Gullit scored the first goal in the finals against the USSR and led the national team to win their first major international tournament.

The Dutch media fetishized Gullit as flamboyant, friendly, and care-free, who, with his dreadlocks, Surinamese father and Dutch mother, represented the new and improved diversity of the Netherlands. In particular, they deployed tropes of an exotic, sensual Caribbean black masculinity that complemented the discourse of Dutch multiculturalism. As Hermes suggests, "Gullit is Europeanness personified" and "his career had its high point at the peak of multiculturalism enthusiasm in the Netherlands."[27] Gullit himself called his style of play, "sexy football," was described as "easy-going, and appeared mostly to enjoy life."[28] The media

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[25] Joke Hermes, *Re-Reading Popular Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005)., 23.
[26] Hermes, *Re-Reading Popular Culture*, 25; Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen,* 119.
[27] Hermes, *Re-Reading Popular Culture,* 27, 29.
[28] Hermes, *Re-Reading Popular Culture*, 24.

described him as "the most celebrated Rasta since Bob Marley."[29] *FourFourTwo* magazine believed "Jesus was probably this cool" and observed plainly that "Gullit laughs a lot." In their interview with Gullit, he explained that "football appeals to the child in me…The adult comes out when I have to pay taxes but I prefer the child in me so I can have fun and have a laugh. I think the world would be a better place if we all had the courage to trust the child in us more."[30] *The Sunday Times* argued that "Gullit was then, some say still is, a fellow of such Bohemian ways he will never deliver all that he promises."[31] Gullit's playful and permissible personality, framed through his child-like innocent masculinity, suggested that Surinamese integration into society was only possible as entertainers devoid of racial politics.

Yet, Gullit represented Dutch multiculturalism because he was a "hybrid figure" who supported anti-racist causes abroad but concealed racism at home in the Netherlands. According to football historian and poet, Eduardo Galeano, Gullit "had always been a full-throated opponent of racism."[32] He dedicated his 1987 European and World Footballer of the Year Award to Nelson Mandela who was still imprisoned at the time and wore 'Stop Aparthied' shirts during

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[29] Joe Lovejoy, "Football: Gullit Placates the Fears of a Nation," *The Independent*, December 22, 1989, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=52038453-371b-4062-bb7e-c6f09a16c69f&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A41B5-Y920-00YJ-R2CT-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A41B5-Y920-00YJ-R2CT-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=8200&pdteaserkey=sr188&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr188&prid=8eaf99bf-ba66-4fec-9dce-117a78c5d830.

[30] Paul Simpson, "Clever Clogs," *FourFourTwo,* September 1996, 8, Magazines Collection, National Football Museum and Archives, Deepdale Stadium, Preston, England (hereafter NFMA).

[31] Rob Hughes, "Football: Rasta with a Twist of Pure Genuis - The Dazzling European Football of the Year," *The Sunday Times (London)*, January 17, 1988, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=602b0319-9369-4f73-824d-a10b8d5ce98f&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A41B4-XR00-00YK-10NX-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A41B4-XR00-00YK-10NX-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=332263&pdteaserkey=sr4&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr4&prid=f73c8176-0864-4cb5-ab96-a90f7de1e150.

[32] Eduardo Galeano, *Soccer in Sun and Shadow* (New York: Nation Books, 2013), 215.

interviews.[33] He even made a song, "South Africa," with a Dutch reggae band, Revelation Time (named after the album from Jamaican reggae artist, Max Romeo), that denounced South African apartheid. In 1992, when Gullit played for AC Milan, he led "a campaign to rid the Italian football league of racist threats against its star black players."[34] After Gullit became the target of racist abuse at a match in November, he declared "the time has come to say stop…We footballers cannot go on burying our heads in the sand."[35] The Italian Federation mimicked the German Bundesliga's strategy and proposed a day of action against racism where players wore shirts that said "Together for Peace." Gullit thought those tactics were "not enough," and instead "proposed to interrupt matches…and even stop them if necessary." While Gullit's tactics had been "rejected from many angles as unfeasible,"[36] Gullit wondered "whether human dignity is not more important than football lotteries."[37] The campaign was to support players who had been

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[33] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen*, 118.

[34] "Gullit Takes Anti-Nazi Campaign onto the Pitch," *Agence France Presse -- English*, December 10, 1992, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=496da622-ab4d-497e-9036-bee0538adb90&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A3TDD-SPD0-0031-V4NX-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A3TDD-SPD0-0031-V4NX-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=10903&pdteaserkey=sr0&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr0&prid=8aaefa59-3ed8-4d50-bf23-d9384ec21cc8.

[35] Patricia Clough, "Italy's Footballers Kick out at Racism," *The Independent (London)*, December 13, 1992, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=f2721c2c-151b-4030-8802-51837225ff40&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A3T4F-J910-005H-83RS-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A3T4F-J910-005H-83RS-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=8200&pdteaserkey=sr3&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr3&prid=24ba67c1-fb11-4469-bb92-ecd964604a0c.

[36] Marc Leijendekker, "Italiaanse Bond Begint Actie Tegen Racisme," *NRC Handelsblad*, November 27, 1992, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=1f38454b-f9ba-45ea-9c19-583c0f793ab3&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-T3N0-0150-W1Y3-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-T3N0-0150-W1Y3-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259064&pdteaserkey=sr18&pditab=allpods&ecomp=5fyk&earg=sr18&prid=0356ee6a-3262-41cd-a355-2745c6c2462a.

[37] "Gullit Takes Anti-Nazi Campaign onto the Pitch," *Agence France Presse—English*, December 10, 1992.

racially abused, such as "Gullit, his AC Milan teammate Frank Rijkaard, [an Indo-Surinamese Dutch footballer] Aron Winter at Lazio and the many Brazilians at Italian clubs."[38] When asked about what he thought about the campaign, Gullit's Dutch and Milan teammate, Marco van Basten, replied indifferently that "it's not [his] fault the world is like that."[39] Gullit replied that "perhaps making goals is more important to him than the fight against racism."[40] According to the Dutch newspaper *Trouw*, "it is partly this kind of behavior that prevents Van Basten from becoming a hero of the masses." In contrast, they praised Gullit who, "in the fight against racism…has been invaluable in the last decade" and is "passionate about the actions against racism in…Italy."[41] Indeed, Gullit exhibited an anti-racist politics that many other black footballers did not adopt because of fear of retribution and further abuse from the media. He criticized his own teammate, Van Basten, for not joining the campaign, and the Italian Federation for delimiting the acceptable ways to protest racism on the field. Moreover, he antagonized the football hierarchy with his "stubborn habit of speaking out against the culture of money that [reduced] soccer to just another listing on the stock exchange."[42] Gullit was not so critical towards the Netherlands. Contrary to his indictment of South African apartheid and Italian football racism, Gullit claimed that "in Holland, there wasn't so much racism because it was a multi-cultural society."[43]

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[38] "Gullit Takes Anti-Nazi Campaign onto the Pitch," *Agence France Presse -- English*, December 10, 1992
[39] As quoted in "Gullit Takes Anti-Nazi Campaign onto the Pitch."
[40] As quoted in Matty Verkamman, "Keuze Voor Oranje Zit Berlusconi Niet Lekker," *Trouw*, December 9, 1992, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=c340f942-eb61-462f-9acd-a29b98b6ed57&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-S3T0-0150-Y4DV-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-S3T0-0150-Y4DV-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259069&pdteaserkey=sr1&pditab=allpods&ecomp=5fyk&earg=sr1&prid=64eb0a35-7397-4be6-9e45-1f54fb7377a1.
[41] Verkamman, "Keuze Voor Oranje Zit Berlusconi Niet Lekker."
[42] Galeano, *Soccer in Sun and Shadow,* 215.
[43] Simpson, "Clever Clogs," 10, NFMA.

In 1996, Gullit became the first black manager of an English Premier League team, Chelsea FC, and in his first season led them to win the FA Cup in 1997, their first trophy in 26 years. His childhood friend and AC Milan teammate, Frank Rijkaard, returned to Ajax in 1993 where he joined a younger generation of Surinamese Dutch footballers. By the mid-1990s, "multiculturalism had…ruled representation of major Surinamese-Dutch soccer players for a solid decade at that moment in time."[44] Regardless of Gullit's limitations in challenging the dominant conceptualization of racism, his activism provided a tradition that the younger generation of black Dutch footballers adopted for their own grievances. This new generation of black footballers, however, deployed a more militant and radical politics that revealed more critical concerns about the place of ethnicity and race in the Netherlands. Moreover, "ethnicity became an issue in the mid-1990s in the Netherlands, with a solid one-third of the players of the national team being nonwhite, and mostly Surinamese Dutch."[45] I argue that, contrary to earlier generations of Mijnals and Gullit, the racial reconstitution of the Dutch national team in the 1990s revealed the coloniality of Dutch football through the negotiation of athletic representations of blackness.

"A Selection Has Occurred through Slavery"

During the 1990s, the coloniality of Dutch football was constituted, in varying degrees, by Dutch athletic trainers and intellectuals, the football media, fans, players, and coaching staff. In different events, each of these actors were complicit in athletic discourses and practices that reinforced Blackness as inferior, subordinate, threatening and radically other. Contrary to the multicultural representation of Black Dutch footballers in the 1980s, the coloniality of Dutch

[44] Hermes, *Re-Reading Popular Culture,* 23.
[45] Hermes, *Re-Reading Popular Culture,* 23.

football during the 1990s captured Black footballers across a range of racial representations of hyper-physicality, immaturity, and militancy. I argue that this articulation of the coloniality of Dutch football occurred as Black players increasingly constituted the rosters of the two leading Dutch football organizations—Ajax F.C. and the Orange. Accordingly, the Black Dutch team of the 1990s underwent a structurally similar, yet discursively different experience than those players of the 1980s. In fact, as the representation of collective Black footballers in Ajax and the Orange solidified, so did the coloniality of Dutch football.

Following the 1994 World Cup, the Dutch footballing hierarchy began to look for a "new generation" of players that could replace the veterans of Dutch football—players like Ronald Koeman, Marco van Basten, Ruud Gullit, and Frank Rijkaard. The new generation not only represented a shift in age, but in ethnic and racial identity. Indeed, Gullit and Rijkaard foreshadowed the future dominance of Black players of Surinamese descent in both the Orange and Ajax FC. The latter had an unofficial "policy of schooling youngsters from the Amsterdam streets, particularly those of Surinamese origin," and most of these footballers proceeded to play for the Dutch National Team.[46] The new generation of Dutch football, both on the national and club level, included players like Edgar Davids, Clarence Seedorf, Patrick Kluivert, Michael Reiziger, Winston Bogarde, and to a lesser extent, Glenn Helder, Nordin Wooter, and Kiki Musampa, all of whom were of Surinamese descent with the exception of Musampa who was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but was nationalized as Dutch.

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[46] Rob Hughes, "Ajax Groomed for New Dynasty," *The Times*, May 24, 1995, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=e0ce2181-2e09-455b-94bf-243be274fe15&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A3T2M-7370-00H1-F2X8-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A3T2M-7370-00H1-F2X8-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=10939&pdteaserkey=sr132&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr132&prid=36a89586-14f9-4ed8-86ef-52d92875ee40.

Indeed, the European and Dutch media noticed this new generation of Black footballers and celebrated the multi-ethnic and multi-racial representation of the Orange. Following the Ajax victory in the 1995 Champions League final, the role of Black players, and their ethnic identity became increasingly important to the European football media. The players of "Surinamese origin, have carried [Ajax] unbeaten in any competition, in Holland or Europe, for the past twelve months." In the media's celebration of the Black players, their colonial inheritance was highlighted as biographical fun fact. According to *The Times* in London, Black players had "antecedents who were slaves in the Dutch colony of Surinam,"[47] while other commentators observed that "a large part to…Ajax's success has roots in the former Dutch colony in South America now called Surinam. Once a slave colony."[48] The lauded representation of Black Dutch footballers generated public discussions about Dutch slavery and colonialism, albeit as a saving grace for Black Dutch athletes, and Dutch football itself. In a 1992 interview with black players in the Orange, Gullit explained to Dutch newspaper, *Algemeen Dagblad,* that his club doctor at AC Milan once told him that "it was from the time of slavery, the best people were appointed, and the crossing to America was then survived by the strong ones. Ultimately, the strongest things remained for the work. A very strong, physical race, which could be an explanation for athletic ability."[49]

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[47] Rob Hughes, "Ajax Groomed for New Dynasty."

