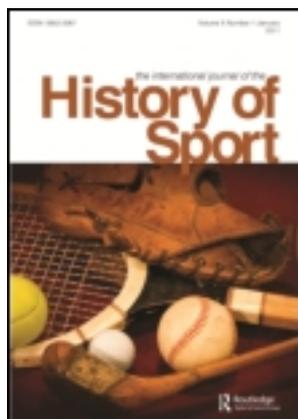


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## **‘Changing the cultural landscape’: English engineers, American missionaries, and the YMCA bring sports to Brazil – the 1870s to the 1930s**

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On 2 October 2009 the *New York Times* announced that the IOC had selected Rio de Janeiro as the site of the 2016 Olympic Games – the first to take place in South America. If it had not been for English and Scottish engineers, who had brought *futebol* (soccer) to Brazil in the late 1800s, and other sports that American missionaries and the YMCA introduced this might never have occurred. Following the Civil War (1861–65) American interest in spreading the Christian gospel abroad grew considerably. In 1871 Presbyterian minister George Whitehall Chamberlain and his wife founded at São Paulo, Brazil ‘the American School’ (today known as Mackenzie College). Games like basketball as well as a more liberal system of education for girls (formerly largely excluded from schools) as well as for boys soon would be introduced. The noted Brazilian educator Fernando de Azevedo has written positively about these developments. Also interested in spreading its influence, in 1891 the International Committee of the YMCA of North America sent Myron Augustus Clark to São Paulo, where he set about training many native-born Brazilians. The Playground Association of America (established in 1906) sought to do likewise. Henry J. Sims, one of several other YMCA leaders who arrived from the United States, and Fred C. Brown, who was recruited to be Executive Secretary of Rio de Janeiro’s exclusive Fluminense Football Club, helped lay the foundations for the Latin American Games that were first held at Rio de Janeiro in 1922. This article examines how developments such as these did much to ‘change the cultural landscape’ in Brazil.

**Keywords:** sport history; YMCA; Brazil; Presbyterian missionaries

### **Introduction**

Brazil has become widely recognised as one of the world’s leading sporting nations. The first Olympic Games to be in South America will take place at Rio de Janeiro in 2016. In 2014 the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup competitions will return to Brazil; they previously had been held there in 1950. *Futebol* (soccer) is the most popular game in Brazil, and the one that has brought the country its greatest attention. Brazilian teams have won five FIFA World Cups (1958, 1962, 1970, 1994, 2002) as well as silver medals at the 1984 Los Angeles and 1988 Seoul Olympics. With regard to volleyball, the country’s second most popular game, the men’s volleyball team won gold medals at the 1992 Barcelona and the 2004 Athens Olympics and attained first-place ranking at the Fédération Internationale de

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Volleyball (FIVA) championships in 2003 and 2007.<sup>1</sup> Brazil's women's teams also have been doing well recently, earning second place standing in soccer at the 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup and in volleyball at the 2006 and 2010 FIVA Women's World Cup.<sup>2</sup>

The roots of these achievements are to be found in the sports that were brought to Brazil by English engineers, American missionaries, and the YMCA during the late 1800s and early 1900s.

### **From Portuguese colony to the arrival of soccer football**

The Portuguese navigator Pedro Alvares Cabral landed in Brazil in 1500 and claimed possession in the name of the King Manuel I. Colonisation began in 1532. Seventeen years later Brazil was made a royal colony. The invasion of Portugal in 1807 by French troops, which began the six-year Peninsular War, motivated King João VI to sail for Brazil. He returned to Portugal in 1821 and left as regent his son Dom Pedro I, who proclaimed independence for Brazil in 1822 and named himself Emperor. When Dom Pedro I abdicated in 1831 his son Pedro II was only five years old. For the next nine years Brazil was ruled as a regency. In 1840 Pedro II became Emperor and during his long reign, which lasted until 1889, a number of changes occurred. The slave traffic was ended in 1851 and slavery was abolished in 1888. A number of efforts was made to develop a more liberal form of government and to improve the country's economy. To secure the necessary industrial skills immigration was encouraged. In 1890 the population of the city of São Paulo had been around 60,000; by 1900 it had grown to about 240,000.<sup>3</sup>