[48] "What They Really Need Is a Round Ball," *International Herald Tribune*, May 31, 1995, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=cc0337ba-e903-4b97-829d-f9c287b719c8&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A3TD9-1TX0-002R-B2WW-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A3TD9-1TX0-002R-B2WW-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=8357&pdteaserkey=sr172&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr172&prid=4a904e28-cf4d-4acd-b002-f9d97fe0ea4d.

[49] Herman Poos, "Parels van Oranje; Surinamers Geven Meerwaarde Aan Het Nederlandse Voetbal," *Algemeen Dagblad*, June 3, 1992, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=7c665bfe-8129-41d1-92b9-

The dominance of Black players in the Eredivisie, in teams like Feyenoord and Ajax, resulted in scientific studies and a public discourse that needed answers. In the spring of 1995, an article in *NRC Handelsblad* sought to provide a range of arguments that could help explain the increased representation of Black Dutch footballers. For example, Jacobus "Co" Adriaanse, the director of training at Ajax explained, as a matter of fact, that their talents emerge from their social and cultural environment. According to Adriaanse, Black Dutch footballers "often come from large families, have little room indoors and receive relatively less attention from their parents. In addition, football in those circles is very popular" so they are able to develop better ball control in tight spaces, and have more time to play, considering their parents aren't paying any attention to them. Meanwhile, "white boys have ended up in a different, wider sphere of interest." Adriaanse believed that "on average, dark-skinned boys are more athletic and explosive and have a better sense of coordinative ability" which he concluded "may be innate."[50] However, as a consultant for a social-psychological study of Ajax, conducted by University of Groningen professor Nico van Yperen, Adriaanse explained "we are looking for a certain type of player that suits Ajax. The composition does not look white or black."[51] While he noticed that the increase

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[50] Guus Van Holland, "Als Donkere Voetballers Beter Zijn, Hoe Zit Het Dan Met Cruijff?," *NRC Handelsblad*, February 11, 1995, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=0c2858cd-e074-49cd-acbb-c03d76fa13a6&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MW-03K0-0150-W0JK-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MW-03K0-0150-W0JK-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259064&pdteaserkey=sr2&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr2&prid=c1c5b371-8503-4a2a-b055-fc5531352b0c.

[51] Van Holland, "Als Donkere Voetballers Beter Zijn;" See also, Nico van Yperen, *De Ajax-School: Schoolvoorbeeld van Talentontwikkeling* (Arnhem: NOC*NSF, 1995), 1-21, https://www.rug.nl/research/portal/files/13294426/1995_Ajax_school_NOCNSF_publicatie_64.pdf.

of black players at Ajax discouraged white parents from sending their kids to the club, he reassured the reader that, "of course we do not take that into account."[52]

The *NRC Handelsblad* article also included arguments from athletic trainers that used scientific racism to explain the dominance of black Dutch footballers. Henk Kraaijenhof, former coach of Surinamese-Dutch sprinter Nelli Cooman, who won the Dutch Sportswoman of the Year in 1986, argued that "dark people have a larger heel bone" and used studies from James 'Doc' Counsilman to claim that "dark people also have a lower fat percentage…[Counsilman] also says that dark people generally have fast muscle tissues."[53] For Kraaijenhof, the answer didn't lie solely in the physical and muscular make-up of black athletes but also their mental incapacities as well. Kraaijenhof argued that there was a left side of the brain, which "is built for calculation programs," and the right side of the brain "which gives images." He claimed that "dark people generally make more use of the right hemisphere. They look more at the total picture, not at details, not analyzing." On the other hand, "the left half thinks in words…*Our* education and training is set on our left hemisphere. Math and language."[54] According to Kraaijenhof, such differences could be traced back to slavery. "One of the many theories is that they usually come from America, from the former colonies or from Africa. *A selection has occurred through slavery.* The strongest strengths remained. So it is a strong race and they would be stronger than us degenerated whites."[55] Using Darwinian logics, black people were genetically selected to be physically and athletically superior to white people which apparently translated into a selection to the Dutch National Team. Public Dutch discourse was complicit in

[52] Van Holland, "Als Donkere Voetballers Beter Zijn."
[53] Van Holland, "Als Donkere Voetballers Beter Zijn."
[54] Van Holland, "Als Donkere Voetballers Beter Zijn."
[55] Van Holland, "Als Donkere Voetballers Beter Zijn."

the idea that if it weren't for slavery, Black athletes wouldn't be half as good, and Dutch football would have a considerably different identity and style.

Contrary to athletic trainers and football coaches, the inquiry included more nuanced, intellectual perspectives. Dr. Jan Tamboer was "incredibly skeptical" of biological and psychological arguments that may explain the differences between black and white players. Tamboer was reminded of "a Dutch National coach [Thijs Libregts in 1984] who compared dark football players with monkeys swaying beautifully in trees." Tamboer, however, gave a thoughtful account of the power structures that could explain why black footballers excel in athletics.

> "We have a colonial past in the Netherlands, England, Belgium and France. We already have a lot of Surinamese and Antillean people and for many reasons many Moroccans and Turks have joined. These people are often in a position at the bottom of society. Sports and music are wonderful media to fight your way up. The idea that darkness has a better coordination seems to me to be bullshit. To trace that back to the skin color and then to assume that skin color is linked to different biological characteristics, is perhaps an unintended attempt to disguise the fact that it is more of a societal problem."[56]

The coloniality of Dutch football is complicit in the biological representation of Black athletes, reducing them to their physical bodies and stripping them of their mental, and human capacities. According to Jacco van Sterkenburg and Annelies Knoppers, "Dutch soccer commentators relatively often described the soccer players of Surinamese descent in terms of their physical characteristics and qualities."[57]

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[56] Van Holland, "Als Donkere Voetballers Beter Zijn."
[57] Jacco van Sterkenburg and Annelies Knoppers, "Sport as a Contested Racial/Ethnic Discourse: Processes of Racialization in Dutch Sport Media and Sport Policy," *Journal of Multicultural Discourses* 7, no. 2 (July 2012): 119–36, https://doi.org/10.1080/17447143.2012.687001.

However, the Dutch football media discourse produces more than a non-human representation of Black athletes. It reproduces the ontological positioning of Blackness outside of humanity. Scholars such as Fanon, Orlando Patterson, Saidiya Hartman, and Hortense Spillers have suggested that the Black subject emerged out of racial slavery and social death. Which is to say, the ontology of Blackness is more akin to a non-ontology, a position of abject non-relation and nonbeing. The coloniality of Dutch football, through the discursive practices of sports media, restrained Blackness to a history of enslavement and colonialism, delimiting the possibility of Black ontological existence insofar as Black being is reduced to "a being for the captor."[58] In the context of post-colonial Netherlands, I argue that this ontological excess is readily materialized through modern sports, where Black athletes are simultaneously celebrated and condemned for their biological make-up and inherent non-humanness cum athleticism. According to popular Dutch discourse, from trainers to segments of the media, Black footballers weren't successful in athletics in spite of histories of enslavement and colonialism, but *because* of it. Dutch sporting discourse transformed slavery into an absolute system of labor that physically prepared enslaved Blacks, and their descendants, to play for the Orange—to be for the captor. As Gullit's trainer reminded him, "the strongest *things* remained for the *work*." However, the paradigm of labor and laborers can only accommodate those who inhabit the discursive and ontological space of Humanity. Enslaved Africans, of whom the Dutch media marked as the antecedents of Black footballers, were things. Black athletes are both sub-Human and hyper-Human, but never just Human. The Dutch media's insistence on tethering the Black players' ethnicities to its colonial constitution, then, reflects Spillers' claim that ethnicity "freezes in meaning," that it "embodies

[58] Hortense J. Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (1987): 64–81, https://doi.org/10.2307/464747.

nothing more than a mode of memorial time," and is "a signifier that has no movement in the field of signification."[59] The coloniality of Dutch football trapped the ontological existence of Blackness in the realm of the ahistorical, and flattened the contemporary presence of Black footballers with the histories of Surinam which could only attain coherence as a colony of the Netherlands. In short, their ontological positioning outside humanity, as *naturally* athletic things gave Black footballers an upper hand.

Euro '96

A month after Gullit's appointment as player-manager of London-based club Chelsea, England witnessed a younger group of black Dutch footballers descend on their sacred football grounds during Euro '96. The summer tournament is a lens to analyze how the antagonism between the kabel and the coloniality of Dutch football —constituted by Dutch media, players, and coaches—unsettled previously held ideas about black Dutch footballers and the success of Dutch multiculturalism. The coloniality of Dutch football relied on racist tropes about black masculinity and their Surinamese identity to represent the kabel as spoiled street kids who threatened the alleged cohesion of the national team and the nation itself. Contrary to the earlier generation of individual Black Dutch footballers, led by Rijkaard and especially Gullit, who accepted the myth of Dutch tolerance, innocence, and multiculturalism,[60] I argue that the kabel resisted the dominant athletic representations of blackness that required them to be submissive, grateful, and apolitical entertainers. Their black teamwork raised concerns about the multicultural image that had dominated the Dutch team in the previous decade and staged a central debate about the place of Black athletes in the Orange, and Blackness in the Netherlands.

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[59] Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe," 67.
[60] Joke Hermes, "Burnt Orange: Television, Football, and the Representation of Ethnicity," *Television & New Media* 6, no. 1 (February 2005): 49–69, https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476403255819.

In the lead up to the competition, excitement surrounded the Netherlands and they were "already installed by many people as favourites to win the tournament."[61] Ajax's championship victory in the Champions League in 1995, and their second-place finish in 1996 caused great hope for the Netherlands national team, who drew "most of their players from Ajax."[62] Even in the midst of racial abuse from fans, the Dutch media described Black footballers of the Orange as critical to the team's success. If their final qualifying match against Ireland was a sign of things to come, it appeared that Black players would carry the Dutch to European glory. Many of the Black players were young and had little experience playing for the Dutch national team. In fact, it was a "team of newcomers," as players like Edgar Davids, Clarence Seedorf, and Patrick Kluivert were all under the age of twenty-two and appeared in less than ten international fixtures.[63] The match against Ireland was important because for the first time the Orange fielded a team that had more than half of the players of Surinamese descent—Davids, Seedorf, Kluivert, Bogarde, Glenn Helder, and Michael Reiziger.[64] In this match, the Dutch defeated Ireland 2-0 and Patrick Kluivert, a nineteen-year old, scored both goals. The build-up to the first goal

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[61] "Group A," *Countdown Euro 96*, February 1996, 4, Euro 96 Collection, NFMA.
[62] "Group A."
[63] Ian Hawkey, "Announcing a Team for the Millennium," *The Sunday Times (London)*, December 17, 1995, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=9f689ffa-3b93-4cef-9e1c-cad836246254&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A3T2M-7T80-00H1-F4SP-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A3T2M-7T80-00H1-F4SP-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=332263&pdteaserkey=sr83&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly3k&earg=sr83&prid=1e09e0fb-9685-4d67-950f-a2e4d377ec50.
[64] Rob Fleur, "Patrick Kluivert Kijkt Al Uit Naar Eindronde EK," *Het Parool*, December 14, 1995, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=793b2364-396d-4c48-bd36-a1ca2360b81b&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-YWV0-0151-00SX-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-YWV0-0151-00SX-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259062&pdteaserkey=sr11&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly3k&earg=sr11&prid=57694550-7046-49ed-a428-4d3db4f20b65.

reflected a striking display of tactical teamwork and chemistry on the field amongst Black players that foreshadowed the political Black teamwork articulated off the field a few months later in the Euro 96. Davids won an errant ball in the midfield and passed it back to Bogarde who then passed it to Helder, who was positioned to the left of Bogarde. The latter played a one-touch pass to Davids who played it back to Bogarde, completing a triangular formation that is the ideal shape for a football style based on short passes, movement off the ball, and the creation of space. Seedorf entered the formation and created another triangle with Davids and Bogarde who passed it to Seedorf. The latter then passed the ball through three defenders to find Davids in open space running towards goal. With patience, Davids located Kluivert, who, directly in front of goal, shot the ball with his left foot past the goal keeper into the right corner of the goal. As the Irish defenders looked around in utter confusion, Kluivert searched for Seedorf and jumped triumphantly into his arms. As Seedorf carried him in celebration, Davids and Reiziger victoriously joined the celebration. Davids jumped into Kluivert's arms and excitedly beat his chest, exuberant about the brilliant tactical play with his teammates.

The teamwork exhibited on the field against Ireland translated to scenes of friendship in the post-game interviews. After the match, "the [Surinamese] word *kabel* falls from the mouth of Kluivert," which they used in their "youthful enthusiasm" to describe their comradery.[65] According to Seedorf, "in Surinam [kabel] means nothing more and nothing less than friendship. No intimate friendship, no fraternity, just, friendship. Period."[66] Kluivert suggested it was "something special that six players who have such close ties with Suriname play a big role in the Dutch national team. We also form a close unity and pep up each other enormously."[67] Robert

[65] Simon Zwartkruis, *Clarence Seedorf, De Biografie* (Amsterdam: Houtekiet, 2003), 69.
[66] Zwartkruis, *Clarence Seedorf,* 69.
[67] Rob Fleur, "Patrick Kluivert Kijkt Al Uit Naar Eindronde EK."

Misset of *Het Parool* described the kabel as "an unbreakable *chain* of loyalty based on Surinamese principles" (italics added).[68]

Five months after Ireland qualifier, during the group stages of Euro 96, head coach Guus Hiddink had reservations about the kabel's ability on the field. While the kabel was central to Holland's qualification and Kluivert declared that "youth is the heart of Orange," Misset claimed that "the angry young men turned out to have overestimated their influence."[69] In their opening match against Scotland, which resulted in a 0-0 draw, sports reporters lambasted Davids and Seedorf for playing recklessly. Following the match, Kees Jansma, a sports broadcaster for the Nederlandse Omroep Stichting (NOS-Dutch Broadcasting Foundation), waited in the media zone for the players to emerge for their post-game interviews. According to the media, Seedorf and Davids worked *too* hard "playing in the center," and "made an unstable appearance." Jansma spoke with Ronald de Boer and Danny Blind who "engaged the topic freely,"[70] while head coach Hiddink added to the critique and suggested that "Seedorf and Davids should play with their minds and less with their hearts."[71] All of a sudden, "there was a lashing out from the NOS

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[68] Robert Misset, "Seedorf: 'Ik Merk Steeds Dat Er Weinig Respect Voor Mij Bestaat,'" *Het Parool*, June 15, 1996, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=581356ea-ae1c-4be8-9025-1a9569180ae0&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-S610-0151-018B-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-S610-0151-018B-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259062&pdteaserkey=sr1&pditab=allpods&ecomp=5fyk&earg=sr1&prid=fd5887c5-9d41-4f33-a379-886ffde67d44.

[69] Misset, "Seedorf."

[70] John Volkers, "De Kabel was Druistig," *Elf: Het Toonaangevende Voetbalmaandblad* (hereafter Elf), July/August 1996, 38, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, Netherlands (hereafter KB).

[71] Zwartkruis, *Clarence Seedorf, De Biografie,* 70.

reporter to the young players Seedorf and Davids,"[72] who "reacted like a bee" and shouted to Jansma, "you're talking to me? Hey, you're talking to me?"[73]

Seedorf disagreed with Hiddink and De Boer, and thought that such matters should have been discussed internally before publicly. He argued that it went against Hiddink's earlier desire for more passion from the players. Seedorf expressed his frustrations with the critique of the press, the coach, and other players. "I'm getting a bit tired of those words. Everybody just echoes them. Nobody has their own opinion…We were aggressive and won duels. That was necessary to keep the team sharp. I think its negative to then call us overworking…That should be treated positively."[74] He suggested that "with eleven players like Edgar and me, we would have won the match."[75]

Following their draw against Scotland, and during their final training session before the Swiss, "the harmonious atmosphere that was ostensibly present had all of a sudden disappeared from the selection."[76] The attack upon Seedorf and Davids did not cease with the public criticism from their white teammates. During the training session, the coaching staff made it clear that they did not want the two friends to play on the field at the same time. According to *Elf* sportswriter, Peter Kee, when the teams were selected to play a scrimmage, "Seedorf and Davids landed on different teams," both in the same position.[77] This "irritated"[78] them, and they

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[72] Volkers, "De Kabel was Druistig," *Elf,* 38, KB.
[73] Mark van den Heuvel, "Nieuw Dilemma Voor de Coach," *Het Parool*, June 14, 1996, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=ab3bccea-3c5a-4d3a-9d3a-e25f40659b4f&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-S5Y0-0151-0134-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-S5Y0-0151-0134-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259062&pdteaserkey=sr3&pditab=allpods&ecomp=5fyk&earg=sr3&prid=66994def-3ca7-4797-a71a-0006e67fccfe.
[74] Peter Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* July/August 1996, 46, KB.
[75] Volkers, "De Kabel was Druistig," *Elf,* 38, KB.
[76] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 46, KB.
[77] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 46, KB.
[78] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 46, KB.

responded accordingly. Kee reported that "Davids never got into his play, and was mainly cursing," while "Seedorf started out with a flying tackle on the ankles of [one of their leading goal scorers] Dennis Bergkamp." According to Seedorf, "because Ed and I were on opposite sides of the competition, I already suspected that Edgar or I would not play…On such a moment, I always think about what's coming ahead. My suspicion turned out correct." Seedorf's father, Johan, made it plain: "If Clarence gets benched against the Swiss, he will go home, that's for sure."[79] Fortunately for Johan and Clarence, the latter started. Unfortunately, that meant Hiddink benched Davids, who participated in warm-ups "uninspired with other reserve players." Just before the match, however, Seedorf, Davids, and Kluivert "were in what was an ostensibly heated conversation." When Kee asked Seedorf about it, he explained that "it wasn't that much…I was just singing."[80]

In the match against Switzerland, the conflict in the Dutch squad was difficult to ignore. Prior to the match, Hiddink visited the reserve captain, Ronald de Boer, in his hotel room to discuss the team's tactics and strategies. When De Boer explained the game plan to Davids, he "suspected a set-up behind the whole affair."[81] Hiddink benched Davids and Kluivert, and, after only twenty-five minutes, substituted Seedorf out of the game after he received a yellow card early in the first half. According to an interview with *Elf* magazine, Seedorf didn't have a problem with his early substitution, but explained that "it sucks. You prepare up to three days for such a match, and if you then have to be substituted for a shitty reason like that…I was already emotional, and the yellow card made everything worse."[82] Yet when Hubert Meyer from the

[79] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 46, KB.
[80] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 47, KB.
[81] John Volkers, "Edje Pikt Het Niet Langer," *Elf*, July/August 1996, 43, KB.
[82] As quoted in Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf*, 46.

German *Kicker Sports Magazine*, asked Edgar Davids why he didn't play, Davids explained that "it was a shame."[83] Switching to a broken English dialect, Davids told Meyer that "the coach shouldn't put his head in other players' ass'."[84] Meyer appeared "perplexed" and then Davids "repeated it word for word."[85] His uncensored critique "turned out to be The Statement of the Euro Cup."[86] Hiddink spoke with Davids and advised him to publicly apologize if he wanted to stay with the team. Davids refused. In fact, Davids re-stated his desire for a starting position on the field. The "people demanded the head of the 'troublemaker'" and Hiddink sent him home for the remainder of the tournament.[87]

In the aftermath of Davids' suspension, the Dutch media positioned the kabel as a gang of spoiled brats. *Het Parool* described Davids and Seedorf as "child stars from the streets of Amsterdam" who were "inevitably spoiled too." The media believed that two young footballers, "who have become millionaires from one moment to the next," should humble themselves "at the start of their career."[88] *De Stem* suggested the players shouldn't have an opinion at all. Columnist Leon Krijnen did "not care what ball players have to say. They have to do what they are paid for, kick that ball, and entertain you and me."[89] When Seedorf gave an interview "chewing gum while snapping at a tv reporter in front of the whole nation" after the game

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[83] Volkers, "Edje Pikt Het Niet Langer," *Elf*, 42.
[84] Volkers, "Edje Pikt Het Niet Langer," *Elf*, 42.
[85] Volkers, "Edje Pikt Het Niet Langer," *Elf*, 42.
[86] Volkers, "Edje Pikt Het Niet Langer," *Elf*, 42.
[87] Volkers, "Edje Pikt Het Niet Langer," *Elf*, 43.
[88] Van den Heuvel, "Nieuw Dilemma Voor de Coach.".
[89] Leon Krijnen, "Column: Is Kabel Davids-Seedorf-Kluivert Gebroken?," *De Stem*, June 15, 1996, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=55576071-9e8c-4285-b8bb-52056d913dc0&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A3TDS-2B00-009Y-B1NN-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A3TDS-2B00-009Y-B1NN-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=256089&pdteaserkey=sr0&pditab=allpods&ecomp=5fyk&earg=sr0&prid=7f7d9cf5-e4ff-4d75-97b2-f0cb6ecb419d.

against Switzerland, Peter Kee of *Elf*, described him as "an arrogant little boss," whose "emotions did not do him well."[90] Months after the tournament, Paul Onkenhout of *De Volkskrant* still believed Davids "behaved like a toddler in England, putting his own interest above that of the national team."[91] The Dutch media expected black athletes to be apolitical entertainers whose only value was their bodily achievements rather than their mental capacities. Seedorf's and Davids' critiques of the coach's tactics challenged the mental authority of whiteness and unsettled the racial hierarchy of the national team.

The Dutch football media also captured the kabel through representations of slavery and criminality. A comic strip that appeared in *Elf* after the tournament provided a visual representation of the kabel that brought the coloniality of Dutch football into clearer view:[92]

[90] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf*, 46.
[91] Paul Onkenhout, "Denkend Aan David Zie Ik Een Verwende Kleuter," *De Volkskrant*, November 23, 1996, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=f141a2b8-5fbd-473f-86ca-099fd2d399d6&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-R1H0-0150-V1RV-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-R1H0-0150-V1RV-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259070&pdteaserkey=sr4&pditab=allpods&ecomp=5fyk&earg=sr4&prid=66994def-3ca7-4797-a71a-0006e67fccfe.
[92] Harr Wiegman, "Nick Staben," *Elf*, August/September 1996, 36-37, KB.

Figure 7: Elf: Het Toonaangevende Voetbalmaandblad, August/September 1996

<u>Nick Staben</u>

Farmer Guus has to firmly take charge over his players for the match against Brazil to not turn into a fiasco.

To start with, Farmer Guus wants to cut through the much-discussed kabel. And so, armed with a bolt, he goes on his way to the concert of the American soul singer Keith Sweat in Sportpaleis Ahoy where he thinks he sees the black players of his selection.

Hiddink: "Aside, I have to go to my boys."
Bouncer: "Hoho, you will not get in with these clothes."

Farmer Guus decides to visit the kabel individually, first of all he sets course for Madrid, to Clarence Soapsuds (Seedorf).
Madrid coach: 'Get out! We no longer need Dutch trainers in Spain!'

Farmer Guus then travels to Milan.
Milan coach: "I do not allow you to put your head in our ... eh ... business!"

Then goes to Amsterdam...
Van Gaal: "Patrick can not be disturbed now!"