Each immigrant group arrived with its unique culture and traditions. The Germans, who established *Turnvereins* following their arrival, were instrumental in developing gymnastics, of the type that Friedrich Ludwig Jahn had devised, swimming, and boating. Their influence was especially strong in the State of Rio Grande do Sul.<sup>4</sup> Efforts also were made to introduce the Swedish system of gymnastics and certain aspects of the French system of physical education that had emerged at Joinville le Ponte.<sup>5</sup>

As was the case in many other countries, it was the English who introduced what would become Brazil's most popular sport – soccer football.<sup>6</sup> In 1851 Brazilian-born industrialist Irineu Evangelista de Souza (who had commercial ties to England) had established the Gas and Light Company of Rio de Janeiro. He and others soon realised that profits could be made by bringing sugar and other commodities from the interior to coastal ports for shipment to Europe. To achieve this, improved transportation would be necessary. In 1854, with the needed technical support of immigrant English and Scottish engineers, he began building the Rio de Janeiro Railway, which linked Raiz da Serra to Petropolis. In 1862 he began the São Paulo Railway, which connected the city of Jundiai (in the State of São Paulo) to the port of Santos.<sup>7</sup> At the time the typical pastimes of the small Brazilian upper class were music, dancing, playing cards and enjoying parties. In what little free time they had the working class and the poor engaged in such things as cockfighting, the samba (created in Brazil), and other forms of dancing. In certain regions capoeira (which combines dance, games and martial arts movements) was especially popular with Afro-Brazilians.<sup>8</sup> Shortly after their arrival, English workers began playing soccer in the 'patios' of factories in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. During the weekends they sometimes also played in public places. As early as 1893 a small number of

native-born Brazilians had started playing the game. However, it was not until Charles Miller, who had been born in Brazil of a Scottish father and a Brazilian mother, returned from ten years in England that the game began to achieve wider approval. In 1895 Miller arranged the first soccer game between teams from the Rio de Janeiro Light and Gas Company and the São Paulo Railway and encouraged Brazilian residents to attend.<sup>9</sup> Golf, which did attain some attention from the upper class, and cricket, which did not become popular with the Brazilian population but currently is gaining some attention, also were introduced by Scottish and English immigrants.<sup>10</sup> The introduction of volleyball and basketball, Brazil's second and third most popular sports, occurred in a different way. Here it was American missionaries and the YMCA that were instrumental.

### **The arrival of American missionaries and the importance of the American school**

The acquisition of Puerto Rico, the Philippines and the Island of Guam following victory in the short 1898 Spanish-American War brought new dimensions to the interest in 'Manifest Destiny' that had emerged in the United States during the early 1800s.<sup>11</sup> A more expansionist stance was apparent when all independent nations from North, Central and South America participated an International American Conference that was held at Washington, DC during 1889/90.<sup>12</sup> The major reason for the United States having decided to host this event was a desire to improve commercial relations. The motivation was clear in the opening sentence of the *Report on Trade Conditions in Brazil* that Lincoln Hutchinson (special agent of the United States Department of Commerce and Labor) subsequently would compile: 'For close upon a century the eyes of American traders have been turned longingly toward South America'.<sup>13</sup> Now that 'the southern continent had thrown off the yoke of Spain' – or in the case of Brazil, the 'yoke' of Portugal<sup>14</sup> – it was anticipated that commercial opportunities would increase considerably.

Interest in commerce was not the only thing that brought growing numbers of Americans to South America during the late 1800s and early 1900s. A commitment to extending the Christian gospel, especially Presbyterianism, also was a factor. In this regard games and sports would have a significant role.