And that is how the mission of Farmer Guus proved to be a hopeless one. Who would actually like to talk to him? Of course: His loyal captain Nick Staben!
Staben: 'Trainer, why not invite the whole selection for a weekend at home?'

So as it was said, it was done that way. On the property of his farm in Varsseveld, Farmer Guus organizes a sensitivity weekend in which everyone tells each other the truth.

Hiddink: 'Who wants his coffee black?
Kluivert: 'We'

Hiddink: "We are going to tackle the problem at the root! I want to tackle all problems here and now!
Man with carrot: "Huh?"

Blind: "I'm suffering from your sweaty feet!"
Bogarde: "Yes, but I'm a fan of sweat, so ..."

Hiddink: 'If you do not perform against Brazil, you'll fly out!'
Bergkamp: "No! I do not want to fly! "

Hiddink: "And finally: I do not want to hear the word Kabel anymore!"

Cable company: "Sorry, Farmer Guus, but we have to build new telephone cables!"

Salesman: 'Fresh cod! Who will release me? Fresh cod! "

TV: 'Sport 8, from August 18th also with you on the cable!'

Babies: 'Dad, may we have a drop cable'

This comic strip was part of a series called Nick Staben, created by Harr Wiegman. Staben is the fictional narrative character who is a professional footballer for the Dutch national team. He is meant to provide advice to the head coach about the organization of the team,

particularly in times of crisis. In this particular installment of Nick Staben, "Farmer Guus" tried, unsuccessfully, to end the discussion about the kabel in an effort to restore team unity. However, the images and humor were constituted by histories of slavery and tropes of Surinamese criminality. While members of the kabel described themselves as a close friendship, the media rearticulated its meaning and represented the kabel as a chained group of criminals. According to the narrative, Hiddink policed the kabel and found them at a Keith Sweat concert where he located his "boys," dancing in chains. Following the tournament, Bogarde and Kluivert attended a Keith Sweat concert at the Ahoy Stadium in Rotterdam where they even discussed the possibility of creating an MLS team in Atlanta centered around Bogarde.[93] In the comic strip, Wiegman depicts the kabel as runaway slaves who have escaped the control of their master, Farmer Hiddink. Boer is translated to farmer to represent Hiddink's rural upbringing, yet in relation to the kabel who were depicted as rebellious street kids, the term Boer could also be translated to "redneck."[94] The representation of black criminality was reinforced by the image of Kluivert, dressed as a prisoner, performing manual field labor. The previous year, Kluivert was involved in a fatal car accident that killed Marten Putnam, a theatre director in Vlaardingen. While he was not drunk, Kluivert drove at 55 mph in a 35 mph zone and hit Putnam who was making a U-turn. The judge found Kluivert guilty and sentenced him to 240 hours of community service.[95] While the leniency of the judge reflected how celebrities were partially protected from the most extreme forms of punishment. Wiegman suggests that Kluivert should have suffered a punishment reminiscent of slavery. Moreover, Wiegman suggests the difficulty of inter-racial

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[93] Julien Gartner, "Winston Bogarde Ontmoet Zijn 'Soul' Idool Keith Sweat," *Elf*, September 1996, 35, KB.
[94] *Reverso Context,* s.v. "Boer," accessed August 11, 2017, http://context.reverso.net/translation/dutch-english/boer#redneck.
[95] David Winner, "Kluivert Seeking Calmer Waters," *The Independent*, June 10, 1996, http://www.independent.co.uk/sport/kluivert-seeking-calmer-waters-1336303.html.

solidarity through the symbol of black coffee. Indeed, during Euro '96, Seedorf asked Hiddink to a cup of coffee in an effort to settle their differences. Wiegman's depiction of Hiddink disguised as a waitress and turned away from the kabel, represented the suspicion amongst the black players that Hiddink only consulted the white players on the team, particularly, Ronald and Frank de Boer, and Danny Blind. Finally, Wiegman claims that "the root" of the problem is, in fact, the ethnic "roots" of the kabel.

The kabel's critique challenged the unity and racial hierarchy of the national team, and thereby raised concerns amongst the Dutch media about the specter of black teamwork. When Davids leveled his critique against Hiddink, "the alleged unanimity within the selection of the Dutch national team ha[d] disappeared."[96] Krijnen, the columnist who demanded the kabel to shut up and "kick that ball," was concerned about "that mystical telepathic kabel with which the Kluivert-Seedorf-Davids threesome likes to profile itself. Has the kabel been broken or is it so strong that Davids is dragging the remaining duo in his bitterness?"[97] Mark van den Heuvel equally expressed his concern about the further actions of "the rest of the 'cable' that Davids forms together with Seedorf, Kluivert and Reiziger? Behind whom do they prepare themselves in this very hard-hitting issue, which can grow into a big riot. Do they declare their solidarity with their teammates or do they join the national coach?"[98] Rather than making the decision to either support Davids, or the national team, the kabel declared solidarity with both Davids, and the national team.

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[96] Volkers, "Edje Pikt Het Niet Langer," *Elf*, 43.
[97] Krijnen, "Column: Is Kabel Davids-Seedorf-Kluivert Gebroken?"
[98] Van den Heuvel, "Nieuw Dilemma Voor de Coach."

De Kabel

Indeed, in the aftermath of Davids comments, the kabel articulated three mutually constitutive forms of black teamwork: cultural solidarity, multicultural transruption, and diasporic geoheterodoxy. The kabel's ability to forge a solidaristic collective helped expose Dutch racism and challenge multiculturalism yet maintained a commitment to live within and against the Dutch nation-state. The cultural and racial solidarity of the kabel is important to understand the coloniality of Dutch football as a structural, rather than an individuated power system. The display of the kabel's solidarity also generated public discussions about the position of Afro-Surinamese communities in the Netherlands, and the reality of Dutch racism and discrimination that exists on a quotidian level.

When Hiddink sent Davids home, the kabel spoke back and reinforced Davids' suspicions that they were being mistreated. The kabel escaped the figurative chains with which the media captured them. Immediately following "the riot" between Davids and the reporters, Seedorf, "that player he befriended came…to take him away."[99] When Seedorf spoke to reporters, football reporter Peter Kee described him "as if he was unchained." Seedorf believed that Davids' comments had a critical impact.

> "I don't talk about the words Edgar used, I talk about where it came from, about how things evolve. The thoughts behind the words of Ed, I also had. With him, it came out, with me only partially…Things like this happen, you don't plan it. Now at least we can talk about the issue. It's now time for things to be changed. If you have a problem, you have to put it on the table, it's that simple. Then you can fix everything, we have to seriously discuss a number of issues. Enough of the guys talk about it, more than you would think. The storm hasn't calmed down yet."[100]

[99] Van den Heuvel, "Nieuw Dilemma Voor de Coach."
[100] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 48.

Seedorf expressed his disapproval of the exclusion of the Surinamese players about the team's game plans. "If you know what [Davids] has shown in preparation, and at Ajax, then shouldn't you always give him the benefit of the doubt? Ok, the decision to not put him in the lineup against Switzerland is being taken, but it is about how that decision is being made."[101] Seedorf argued that as top-class professional footballers, Hiddink should consult more with Davids and himself. The kabel felt disrespected by "the hierarchy brought forward by Blind and De Boer within the Orange selection" and their decision to criticize the kabel publicly, rather than privately.[102]

Other players who were considered to be part of the kabel also expressed their understanding of and friendship with Davids. "Clarence Seedorf, Michael Reiziger, and Winston Bogarde still understand that Edgar Davids did not want to bend a knee for Guus Hiddink."[103] Reiziger believed that "Edgar used too harsh words [and] should not have done that…But in principle, I can agree with it." He commended Davids for speaking up to Hiddink and appreciated "the character of Davids: he stands for what he says."[104] Bogarde was disappointed

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[101] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 48.

[102] Matty Verkamman, "Seedorf Gooit Olie Op Het Vuurtje van Davids," *Trouw*, June 17, 1996, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=8e8db425-1a2f-49a8-a576-fbcd8f33d333&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-VS20-0150-Y09M-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-VS20-0150-Y09M-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259069&pdteaserkey=sr9&pditab=allpods&ecomp=5fyk&earg=sr9&prid=fd5887c5-9d41-4f33-a379-886ffde67d44.

[103] Robert Misset, "Davids' Vrienden Spelen Met Pijn in Het Hart Verder," *Het Parool*, June 17, 1996, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=0ec2b372-c9b2-4881-87be-ad2c3b4378df&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-S630-0151-01DM-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-S630-0151-01DM-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259062&pdteaserkey=sr19&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr19&prid=b54581fb-0089-44d8-a2a3-0a432e225e16.

[104] Robert Misset, "Davids' Vrienden Spelen Met Pijn in Het Hart Verder."

with the situation and could "imagine the anger of Edgar very well. But it depends on the person how you deal with that. I lost a friend at the Dutch national team. I miss him already." Bogarde expressed the "silent sadness of the 'kabel': 'I came to the European Championship to win the cup. But I continue to play with pain in my heart.'"[105]

Importantly, their solidarity was centered around the commonality of their Surinamese culture. Reiziger's friendship with Kluivert, Seedorf, and Davids formed "a separate group. We talk easily with each other, because we think the same way, come from the same culture, and make the same jokes."[106] In a notorious photo of the Dutch national team during Euro '96, the players ate lunch, yet sat together along racial lines. Three tables sat all white players, and the fourth table had all Surinamese players—Kluivert, Bogarde, Aron Winter, Gaston Taument, and John Veldman. The media complained about the kabel's "star ambitions," when they requested a Surinamese cook to address their nutritional needs. According to Davids, "part of my displeasure was simply food, the main source of performance. Nutrition is very important in top sport. Look, if I get diarrhea from certain kinds of food all the time, then yes, I do not think it is conducive to a good performance."[107] Davids thought it was "nothing more than logical."[108] The coloniality of Dutch football "haunted them" during Euro '96, yet Seedorf and the kabel "fought it off" and refused to be a "push over." Prior to the tournament, the team agreed that they would not publicly criticize each other, and Seedorf argued that their critiques should "remain inside chambers. If something or someone bothers you, you go up to the person and talk about it, that's what I think. That's a matter of upbringing, of the way you've been raised by your parents in

[105] Robert Misset, "Davids' Vrienden Spelen Met Pijn in Het Hart Verder."
[106] Simon Kuper and Rutger Slagter, "We don't talk Anymore?" *FourFourTwo,* August 1996, 30-31, NFMA.
[107] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen,* 195.
[108] Tan, *Het Surinaamse Legioen,* 195.

your younger years. It's really all too much to explain all of that right now."[109] Reiziger echoed Seedorf and told reporters that "our culture is hard to explain, I'm afraid it cannot really be understood if you are not a part of it."[110]

In some cases, the solidarity was centered around their blackness, rather than their ethnicity. The following match after Davids' comments, the Dutch lost 4-1 to England, yet still qualified for the quarter-finals. They lost 5-4 in a penalty kick shootout against France, and Seedorf missed the deciding shot. Onkenhout of *De Volkskrant,* blamed Hiddink for choosing Seedorf who "should never have taken" the shot. According to Onkenhout, Seedorf was never a good at penalty kicks and "he was mentally not the most suitable player to cope with the tension associated with taking a penalty."[111] However, after the match, the media captured a fleeting moment of black teamwork between Seedorf and his French opponent, Christian Karembeu who was born and raised in New Calcedonia, a French territory in the Pacific Islands. Karembeu and Seedorf were teammates at Sampdoria in Italy during the 1995-96 season, and Karembeu helped acclimate Seedorf to the new club. The two players formed a "friendship at first sight."[112] In the midst of the French celebration, while some of the white Dutch players "ignored Seedorf and his grief," his friends Bogarde, and "French friend," Karembeu, consoled Seedorf as he cried. Karembeu's refusal to celebrate with his French teammates, and the consolation of Seedorf demonstrated an expression of black teamwork that was unbound from nationalities and competitive desires to win. Rather it represented the possibilities of black transnational solidarities in a space constituted by strict national antagonisms.