Brazilian Law 630, which had been enacted in 1851, had stated that callisthenic/gymnastic exercises were to be included as part of the elementary school system. However, at the time that Americans began to arrive very few children attended school.<sup>15</sup> In those few places where gymnastic exercises were provided, they usually were of the German form that had been devised by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn or of the Swedish form developed by Per Henrik Ling. The emergence of games as part of the curriculum beginning in the late 1870s would be fostered by the arrival of American missionaries, the YMCA, and individuals interested in work of the Playground Association of America.

Following the Civil War of 1861–65 American interest in spreading the Christian gospel abroad grew considerably. Education proved to be one of the most productive means. Anthropologist Gilberto Freire is among those who have written about the importance of educational reforms that were brought to Brazil by Americans. One of the earlier individuals to arrive was the Presbyterian George Whitehill Chamberlain. Born in Waterford, Pennsylvania, in 1839, Chamberlain had studied at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. When he began to experience problems with his eyes a doctor advised him to take a nautical trip that might help to improve his vision.

He chose Brazil where America missionary Ashbel Green Simonton had founded the *Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil* (Presbyterian Church of Brazil) in 1862. Chamberlain was 24 years old when he arrived in São Paulo, where he began working as a teacher of English. He then moved to Rio de Janeiro to assist Simonton. From there he moved south to Rio Grande do Sul. In 1866, he returned to the United States, where he stayed for three years while he received a bachelor in theology degree from the Princeton Theological Seminary. During this period he married Mary Annesly. The two returned to São Paulo, which by then had a population of about 25,000 inhabitants; and in 1871 they founded the American School.<sup>16</sup> The stated mission of the American School was to 'offer quality and necessary education for boys and girls with no distinction of religion, color of skin, or sex'. When Mary Annesly wrote these words she accurately stated that this was the first school in Brazil to offer mixed classes. In conservative Catholic Brazil it was deemed inappropriate to have both sexes attend the same school. However, in spite of its inclusion of girls as well as boys, the American School became of growing interest to a number of Brazilians. It would have a significant impact upon improving education in the State of São Paulo, and this would influence developments in other areas. From an early date courses in hygiene and physical activities such as gymnastics and games were made an important part of the school's curriculum.<sup>17</sup>

A provisional law enacted in 1874 had intended to make education compulsory for boys ages seven to 14 and girls ages seven to 11. However, it was not being enforced.<sup>18</sup> In 1892 a representative of the Escola Normal Caetano de Campos, a normal school located in São Paulo, was endeavouring to bring about educational reforms and establish a 'system for elementary school public instruction'. Chamberlain was invited to design the system and implement courses for the training of teachers throughout the State of São Paulo. He and his wife wrote the public school curriculum (which included physical education) and established for the first time in Brazil a kindergarten programme that was based upon Friedrich Froebel's theories. They also created a teacher training course and brought in specialists from United States to help teachers in the countryside implement the new curriculum.<sup>19</sup> A *Revista do Jardim da Infancia* ('Kindergarten Magazine') also soon began to be published.

American Marcia Browne, a graduate of the Boston Normal School of Gymnastics (BNSG), helped considerably with the early work of the Escola Normal Caetano de Campos. With Brazilian-born Maria Guilhermina Loureiro, also a BNSG graduate, she made a number of other significant contributions to education in Brazil. Oscar Thompson and his two co-authors spoke positively about the work of Marcia Browne in their 1903 book *Education in the State of São Paulo Brazil* (which was prepared for the 1904 St. Louis International Exhibition) and included a laudatory section dealing with the American School and the recently established Mackenzie College.<sup>20</sup> In 1896 American attorney John Theron Mackenzie and his sisters had donated \$50,000 to establish an engineering school in São Paulo. They requested that it be built under the supervision and direction of Chamberlain, who quickly set about establishing Mackenzie College.<sup>21</sup> To help create the needed faculty Chamberlain brought in teachers from the United States. One of these was Yale graduate August F. Shaw, a teacher of art history. At the urging of Luther Halsey Gulick (who then was serving as head of the Physical Department of the Young Men's Christian Association of North America) in 1891 James Naismith had created the game of basketball. Shaw, who was aware of the new game, brought with