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[109] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 47.
[110] Misset, "Davids' Vrienden Spelen Met Pijn in Het Hart Verder."
[111] PAUL ONKENHOUT, "Ook voor de bondscoach wordt het een kommervolle zomer," *de Volkskrant*, June 24, 1996, https://www.volkskrant.nl/gs-b439020d.
[112] Zwartkruis, *Clarence Seedorf, De Biografie,* 62.

This is not to suggest that the kabel absolutely disidentified with the Netherlands. On the contrary, they often demonstrated an ambiguity between their two nationalities. While the kabel mobilized around their Surinamese identity, and "sympathized with [Davids]…they remained in England."[113] Indeed, Reiziger explained that Davids did not want the rest of the kabel to separate from the national team and encouraged them "to win the tournament." While Reiziger agreed with Davids' criticism, he did not agree that Surinamese-Dutch citizens were oppressed in the larger Dutch society. According to Reiziger, it was incorrect to think that Surinamese communities should "return to Suriname because they will never be accepted in the Netherlands." As someone who had an Antillean mother, but grew up in the Netherlands, he did not believe that the Surinamese had "a bad job in the Netherlands."[114] Seedorf's father, Johan, argued that "there is a connection between the Surinamese of course…Besides that, they are also well versed in Dutch culture."[115] Indeed, the kabel's decision to remain in England, and continue playing for the Orange years later represents a commitment to representing the Netherlands. According to Seedorf, "we have the Dutch nationality, we are Dutch and we play in the Dutch national team with pleasure and we want to win."[116]

Their affinity with the Netherlands did not absolve the histories and practices of Dutch racism. The formation of the kabel and their public humiliation at Euro '96 illuminated structural processes of racial discrimination. In particular, the treatment of the kabel reified their earlier concerns about "the Ajax feeling."[117] According to Seedorf, the older players at Ajax

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[113] Volkers, "Edje Pikt Het Niet Langer," *Elf*, 43.
[114] Misset, "Davids' Vrienden Spelen Met Pijn in Het Hart Verder."
[115] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 47.
[116] Lesley Hellings and Iwan Bottse, "Seedorf: Wij Zijn Door Niemand Te Breken," *Obsession: Onafhankelijk Surinaams-Nederlands Tijdschrift*, October 1997, 38.
[117] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 46-47.

"approached him rather negatively than positively." While Frank Rijkaard was there to support the younger players' development, "on the other side there was [Danny] Blind and [Frank and Ronald] de Boer who manifested themselves solely with cursing at the youngsters and tried to irritate them with nasty gestures."[118] Moreover, the "Ajax feeling" conjured up realities of racial discrimination, which is why Davids and Seedorf "insisted on being members of the team council in which Danny Blind and Ronald de Boer already were seated."[119] According to *FourFourTwo* magazine, "someone on the side of the kabel" leaked the salaries of the Ajax team that won the 1995 Champions League. The brothers, Ronald and Frank de Boer each received £200,000 and Danny Blind received "almost as much," while Davids received only £40,000, Seedorf and Kluivert collected £32,000 each, and Reiziger only pocketed £26,000.[120] Seedorf suggested the discrimination did not target their Surinamese identity, but rather their blackness.

Following the 1995 Champions League final, black players at Ajax started to leave. Seedorf explained that when you look at "the names of the players who just left one after the other: Me first, then Davids, Reiziger, Finidi [George], [Nwankwo] Kanu, Kluivert, Bogarde," they all had "the same dissatisfaction." Seedorf made clear that it was not a coincidence, nor "about *feelings* of undervaluation. Then you are talking about facts" (italics added).[121] The solidarity with Kanu and George, who were Nigerian internationals, reveals the anti-black sentiment that existed at Ajax, and the underappreciation that drove many of the black players away. The exodus of black players from Ajax was indeed a form of black teamwork that revealed the coloniality of Dutch football. While each player made their own decision to leave,

[118] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 46-47.
[119] Kee, "De Storm is nog niet Gaan Liggen," *Elf,* 48.
[120] Kuper and Slagter, "We don't talk Anymore?" *FourFourTwo,* 30.
[121] Zwartkruis, *Clarence Seedorf, De Biografie,* 77.

they shared the same reason. Reiziger did not want to "speak of prejudice or discrimination," but admitted that he still felt that "the colored person has to prove himself to the white man. These are often subtle things, but they are an essential part of existence." Bogarde contextualized their dissatisfaction and explaind that "Fifteen, twenty years ago dark players were not or hardly selected for representative teams…now it is almost inconceivable that Orange plays without dark boys. Yet the dark football player still has to manifest himself more."[122]

The critique against the coloniality of Dutch football took full shape a year later during the qualifications rounds for the 1998 World Cup. However, it emerged at a time when a member of the kabel, Kluivert, experienced immense pressure from the Dutch press. In May 1997, Kluivert and three of his friends partied at a club when they went home with Marielle Boon, a twenty-year old white woman. From the moment the party reached Kluivert's home, the stories diverged. According to Boon, Kluivert and his friends gang raped her. While Kluivert and his friends initially "denied that there had been any sex at all," they later admitted to having voluntary sex with Boon. The judge dismissed the case because of insufficient evidence. The prosecutors and Dutch media were shocked and believed "that the name Kluivert played a major role."[123] Indeed, as long as Kluivert "makes goals, he will be forgiven and forgotten. This is how professional sport is."[124] Kluivert's reputation as the Dutch wonder-kid suffered as a result of his

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[122] Misset, "Davids' Vrienden Spelen Met Pijn in Het Hart Verder."

[123] "'Het Kan Niet Anders of Naam Kluivert Speelde Een Rol,'" *Algemeen Dagblad*, July 12, 1997, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=93dfd503-2e2a-4d5f-98ae-f50b7dd9d8fb&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MW-00R0-0150-X2PP-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MW-00R0-0150-X2PP-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259047&pdteaserkey=sr1&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr1&prid=cbdbd175-ce11-4fd2-abb1-632ee7c260b7.

[124] Frans Kotterer, "Alweer Kluivert," *Het Parool*, July 17, 1997, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=0c777d17-2051-4887-a641-4d6dc61281ea&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-

actions, which included his fatal accident with Marten Putnam. Prior to a World Cup qualifier match against Belgium in September of 1997, two months after the judge's decision, the Dutch media, fans, and coaches debated about whether or not to play Kluivert. Hiddink selected him, and Kluivert scored a goal and made an assist. The Netherlands defeated Belgium 3-1, and the Dutch public "accepted [him] in grace." Throughout the match, it was clear the fans had "forgiven and forgotten" Kluivert's alleged crime, as they sung his name in the stands. Kluivert explained that because of the support, he "felt stronger and stronger," and expressed his excitement for the World Cup the following year.[125] Seedorf supported Kluivert and problematically attempted to ignore his alleged off-the-field crime. Seedorf explained that "Kluivert had a difficult preparation" for the match so he "thought it was important to support him."[126] According to Seedorf, Kluivert's private life had nothing to do with his professional career. "If Patrick goes wrong in his private life, that does not mean that he cannot kick a ball anymore. I'm not going to talk about what he did, but I think we should concentrate on football."[127]

Following the press conference, a group of Surinamese-Dutch reporters from the magazine, *Obsession,* asked Seedorf, Kluivert, and Bogarde for an interview about their

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[125] "Kluivert in Genade Aangenomen," *Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau ANP*, September 7, 1997, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=a61c727f-3c6a-4688-b71e-600a6839caa3&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A3SKN-KWM0-00B0-752H-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A3SKN-KWM0-00B0-752H-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=149014&pdteaserkey=sr1&pditab=allpods&ecomp=5fyk&earg=sr1&prid=f7e5272b-bda0-4a7a-89d5-721cea2c3446.

[126] "Kluivert in Genade Aangenomen," *Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau ANP*, September 7, 1997.

[127] Zwartkruis, *Clarence Seedorf, De Biografie,* 100.

experiences as Surinamese-Dutch footballers. The interview dismissed the gendered violence of Kluivert, and rather exposed many of the racial injustices faced by the kabel at Ajax and the Dutch national team. When the interviewers, Lesley Hellings and Iwan Bottse, asked Bogarde about the exodus of Surinamese footballers from the Netherlands, he explained that it was "the simple fact that we Surinamers, especially the footballers are less appreciated." According to Bogarde, the black players "should be valued just as much as other players, or even more. That does not happen here." Specifically, Bogarde explained that the clearest sign of underappreciation was their financial compensation, which was "not as high as for other players who are also starters and internationals." Bogarde affirmed Hellings' and Bottse's suspicion about whether or not black footballers noticed "that people look at you in a certain way, act in a certain way." Bogarde explained that as professional footballers they were not insensitive to those experiences and declared that "we are also human. I think that's the most important thing."[128]

Kluivert told the reporters that "people know that I am very sorry that there is no Surinamese team on this level; if that was there, it would be very different, I think." Kluivert explained to the intrigued reporters, "with Surinamese boys…you form another band." In the Netherlands, "you are a full player, but you do not feel at ease because as a dark boy you always have to perform twice as hard and you have to keep your mouth shut twice as much. As soon as you say something, it is always used against you. I think if you only have dark boys around you, you have a certain bond with each other, they support you through thick and thin. I miss that here." Kluivert shared Bogarde's feeling of underappreciation and expressed his concern that although the black players made up a majority of the Ajax and Orange's squads, the public perception was

[128] Hellings and Bottse, "Seedorf: Wij Zijn Door Niemand Te Breken," 34-35.

that the white players "'carry' the team. It is very difficult for us to show the outside world that we actually carry the team. They have not realized that yet, but that will still happen." He also echoed Seedorf's belief that at Ajax, "our eyes slowly opened. Clarence left, Winston, me, Kanu, Finidi. We knew what was going on. Some, mainly two players (the De Boer brothers), thought that Ajax was theirs." However, after the Champions League victory with Ajax, European clubs started to offer the players substantially more money than Ajax, and they realized "I can earn so much. I can also see that people really respect me." While Kluivert recognized that they were "very high in white society" as part of a "black elite group; a group of guys who are millionaires," he maintained that "the most important thing is to be normal."[129]

Seedorf was skeptical about the interview and realized "after two minutes…that the interviewers in the story wanted to project their own thoughts."[130] Indeed, the reporters asked the same question about black elites to Seedorf who responded that he does "not want to go into that black and white. I think that is a very sensitive issue." However, Seedorf did reveal the operation of racism in the Netherlands. He explained that "In football, in sports, and I think in life in general, few people say in your face: I do not like the whites or I do not like the blacks or I do not like the yellows. People never say that straight in your face." When the reporters suggested that "Americans do," Seedorf agreed and explained that "I prefer that. This usually does not happen here. You can not talk about it. You should not talk about it either." Seedorf also disagreed with Kluivert and Bogarde and suggested that Suriname needed "a lot of time to build" before focusing on the "sports activities and other things." Seedorf believed that the talent is

[129] Hellings and Bottse, "Seedorf: Wij Zijn Door Niemand Te Breken," 35-36.
[130] Zwartkruis, *Clarence Seedorf, De Biografie,* 101.

comparable to the Brazilians, yet it was "important that the country first progresses; then the rest will come naturally."[131]

Contrary to the anti-racist politics of Gullit, the kabel's black teamwork around Euro '96 generated critical discussions about the institutional realities of European football racism. Gullit's campaign was part of a growing anti-racist sentiment in European football. The institutionalization of anti-racist politics emerged in England, when in 1993, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) launched the "Let's Kick Racism Out of Football" campaign. According to Back, Crabbe, and Solomos, the initiative focused "almost exclusively on the racial abuse of players by fans."[132] The image of the racist hooligan was presented in the media as working and middle-class white men whose neo-Nazi rhetoric and violence toward black players caused a moral panic in British popular culture. Gullit similarly adopted this image of the racist hooligan as the 'demon' figure that Italian football could rally against. Racism, then, only became legible when the perpetrator "fit the category of…the 'racist hooligan.'"[133] Importantly, Back et al. argue that the concept of the racist hooligan is narrow and misleading, and obscures the banal and quotidian forms of racism embedded within the institutions of European football. As a result, racism is located "outside of the institutions of football and into the shady interstices of quasi-criminal subcultures."[134] Indeed, while Gullit called on Silvio Berlusconi, the president of AC Milan and far-right

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[131] Hellings and Bottse, "Seedorf: Wij Zijn Door Niemand Te Breken," 38.
[132] Back, Crabbe, and Solomos, *The Changing Face of Football*, 192.
[133] Les Back, Tim Crabbe, and John Solomos, "Beyond the Racist/Hooligan Couplet: Race, Social Theory and Football Culture," *The British Journal of Sociology* 50, no. 3 (n.d.): 419–42, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.1999.00419.x.
[134] Back, Crabbe, and Solomos, *The Changing Face of Football,* 165.

sympathizer, to denounce racism in the stands, he failed to highlight the institutional racism of the club itself.