him a basketball as well as books and artwork. He soon set up a basket and in his spare time began shooting a basketball in one of the patios of the College. The students became intrigued. Before long they were playing the game with him.<sup>22</sup> According to the *Minutes of the Brazil Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U S of A*, the first basketball game among the boys took place in 1896. A girl's team also was created.<sup>23</sup> The first picture of a male team appeared in 1899; however, it would not be until the 1920s that the first picture of a woman's team was published.

By 1914 the Escola Normal Caetano de Campos (Normal School of São Paulo), which had been headed for over a decade by Oscar Thompson, enrolled more than two thousand male and female students.<sup>24</sup> At the request of Americans who had been hired to help train Brazilian teachers, basketball had been introduced there by 1906. Games between teachers from the Normal School of São Paulo and those from Mackenzie College took place beginning in 1907. The popularity of basketball among young Brazilians who had been trained at both of these institutions helped spread the sport among youth in several parts of the country.

### The importance of the YMCA

Chamberlain's abiding objective was to develop in children and youth a passion for knowledge and interest them in pursuing the types of careers that would contribute to Brazil's betterment. He realised that something outside of the schools would be needed to create more opportunities for young men. A YMCA had existed in Buenos Aires from 1870 to 1874 but no such programme existed there or in Brazil when in the spring of 1890 Chamberlain decided to write to Robert McBurney (general secretary of the New York YMCA) asking him to bring the YMCA movement to Brazil. In his request Chamberlain declared:

The work with young men in Brazil in the YMCA style should start at once on several fronts . . . . The truly valuable work must become identified with national life and never be regarded as exotic. It must also be done in this way in the business and education centers. The principal one is the city of São Paulo.<sup>25</sup>

Although Chamberlain believed that São Paulo was destined to become the greatest city in South America, when he wrote to McBurney things were not favourable for establishing Brazil's first YMCA there. The reason was that dissent within the Presbyterian Church of Brazil was beginning to grow. The nearly 50-year reign of Dom Pedro II had been ended in 1889 by a Republican military coup led by General Deodoro da Fonseca, who became the country's first de facto president. The country's name was changed to the Republic of the United States of Brazil and a new constitution that guaranteed freedom of religion was enacted.<sup>26</sup> When Brazilians celebrated the first anniversary of the republic in 1890 there was a surge of nationalism and the desire to become independent from foreign influences and establish a 'Brazilian identity' increased. Individuals who supported this new approach included members of the Presbyterian Church of Brazil, who created a movement that came to be known as the *Igreja Independente Presbiteriana do Brasil* (Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil). São Paulo's Presbyterians were especially fervent in claiming independence from the North American Presbyterian Church.<sup>27</sup>

It had been intended that evangelisation would be done by American missionaries in the southern, western and northern parts of the country.

The Independent Presbyterian Church of Brazil was to be responsible in the rapidly growing urban areas of the east. One problem with this arrangement was that it separated the American missionaries from their Brazilian counterparts. This was not well accepted by the Brazilian workers, who felt abandoned in the big cities without the support of the Americans; they also realised that they needed financial resources from the United States.<sup>28</sup> Such matters made it difficult for the YMCA to establish an educational centre in São Paulo City.

In 1891 the International Committee of the YMCA of North America sent Myron Augustus Clark<sup>29</sup> to São Paulo, where he set about contacting influential people and ministers, raising funds and arranging places for holding meetings (usually a member's home). However, Rio de Janeiro was more open to foreign approaches to education and it was not long before Rio de Janeiro was acknowledged to be the best place for the YMCA to initiate efforts. His work became quite successful and on 4 July 1893 the first continuous YMCA in South America was established near Rio's harbour area at 79 Sete de Setembro Street. Its initial membership was 71. In 1902 Clark would become secretary of the Brazilian Alliance of the YMCAs and hold that position until his death in 1920.<sup>30</sup> Elmer Johnson, who has written at some length about the physical education work of the YMCA, contends that South America was 'one of the most difficult areas to penetrate'. The vast geographical area consisted of countries that differed extensively. Many retained, in varying degrees, significant aspects of the indigenous cultures that had preceded the arrival of Spanish or, in the case of Brazil, Portuguese settlers. Brazil also had a very large number of descendants of African slaves. The majority of a country's population lived in poverty while a small minority lived in considerable affluence. The fact that Roman Catholicism was the dominant religion posed another difficulty for those who sought to bring Christian missionary and YMCA work to a country. As Johnson has observed, the YMCA needed to 'rely upon the goodwill and generosity of wealthy, influential business and professional laymen of Catholic faith to actualize its goals'.<sup>31</sup> It did this with considerable skill.

According to the *1893-94 Report of the YMCA of Rio de Janeiro*, Dr. Nicolau Soares do Couto was president of the newly established – and first – YMCA in Brazil; seven of the other eight officers also were Brazilian. The secretary-general position, which conducted most of the work, was held by the very active Myron Clark.<sup>32</sup> A second YMCA was established at Porto Alegre in 1901. It was not long before the success of the work at Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre encouraged the people of São Paulo to have their own YMCA. Clark chose Carlos Gomes de Souza Shalders to be its first president. In the *1903 Annual Report of the Rio de Janeiro YMCA* its president L. Fernandes Braga spoke favourably about the establishment of a YMCA in São Paulo City. The *1903 Report* also included brief comments about social excursions, lantern slide exhibitions and the formation of a debating society, but nothing relating to games or physical education.<sup>33</sup> This soon would change. As was the case in many other countries, an important step in expanding the YMCA's influence upon Brazilian society was the establishment of games and sports. In 1911 Maurice C. Salassa, a Springfield College graduate of Italian descent, was sent by the International YMCA to Rio de Janeiro to develop a physical education programme. Salassa, who remained only one year, established a leaders' corps and created a limited physical education programme. Things changed dramatically after Henry J. Sims, who had been serving as physical director of the Chattanooga, Tennessee,

YMCA, became his replacement in 1912. Sims had received a diploma from the YMCA Training School at Chicago, Illinois. He was very knowledgeable about gymnastics and wrestling and was in many ways well prepared for his new duties as the Y's only fully trained physical education specialist in Brazil.<sup>34</sup> Not only was Sims passionate about the value of the YMCA for boys and young men; he was desirous of spreading its work to other countries. In 1913 he wrote: 'The best results of this [the YMCA's] work . . . are being seen daily in the stronger, purer, and more useful life of our members. The Physical Director [Sims] is in correspondence with colleagues in Montevideo and Buenos Aires with the intention to coordinate the work among the YMCAs in South America'.<sup>35</sup> Nine years later an important YMCA training school would be established at Montevideo, Uruguay