Indeed, the kabel revealed that black footballers, regardless of their representation, experienced institutional racism. The exodus of black players from Ajax exposed the systemic mistreatment they faced from the players, coaches, and administration. More importantly, the kabel confirmed the existence of what Essed termed "everyday racism" in the Netherlands, "the integration of racism into everyday practices…that activate underlying power relations."[135] The concept of everyday racism is helpful because it seeks to understand the cognitive and behavioral, institutional and individual, manifestations of racism as a simultaneous process, rather than two separate functions. In other words, everyday racism dispels the idea that racism has more to do with either ideologies or practices, and suggests that "the structural exclusion, marginalization, and repression of Blacks is consistent with and rationalized by existing ideologies problematizing and inferiorizing Blacks."[136] The kabel marked their experiences of everyday racism and refused to accept the athletic representations of blackness that were required to maintain unity in the Dutch national team. Football, then, is a critical space to understand the "heterogenous manifestations" of everyday racism, and the ways in which it is "structured by forces towards uniformity."[137] I argue that the uniformity of Dutch football was only possible through the heterogenous manifestations of everyday racism that maintained the racial hierarchy of the Netherlands. However, while Essed's and Back's conceptualizations of racism suggest that it occurred inside the institutions of football, I am concerned with how

[135] Essed, *Understanding Everyday Racism,* 50.
[136] Essed, *Understanding Everyday Racism,* 50.
[137] Essed, *Understanding Everyday Racism,* 50.

football is itself constituted by racism. Moreover, the inability to talk about the racial constitution of football is a byproduct of the inability to critically interrogate the concept of racism itself.

While it is true that the universal recognition of the racist hooligan ignores the forms of everyday racism in football, I argue that it equally ignores the racial and colonial constitution of football, and thereby the colonial constitution of racism. Rather than the language of football racism, I claim that the coloniality of sport captures the way football is a colonial constitution complicit in the privileging of whiteness and the subordination of blackness. This is not to suggest that the kabel did not experience racism. On the contrary, I argue that the racism they faced was constituted by the coloniality of sport. To be sure, Davids "actually thought it was racism towards us. Because when I see a table with only white people, I have never heard the press call: 'Yes, all the white people are together, they are moving away from the rest.'"[138] Davids revealed how Dutch football is constituted by the normalization of whiteness and how a black collective threatens the racial harmony of the team. As Joke Hermes explains, "it is easy enough to incorporate black men as individuals but much harder to accept them as a group."[139] Indeed, the Orange did not have a problem incorporating individual Black footballers like Gullit and Rijkaard yet represented the kabel in more militant terms.

Conclusion

Importantly, the kabel's black teamwork represented a threat because it exposed the coloniality of the Netherlands. Gullit's condemnation of racism in Italy and South Africa was legible and celebrated as a high-point in Dutch multiculturalism because it diverted attention away from Dutch racism. Gullit's avoidance of Dutch racism fits in the tradition of the

[138] Tan, *Het Surinamese Legioen,* 197.
[139] Hermes, *Re-Reading Popular Culture*, 58.

Netherland's historic denial of racism. According to Essed and Isabel Hoving, "though not unique to the Netherlands, one of the key features of Dutch racism is its denial."[140] Similarly, Gloria Wekker argues that "the dominant discourse stubbornly maintains that the Netherlands is and always has been color-blind and antiracist."[141] Gullit was the poster boy of Dutch multiculturalism as long as he portrayed the Netherlands as a liberal multicultural and antiracist society. As stated earlier, the denial of Dutch racism was the condition of possibility for Gullit's representation as a multicultural hero. An editorial in *De Volkskraant* suggested that "the image of Gullit has caused a lot of goodwill" in the area of Dutch race relations. The representation of Gullit and Rijkaard represented the absence of Dutch racism "because they profiled themselves in the first place as Amsterdam (read Dutch) boys."[142]

On a number of occasions, players like Gullit and Rijkaard exhibited an ignorance about their racial difference. According to Tan, Surinamese communities had "uncertainties about Gullit's sympathies for Surinam, the birthplace of his father."[143] In a 1984 television broadcast, when a reporter asked Gullit whether he felt Dutch or Surinamese as a youth, Gullit said "'I have always been raised with Dutch boys. I did not feel like a Surinamese, but a Dutchman. I was only confronted with it because at one point I was seen as a representative of the Surinamese community. Only at a later age, around the age of nineteen, did I start thinking about my

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[140] Isabel Hoving and Philomena Essed, "Innocence, Smug Ignorance, Resentment: An Introduction to Dutch Racism," in *Dutch Racism*, ed. Isabel Hoving and Philomena Essed (Amsterdam: Brill | Rodopi, 2014)., 10.
[141] Wekker, *White Innocence*, 31.
[142] "GEACHTE REDACTIE: Wat Maakt Het Uit of Onze Jongens Wit of Zwart Zijn?," *De Volkskrant*, June 29, 1996, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=f85f25b7-2287-4f82-a0ae-fb28123e74c9&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-PT30-0150-V212-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-PT30-0150-V212-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259070&pdteaserkey=sr24&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr24&prid=dbcea10d-82f0-4583-9c55-cbd220d90612.
[143] Tan, *Het Surinamese Legioen,* 118.

background.'"[144] When Rijkaard, who was born in Amsterdam, visited Surinam with Ajax in the early 1982, he "had no expectations of the trip beforehand," and went there "not as a private person but as a professional of Ajax."[145] He noticed "a sense of pride" among his Surinamese family "because a family member was in the selection of professional football club in the Netherlands." After the trip, "it never really occurred to [him] again to go to Suriname."[146] In the summer of 1999, the Dutch national team—of which Rijkaard was the head coach—visited Brazil to a play a friendly match. Following the match, Seedorf and Davids told Brazilian reporters that the country reminded them of Suriname. According to Rijkaard, "they felt it. It had a lot of the Surinamese atmosphere. That was a moment of recognition for Edgar and Clarence, but I did not have that moment of recognition…I do not feel what Clarence and Edgar have with Suriname. I was not born there, I did not grow up there, so that's a difference…In principle, they have a stronger bond with Suriname."[147]

While Rijkaard positioned himself "in the middle of both cultures," he confessed to not passing on "typical Surinamese things" to his children.[148] Rijkaard and Gullit balanced their racial and ethnic differences in ways that subordinated their Surinamese identity to their Dutch identity. Through their representation as multicultural heroes, the two footballers upheld the liberal image of Dutch integration, color-blindness, and national cohesion. They sanitized the Netherland's multi-ethnic society during the 1980s and incorporated their cultural, racial and ethnic differences into dominant Dutch culture.

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[144] Tan, *Het Surinamese Legioen,* 118.
[145] Tan, *Het Surinamese Legioen,* 121.
[146] Tan, *Het Surinamese Legioen,* 121.
[147] Tan, *Het Surinamese Legioen,* 121.
[148] Tan, *Het Surinamese Legioen,* 121.

On the other hand, the kabel interrupted the myth of Dutch multiculturalism precisely because they uncovered the coloniality of the Netherlands and Dutch football. As professional Dutch athletes, their solidarity with and identification as Surinamese made it difficult for the Dutch to ignore their histories of colonialism and slavery. Indeed, following Euro '96 and the 1997 *Obsession* interview, the question of Dutch racism became a central debate in the public Dutch discourse. Members of the Dutch press deployed a colorblind discourse to describe the difference between the black and white players, and encouraged the Dutch public to not "let the foreign press talk about a racial problem, while we have had an exemplary role internationally in this area for years."[149] The myth of Dutch tolerance differed drastically with Bogarde's experiences. He explained that the black players "felt strongly that [they] were subordinated." It was only at Euro '96 when "the puzzle collapsed, then things came out."[150] The *Obsession* interview "caused a stir" in the Dutch national team, "but also in the Surinamese community." On an independent Surinamese-Dutch radio program called "Damsko so mi tan (Amsterdam, that's me!)," callers discussed the kabel's grievances. According to one of the guests on the show, "in many other areas, Surinamese notice that they receive little respect. In the healthcare sector, in education, there is always talk of backlogs." The caller argued that "in the Netherlands you will not be judged on your qualities," and questioned why Surinamese-Dutch footballers only "get a lot of appreciation abroad."[151] Another listener believed "that the issue shows that the

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[149] "Racisme?," *Trouw*, June 28, 1996, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=8182be23-b535-477a-b047-ddbd5cc3b99b&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-VSN0-0150-Y20S-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-VSN0-0150-Y20S-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259069&pdteaserkey=sr23&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr23&prid=dbcea10d-82f0-4583-9c55-cbd220d90612.

[150] Tan, *Het Surinamese Legioen,* 165-166.

[151] Herman Staal, "'Surinamers Moeten Dubbel Vechten,'" *NRC Handelsblad*, October 20, 1997, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=411dfb91-ffff-

white-black relationship is a charged subject." The caller "argues for a national discussion about the colonial past and slavery. According to her, that is still not well processed."[152] One of the interviewers, Lesley Hellings, agreed and advised the Dutch to address their own history. Hellings observed that "the Dutch also want the Japanese and the Germans to be accountable for their actions. There is never talk about the Dutch colonial past. The Dutch do not know their own history."

The relationship between Black footballers, the media, and the coaching staff generated critical conversations about the possibilities of black Dutch footballers belonging on the national team and black belonging in the nation itself. Rather than accepting the myth of Dutch multiculturalism through the subordination of their Surinamese identity, the kabel's black teamwork was a form of what Barnor Hesse has called multicultural transruptions. According to Hesse, a transruption in the discourse of multiculturalism "threatens the coherence or validity of that discourse, its concepts or social practices." It is more "than a singular interruption or an ultimate disruption…a multicultural transruption is constituted by the recurrent exposure of discrepancies in the post-colonial settlement."[153] The discourse of Dutch multiculturalism manifested itself whenever the Dutch national team appear[ed], complete with dreads, curls and shaved frizz." However, the notorious photo of the black and white players eating lunch at separate tables told "a different story that is less exemplary, and, as it looks, much more

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[152] Staal, "'Surinamers Moeten Dubbel Vechten.'"