Sims quickly began developing ways to bring the community into contact with the Y's work and training young Brazilians to assist him. The Rio de Janeiro YMCA first entertained the local population with an exhibition of callisthenics and games at the Portuguese Athletic Club. It also gave a garden party that included such activities and held a reception for visiting Chilean football players.<sup>36</sup> Such events apparently made the physical education programme so popular that it gained the attention of the city officials, who in 1914 would relieve the Rio de Janeiro YMCA of local taxes in recognition of the community services that it was offering to young Brazilians. Additionally, numerous individuals and corporations such as the Rio de Janeiro Tramway Light and Power Company began contributing money to the Y's efforts. During the year classes had been given in wrestling, boxing, basketball, volleyball, athletics (track), fencing, marching, callisthenics, apparatus and gymnastic dancing. Several of these activities were part of a *Festa* (attended by 200 people) that the Y held on 17 December 1914.<sup>37</sup> Two other well-attended *festas* (sports festivals) were held in cooperation with the Brazilian navy, whose director of physical education was a member of the Y's physical committee and its fencing instructor. For the first of these *festas* 24 athletes from the YMCA went to the Brazilian naval barracks at Villegaignon Island for a dual meet that included the broad jump, relay race, tug-of-war and two basketball games. The return *festa* was held in the gymnasium of the Rio de Janeiro YMCA.<sup>38</sup> In 1915 the Rio de Janeiro YMCA organised its first local Basket Ball Championship. This also was held on the Island of Villegaignon. In addition to the YMCA, there were participating teams from the American Foot-Ball Club, Club International de Regatas, Colégio Sylvio Leite, Club Gymnastico Portuguez and the Corpo de Marinheiros Nacionaes de Villegaignon.<sup>39</sup> The Y also introduced Brazilians to volleyball, the game that William Morgan, physical director of the Young Men's Christian Association in Holyoke, Massachusetts, had invented in 1895 as an alternative to basketball.<sup>40</sup> Today volleyball is Brazil's second most popular sport and is frequently played on beaches all along the country's coast as well as at schools, gymnasiums, parks and elsewhere. A monthly event that featured gymnastic and athletic exercises as well as music and readings also was initiated. Among several other public events, the Y held an athletic meet for the benefit of the Evangelical Hospital on 14 July 1915 that included local sailors and firemen. Attendance at such tournaments, meets and public demonstrations had grown from 7,306 in 1913 to 12,510 in 1915.<sup>41</sup>

Improving the health of local populations was another important goal of the YMCA. According to the 1915 *Annual Report of the Young Men's Christian Association of Rio de Janeiro*, a series of lectures open to the public had been given by

specialists such as Dr Avezedo Lima, president of the League Against Tuberculosis. Three hundred local residents attended. Among several of the other lectures that took place Dr Carlos Seidl spoke to a 'select audience' of over 200 professional and businessmen about 'The Sanitation of a Great City and How the People Can Help'. Dr. Luiz Romero's address 'The Function of the Department of Physical Education in the Young Men's Christian Association' was printed in *O Jornal do Comércio* on 31 March 1915.<sup>42</sup>

### **The Playground Association of America enters the scene**

The Playground Association of America (established in 1906), like the YMCA, was committed to the importance that properly conducted play and games could have in contributing to health and instilling sound moral values in children, youth, and even adults. Luther Halsey Gulick, MD, who had been born in Honolulu, Hawaii, of missionary parents, was a major figure in YMCA work as well as school-based physical education. Among his many contributions, he was the first president of the Playground Association of America (PAA) and by no means the only person at the turn-of-the-century who had important relationships with the PAA as well as the YMCA. Before long work of the PAA also was being extended beyond the borders of the United States. At the request of H.C. Tucker, who was residing in Brazil, in July 1909 *the Jornal do Comércio*, Rio de Janeiro's leading daily newspaper, had published an article intended to inform the Brazilian population about the value of modern playgrounds. Five months later it published another article in which a number of authorities expressed their views regarding the 'educational value of wisely directed play' and why playgrounds were needed. An appeal soon was made to the mayor of Rio de Janeiro and other notables with a request to set aside a plot of land where an experimental playground could be established.<sup>43</sup>

Many Brazilians lived in abject poverty in *favelas* (slum areas). In an effort to help improve their conditions the People's Institute of Rio de Janeiro had been opened in 1906. While visiting Rio de Janeiro three years later, William Jennings Bryan (who three times had sought election as president of the United States; had given a speech at the 1900 Democratic National Convention entitled 'The Paralyzing Influence of Imperialism'; and would serve briefly as Secretary of State under President Woodrow Wilson) was invited to speak at the People's Institute on the value of parks and playground work. After hearing Bryan's remarks several important local dignitaries became interested and approached the city's superintendent of parks and gardens, who suggested that the grounds of the old Imperial Palace might be converted into a public park. A cooperative plan was devised by individuals from the People's Central Institute and the Rio de Janeiro YMCA.<sup>44</sup>