[153] Hesse, ed., *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms*, 17.

stubborn."[154] An editorial pleaded for the country to "let white, black, yellow and brown play football, work, live and marry together, and let us stop looking for problems that are not there."[155] Indeed, even the Dutch State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science at the time, Dr. Van der Ploeg, used the kabel as an example of "a multicultural society that is not only beautiful, but also complicated and vulnerable."[156] Although the Dutch were favorites in Euro '96, "the team - and the image of the Netherlands as a harmonious multi-cultural society - was wrecked by a bitter conflict between black and white players."[157]

The kabel's black teamwork and multicultural transruption was not an "ultimate disruption," and in fact had a serious limitation. The kabel subscribed to violent, heterosexist, and homosocial masculinities that constituted the modern sports landscape in Holland. The judge's dismissal of Kluivert's case reflects the hegemonic coloniality of sport that protects black male celebrities through the exclusion of and violence against women. Moreover, the support from his teammates reflected the homosocial spaces of football and the masculine and sexist constitution of solidarity. The support of Kluivert revealed the complex and often violent ways gender, and masculinity in particular, dictates and governs modern sport. Kluivert's alleged rape of Boon, and the subsequent display of solidarity equally illuminates the limitations of black teamwork in the context of a gender segregated sportscape. The kabel's ability to resist and expose Dutch racism was in relation to its inability to challenge the gendered violences that

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[154] Stephan Sanders, "Foto & Bijschrift," *De Volkskrant*, June 22, 1996, https://advance-lexis-com.turing.library.northwestern.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crid=1fbe26dd-c751-4aa1-925c-9aeec1f15c55&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-PSD0-0150-V10P-00000-00&pddocid=urn%3AcontentItem%3A48MV-PSD0-0150-V10P-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=259070&pdteaserkey=sr1&pditab=allpods&ecomp=Ly_k&earg=sr1&prid=e23facca-7b4e-4bb4-9cb6-a2b1ed4681e1.

[155] "Geachte Redactie: Wat Maakt Het Uit of Onze Jongens Wit of Zwart Zijn?."

[156] As quoted in Tan, *Het Surinamese Legioen,* 196.

[157] Winner, *Brilliant Orange,* 195.

became the condition of possibility for black teamwork. The representation of the kabel's masculinity was contingent on their performances. During Euro 96 and Kluivert's rape trial, the kabel became a threat to the cohesion of the national team. Yet, their alleged wrongdoing appeared to disappear in 1998 when the Netherlands reached the semi-finals of the World Cup and finally performed up to the country's expectations.

The experiences of the kabel prior to, during, and after Euro '96, illuminated a geoheterodoxical articulation of black teamwork that transrupted Dutch multiculturalism, albeit in masculinist terms. According to Iton, geoheterodoxy is "the capacity to imagine and operate simultaneously within, against, and outside the nation-state," in an effort "to push for inclusion among those protected by the…state while at the same time recognizing the limitations of this recognition."[158] Although the kabel critiqued the coloniality of Dutch football, they nevertheless continued to play for the national team. The kabel identified with Dutch culture and Surinamese culture, in ways that challenged the nation-state's pressures of assimilation. Indeed, in order to belong to the Netherlands "demands that those features that the collective imaginary considers non-Dutch—such as language, an exotic appearance…the memory of oppression—are shed as fast as possible and that one tries to assimilate."[159] Contrary to the unquestioned adherence to Dutch multiculturalism and assimilation, the kabel unsettled the apparent multicultural homogeneity of the Netherlands, and provided alternative modes to inhabit white nation-states while resisting the regime of whiteness.

In 2007 the Under-21 Men's Dutch national team defeated England in the finals of the UEFA European Championship. During the award ceremony, the Surinamese-Dutch players, of

[158] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic*, 202.
[159] Wekker, *White Innocence,* 7.

which they made up the majority of the starting line-up, celebrated their victory with Surinamese flags. They received the flags from a supporter in the stands, and, for a moment, "Young Orange" became "Young Suriname." According to reporters, there were no signs "that a new kabel was formed," yet the Surinamese celebration unsettled ideas about the homogeneity of Dutch in the wake of Dutch multiculturalism and the rise of far-right politics. Geert Wilders, a far-right conservative whose political agenda is based on anti-immigration, called the display "unprecedented foolishness" and reminded the public that "it was not the Surinamese team after all."[160] However, while politicians and reporters suggested it was the inappropriate time for the celebration, Surinamese communities in the Netherlands welcomed "Young Suriname." According to Maike Drooduin, his son "'was very proud when he saw that flag and understood nothing about the fuss that followed.' Machteld Cairo adds with a laugh: "Our young people regard themselves as Surinamese, but that is not only true to themselves. That is how they are addressed by everyone. Except if they do something very well. Then suddenly they are 'our Dutch'.'" Young Suriname played for the Netherlands, but represented Suriname. Their celebration took on an added significance as it occurred a few days before the Keti Koti (breaking the chains) festival in the Netherlands, which remembered the abolition of Dutch slavery. In the context of Keti Koti, Young Suriname re-directed attention to the violent histories of Dutch slavery and colonialism, while their articulation of black teamwork was a symbol of cultural and racial solidarity for the broader Surinamese-Dutch communities.

[160] Charles Bromet en Willem Vissers, "Jong Oranje En Jong Suriname," *De Volkskrant*, June 25, 2007, https://www.volkskrant.nl/gs-bfed41c1.

CONCLUSION

Black athletes transformed football as a tool of colonial discipline into a practice of black politics. In the second half of the twentieth century, following the African diasporic struggles for decolonization and civil and human rights, black footballers emerged as critical actors who revealed, critiqued, and resisted the persistence of colonial logics and practices that constitutes modern football. I follow the careers of different footballers and administrators across multiple African diasporic sites, time periods, and languages, to demonstrate the singularity of a global anti-blackness that constitutes the modern world hierarchy. The experiences of African diasporic subjects are often segregated based on the historical, cultural, and linguistic differences of colonial empires. While there are, indeed, particularities between blackness and the nation-state in the Lusophone, Anglophone, and Dutch context, my study demonstrates a continuity based on the global logics of coloniality and anti-blackness. Accordingly, I recover a central component of African Diasporic culture that is often obscured in the scholarship by literary, musical, and visual forms of black popular culture. Black teamwork is an expression of postcolonial black politics that marks a tradition amongst black footballers who have refused to be subordinated by the coloniality of sport and have created alternative modes of sociality within and against the nation-state.

The analytical salience of football illuminates how anti-blackness constitutes the modern world. In each chapter, the governing body of football, FIFA, NCAA, KNVB, and Corinthians Football Club sought to establish racial hierarchies that subordinated black athletes and privileged white athletes. Indeed, football's origins in European colonialism suffused it with logics about the alleged inferiority of blackness that persisted beyond European rule. The sport

followed the same routes as colonial administrators who traversed the Atlantic with their Westernizing, and "civilizing" projects. Indeed, European colonizers deployed football as part of a culture of discipline and assimilation when they colonized black and indigenous communities. In the wake of decolonization movements, black footballers continued to face familiar experiences of racism. Football, therefore, should be understood as a critical cultural tool in the maintenance of coloniality. Yet, the governing bodies of football constructed an international, national, and local representation of the game as a universal sport that includes black athletes, albeit through paternalistic and colorblind discourses. The coloniality of football manifested in different forms in different geopolitical contexts. While FIFA sought to exclude African nations from its Executive Committee, the NCAA punished Caribbean and African footballers at Howard for becoming the main representatives of U.S. collegiate football. Following similar logics, yet in a different register, the last two chapters reveal how professional black footballers were financially and socially mistreated based on their race. While fans and journalists celebrated black footballers in Brazil and the Netherlands for their on-field successes, the footballers themselves often experienced discrimination from fans, coaches, and other players. Importantly, while each case study occurs in a different historical and geopolitical context, the global singularity of anti-blackness and the coloniality of football becomes apparent.

The tradition of black teamwork emerged as a black political practice that black footballers used to reveal, unsettle, and challenge the coloniality of football. This dissertation contributes to the larger scholarship on black popular culture by interrogating the significance of sport, and football in particular, as a form of black politics. The blackness of the teamwork is signified by the footballers' antagonistic relationship to the white colonial logics of football's governing bodies—the coloniality of sport. Moreover, the blackness of the politics is rooted in

the histories of resistance to racial slavery and colonialism that marked people of African descent as inherently subordinate and inferior to Europeans. The formation, then, of black teams signals the formation of a subaltern collective within and against the recognized representations of the formal team. Indeed, the coloniality of sport dictates the formation of teams around representations of whiteness and the nation, while black teams seek to undermine these hegemonic representations. Accordingly, the work of the black team is decolonial and diasporic. It not only strives to unsettle the colonial constitution of modern sport, but seeks to create new and alternative modes of sociality on and off the field of play. Black teamwork troubles the dominant scripts of the nation-state that celebrates black athletes as national heroes, and reconstitutes their relationship to the nation through diasporic practices.

However, the tradition of black teamwork I have outlined thus far does not necessarily promise an absolute articulation of a liberatory politics. To be sure, black teamwork, as expressed in this dissertation is "not exempt from the masculinist and heterosexist impulses that energize modern arrangements."[1] My dissertation concludes with an analysis of the black teamwork articulated by queer black South African women and their creation of alternative socialities to the more exclusive, homophobic, and sexist structures of post-Apartheid South African football. Similar to many nations facing a conjunctural shift in the racial landscape, South Africa depended upon sport to reconstitute itself to accommodate the formerly excluded and subordinated communities, specifically, the black and queer South African population. Indeed, post-apartheid South Africa is celebrated as the "rainbow nation" for recognizing in its constitution not only the civil rights of black and coloured communities, but also of women, and queer communities. However, while these formerly oppressed groups were now constitutionally

[1] Iton, *In Search of the Black Fantastic,* 259.

recognized as first class citizens, on the quotidian and material level, black South African women, and especially black queer women still face the wrath of South Africa's colonial, anti-queer constitution.

I argue that black queer female and gender non-conforming footballers centered football as a space to reveal the structural inequalities embedded in the post-apartheid South African state. A network of black queer women established different football teams throughout South Africa that provide spaces for women to freely express their sexuality outside the colonial and anti-queer gaze of the state. Furthermore, I suggest that the spatial fugitivity of the network's organization is a helpful articulation of black teamwork that imagines physical alternative spaces that exist beyond the regulatory apparatuses of the state. Moreover, these alternative spaces of sociality provide a level of protection from the anti-queer violence that persists in the constitution of post-apartheid South Africa.

History of South African Women's Football

The coloniality of sport is indeed gendered and sexualized. The coloniality of sport is constituted by heterosexual norms of gender and sexuality that repress gender non-conforming subjects, particularly in South Africa. While much has been written on the history of men's football in South Africa, there has been very little scholarship on the history of South African women's football. According to sociologist, Cynthia Pelak, white middle class women were among the first South African women to join organized football in the late 1960s and early 1970s and created the South African Women's Football Association (SAWFA).[2] Even with the inclusion of women footballers, they were still subordinated to the men's game that largely

[2] Cynthia Fabrizio Pelak, "Women and Gender in South African Soccer: A Brief History," *Soccer & Society* 11, no. 1/2 (January 2010): 63–78, https://doi.org/10.1080/14660970903331342.

dominated the sport. For example, women's matches were played as "curtain raisers" for men's games.[3] While black and coloured South African women started to play organized soccer in the late 1970s and early 1980s, they faced material inequalities that reflected the apartheid regime. It was not until the end of apartheid that black and coloured women gained greater access to organized soccer. Accordingly, "in 1991, the South African Women's Soccer Association (SAWSA) was formed by a group of Black women," and merged with SAWFA in 1992 as an affiliate to the South African Football Association (SAFA).[4]

The development of South African football coincided with the institutionalization of women's football on the international level. In 1988, FIFA organized a women's invitational tournament in China, as a "trial" to determine if women's football was popular enough to have a World Cup. FIFA invited Ivory Coast, and in the inaugural Women's World Cup, Nigeria represented the continent. The South African women's national team, Banyana Banyana (the Girls), was created in 1993, and they won their inaugural match against Swaziland, 14-0. The women's team also entered the qualification rounds for the second Women's World Cup in 1995, however lost to Nigeria in the third round.[5] Banyana Banyana participated in the CAF Women's Championship in 1998 in Nigeria, but lost to Cameroon and Ghana. Regardless of the developments made in South African women's football, the women's national team, predominantly made up of black women, still struggled with institutional barriers like sexist representations.

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[3] Prishani Naidoo and Zanele Muholi, "Women's Bodies and the World of Football in South Africa," in *The Race to Transform: Sports in Post Apartheid South Africa*, ed. Ashwin Desai (Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council, 2010)., 114.
[4] Pelak, "Women and Gender," 65.
[5] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 116.

Women's participation in South African, and world, football is defined by their imposed femininity and positioning as "soccer babes."[6] South African sociologist, Prishani Naidoo, and South African visual artist Zanele Muholi, explain how football journals constructed the preferred role for women in the sport as hyper-feminine, heterosexualized objects at the service of the male gaze. This reflected the broader marginalization and commodification of black women's bodies in South African society. Contrary to focusing on black South African women's footballing experiences, women are often relegated to the lives of men as support systems, "soccer babes," and domestics. Alongside the heterosexual representation of women footballers, the latter also received a lack of resources and institutional support.

As an associate member of SAFA, SAWFA experienced a number of inequities that stunted the development of the game. A central problem was the hiring of men as coaches for the women's team. Particularly, the appointment of "male coaches who were not of the right calibre" during the 1990s stunted the growth of the program.[7] Power struggles ensued between men and women in South African football, and "some men acted violently to defend their perceived right to control the sport."[8] Indeed, women made complaints to SAFA about sexual harassment by owners and coaches of different clubs, but after SAFA did nothing, the Minister of Sport and the national government got involved. South African women's footballers and administrators went to the Pickard Commission, led by Judge B. de V. Pickard, and demanded an end to the sexual harassment and the hiring of more women coaches. The commission found that the male-dominated SAFA was negligent in attending to the structures and experiences prohibiting the

[6] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 107.
[7] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 118.
[8] Pelak, "Women and Gender," 70.

development of women's football, and "advised SAFA to increase resources for women's soccer."[9]

Facing a lack of institutional support from SAFA, the national government, and private sponsorships, the women's national team continued to voice their concerns. Following their victory in the Council of Southern Africa Football Associations (COSAFA) Cup in 2006, the team "voiced their unhappiness with their pay and the differential treatment they received."[10] While the men's national team received R40,000 for a win and R20,000 for a tie, the women's national team only received R2,000 for a win and R1,000 for a tie. Indeed, in response to the public demands of the women's team, SAFA agreed to increase their payments, albeit only marginally. The reforms increased their pay to R5,000 for a win and R2,500 for a tie, in addition to a R500 daily allowance, and R15,000 each if they made it to the semifinals of the 2007 CAF Women's Football Championship (which they did).[11] The increase in pay is critical when one considers the difficulties in making football a livable profession for black South African women. Nevertheless though, "poor pay and the lack of a professional women's football league make it impossible for women to make a living from soccer."[12]

Black Teamwork as Survival

As previously mentioned, a central problem in South African women's football was, and continues to be, sexual harassment. Not only were male coaches ill-equipped to coach a national team, they were also accused of objectifying the players. A founding administrator in South African women's football, Fran Hilton-Smith, explained the early violence:

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[9] Pelak, "Women and Gender," 71.
[10] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 125.
[11] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 125.
[12] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 126.

"Generally a lot of men that we got in women's football were men that had been kicked out of men's football because they were no good. So they came into women's football and they started their own teams...And all they were doing was collecting all these women as their property. And they were sleeping with them in order for them to play. And they were trading them with other coaches. It was like a slave market...because, if you wanted to play on a Sunday, which they wanted to play, then they'd sleep with the coach or manager because they wanted to play."[13]

Hilton-Smith illuminates the violent environment of women's football, and the heteropatriarchal constitution of the sport. Moreover, sexual harassment was not confined to the club level. The treatment of black South African women footballers on Banyana Banyana caused some women to leave the team altogether.

Their experiences also revealed the ways in which South African football was constituted by heteronormative sexualities. For example, Phumla Masuku, a founding player of Soweto Ladies (the precursor to the national team) and Banyana Banyana, explained how after the Soweto Ladies' initial success in 1992 against Sweden, her experiences with the coach led her to leave the team. According to Masuku, "our manager was trying to do funny stuff with other girls, you know. Even myself...he pursued me. I told him straight that I'm a lesbian...and that it wouldn't be appropriate. 'I'm captain, you're the manager,' I said." Indeed, Masuku, along with another player Gloria Hlalele, publicly accused the coach of sexual harassment, yet were subsequently banned from the team.[14] According to Hlalele, "she strongly believes that her sexual orientation has been a reason for her exclusion from professional playing and coaching of the sport."[15] Most women who play football in South Africa are stigmatized for being lesbians,

[13] As quoted in Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 130.
[14] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 132.
[15] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 132.

forcing many of them to conceal their sexuality "as a necessary means of survival in the heterosexist world of football." Maholi and Naidoo also make the connection between the imposition of heteronormative sexualities on black women footballers with the institutional support they receive. They demonstrate how Banyana Banyana are constructed to be more legible as "ladies" in order to secure more sponsorships. For example, in March 2005, the chairperson of SAFA's Women's Committee, Ria Ledwaba, suggested that the women's national team undergo "'workshops' to teach the players general etiquette and ways of 'behaving like ladies,' as well as a shapelier soccer [uniform]."[16] Portia Modise, former captain of the national team, refuted SAFA's recommendations. She argued that their performance on the field had nothing to do with how they dressed or behaved off the field. She also claimed that "60 per cent of the [national] team were lesbian, and that in fact a majority of soccer players worldwide were lesbian."[17] Moreover, Modise dismissed SAFA for shifting the responsibility for not securing sponsorships and properly developing the team. According to Modise, the sexuality of the women on the team and their appearances became the "scapegoat" for SAFA. Indeed, Modise's comments reflect the broader feeling amongst South African women footballers. "You can't change me; you can't. You can't expect me to wear high heels and perform in the field. That is impossible."[18] However, black queer South African women did not accept the sexist discrimination and sought alternative spaces to play, and survive.

Contrary to the discourse of the "rainbow nation" that characterized the post-apartheid South African state with its constitutional protections for women and queer communities, black South African lesbians continue to face violence, and at times death. The anti-queer crime of

[16] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 133.
[17] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 133.
[18] Naidoo and Muholi, "Women's bodies," 134.

"corrective rape" has taken the lives of many black lesbians in South Africa, including a midfielder on the national women's team, Eudy Simelane. In April 2008, five men stabbed and raped Simelane and left her to die in a ditch in Johannesburg. Her murder was classified as a hate crime because she was openly gay, and according to her friends, was targeted for her sexuality.[19] A year prior, Thokozani Qwabe, a 23 year old black lesbian footballer, was brutally murdered in the Ladysmith township.[20] Both of these footballers had a significant impact in black lesbian communities in South Africa and influenced the creation of different lesbian football teams throughout the country.

One of these football teams is Thokozani Football Club, created in honor of Qwabe. Founded by South African artist and photographer, Zanele Muholi, and her sister Lizzy Muholi, Thokozani FC was created as a safe space for black lesbians to play football and build a sociality based on the free expression of their sexualities. Many of the women treat the club as a family because of the exclusion and violence they face at home for being lesbian. Lizzy Muholi, the manager of Thokozani FC, adopted the role as a mother for some of the players. She explained to the players that if they had any problems, they should tell her. For example, she would "cook for them...and some of them moved in with me." At one point, Muholi had "five girls in the house," and had to "divide [her] love to all of the other kids," including her son who was in high school at the time. According to Nkosingizwile Sibeko, the goalkeeper for Thokozani, "I take [Lizzy] as my mom. And now, still, she is my mom. And she is the best mother in the world because she

[19] Patrick Barth, "In South Africa, the Chosen Few," *The New York Times*, accessed April 20, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/video/sports/soccer/1247468408867/in-south-africa-the-chosen-few.html.
[20] Anonymous, "Lesbian Women Killed in South Africa," *Sister Namibia* 19, no. 4 (October 2007): 33. Indeed, Simelane and Qwabe were not the only black lesbians in South Africa to face death, however their role as footballers gave other queer South African football to organize themselves for protection.

loves me like I am her child."[21] Indeed, many of the lesbian footballers in South Africa were abandoned by their biological families, and Thokozani became a welcoming space. Ntando Ntuli, a defender for Thokozani, recalled how her mother threw her out of the house when she was eleven years old, for her non-normative behavior. However, her participation in the club provides her a sense of safety, community, and belonging that would otherwise be hard to attain in their respective townships.

A similar black lesbian team in South Africa is the Chosen FEW football club. Founded in 2004 by the Johannesburg-based Forum for the Empowerment of Women, Chosen FEW serves unemployed black lesbians in Soweto and gives them a place to socialize and play football. During the first decade of the 2000s, more than 30 lesbians were *reported* to have been murdered, and thus teams like Chosen FEW, and Thokozani, offered them a space to freely express their sexuality. Indeed, for players like Lerato Marumolwa, "Few is my family...It's a space where I feel at home. I can be myself. My team-mates all come from different backgrounds but when we are together we are one big family. At home we have to watch what we do, watch what we say. We don't go around at night so Few is a good space for us."[22] However, because the first division leagues discriminated against lesbian teams, Chosen FEW struggled to find a permanent playing field. Often times, teams like Thokozani and Chosen FEW are relegated to empty lots and "dusty, dirty, puddle-riddled waste ground[s]" because of the discrimination they face as lesbians. In the case of Chosen FEW, they ironically secured a playing ground a few hundred metres away from the constitutional court in Johannesburg--the same court that should

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[21] Association Les Dégommeuses, *Thokozani Football Club : Team Spirit*, accessed April 20, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AEj96bsTE8Y.

[22] Lousie Taylor, "The Chosen Few Lesbian Team Has Changed Lerato Marumolwa's Life," *The Guardian*, June 19, 2010, sec. Football, https://www.theguardian.com/football/2010/jun/20/world-cup-south-africa-lesbian.

be protecting and caring for South Africa's queer communities, as outlined by the constitution. Moreover, while Chosen FEW faces discrimination against South Africa, they also exposed the anti-blackness that constitutes queer sporting organizations. When the team travelled to London for the 2008 International Gay and Lesbian Football Association World Championships, they experienced racism both on and off the field. Firstly, they were housed in a hostel that was not ideal for an athlete's diet. Contrary to other teams who had a kitchen, Chosen FEW had to play a week-long tournament eating fast food. During the games, the other teams resorted to physical abuse while the referees did nothing to stop it. At one point during a game, the Chosen FEW coach "went to call for the organisers to come over to see what was going on" but the organizers never arrived. "So bad were the stomping, kicking and fouling that one [Chosen FEW] player requires an operation to her ankle, and may never play again, and another was told she needed an MRI scan before any further assessment could be made about the severity of her leg injury." Furthermore, some of the injured players' insurance did not cover the cost of their injuries, and "so five young women...are left with untended injuries which may well affect them for life."[23] Regardless of the mistreatment both domestically and internationally, football provided a sense of sociality for black lesbians in South Africa.

Players on teams like Chosen FEW and Thokozani FC used football as a mode of survival and care. Black teamwork, then, in its most radical articulation, is a politics of care and survival in the context of the heteronormative, male-dominated enterprise like modern football. Christina Sharpe suggests the possibilities of thinking about care "in a different relation to the violence of the state."[24] How might we think about football as a site of black political care--a site

[23] Sokari Ekine, "The South African Lesbian Soccer Team Comes To London," The New Black Magazine, September 9, 2008, http://www.thenewblackmagazine.com/view.aspx?index=1579.
[24] Sharpe, *In the Wake*., 20.

where football is not constituted by the coloniality of sport that produces and reproduces racial, gendered, and sexual hierarchies? Although black lesbian footballers in South Africa continue to be targeted by homophobic violence, clubs like Chosen FEW and Thokozani FC provide a temporary space of escape. Accordingly, the black teamwork of these two clubs reveal the significance of space in relationship to black political expression. Black lesbians in South Africa, by necessity, construct alternative spaces of sociality that exist within and against the nation-state. Contrary to seeking the care that would otherwise be provided by the state, black queer women and gender non-conforming footballers created their own spaces where they create their own structures of care. The black teamwork of these teams gesture toward the future of football as spaces of fugitivity, that exist within the boundaries, but beyond the regulation of the nation-state.

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