During a six-month visit to the United States Tucker obtained relevant information from both the PAA and the YMCA. Upon his return to Rio de Janeiro he contacted local authorities. Both the mayor and the superintendent of parks and gardens agreed that 'all the work of preparing the grounds and putting up of apparatus' on the new playground would be done at the city's expense. Local businesses contributed galvanised iron, rope, a large Brazilian flag and other materials. The manager of the Rio de Janeiro Tramway Light and Power Company supplied old streetcar rails and other materials to be used for constructing apparatus and volunteered to obtain other apparatus from the United States. The Brazilian Government allowed the imported items into the country 'free of duties'. The man

(possibly Maurice Salassa) from the International YMCA Training School at Springfield, Massachusetts who had been selected as the new playground's director oversaw the final 'laying out of the playground and athletic field'. He also was to be responsible for the gymnasium work at the local YMCA and for callisthenics at the People's Central Institute.<sup>45</sup>

The formal opening of the new playground took place on 12 October 1911, a national holiday that commemorates the day of Brazil's religious patron Nossa Senhora Aparecida (Our Lady of Aparecida – the Lady Who Appeared). Many dignitaries attended. The mayor, who had supplied the band, hoisted the Brazilian flag and assured the audience of his support for a programme of 'intellectual, moral, and physical education that would elevate the people'. The children and youth then sang the Brazilian national anthem. As the mayor and his group were leaving everyone sang an adaptation of the United States' second most patriotic song – 'My Country, 'Tis of Thee'.<sup>46</sup>

The early enthusiasms did not last. Slightly over a decade later a survey reported that these 'first playgrounds in the city' had been for several years 'without supervision of any kind' and that they could not be developed until the necessary leadership became available. It was hoped that the YMCA Training Course that recently had been established at Montevideo, Uruguay would help to remedy the situation.<sup>47</sup>

### **Establishment of the Instituto Tecnico, the growth of YMCA physical directors and the 1922 Latin American Games**

The small country of Uruguay is bordered in the north by Brazil and on the south by Argentina. In 1909 the YMCA of Montevideo had been founded at the 'urging' of Eduardo Monteverde (a member of the engineering faculty at the National University of Uruguay). It soon was serving as headquarters for the Federation of YMCAs of South America. In 1912 Jess T. Hopkins, a graduate of the Springfield, Massachusetts, International YMCA Training School, who had been serving in the Panama Canal Zone, became its first physical director. He quickly brought together a group of charter members, organised a leaders' corps, and sent several young men to study at YMCA training colleges in the United States.<sup>48</sup>

Hopkins realised the importance of working cooperatively with colleagues in Argentina and Brazil. To train more secretaries and physical directors plans were made to develop a four-year course similar to what was being offered at the Springfield, Massachusetts, and the Chicago YMCA training schools. The first two years would take place at the trainee's own YMCA (Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo or Buenos Aires); the last two years of work would be undertaken at the Instituto Tecnico (technical institute) that opened in Montevideo in 1922.<sup>49</sup> This arrangement helped to increase the number of qualified leaders and decrease the cost of fully-paid staffs. (The students, who received some payment for their work, divided their time between class work and 'on the job training'.) By 1926 ten Brazilians were engaged in the programme. Henry P. Clark (son of Myron Clark), who had graduated from both the Instituto Tecnico and Wooster College (founded in Ohio in 1866 by the Presbyterian Church), recently had been recruited to serve as physical director at Rio de Janeiro's YMCA.<sup>50</sup> The junior Clark, whose mother was Brazilian, was one of the first two South American-born YMCA leaders.

In 1926 *Physical Training* (the journal of the Physical Directors' Society of the Young Men's Christian Association of North America) published an article in which

Henry Sims spoke very positively about the young Brazilian and Argentinian men who recently had studied in the United States or were enrolled in the new four-year course at the Instituto Tecnico. He closed by comparing *zicunate* (a traditional ball game played by indigenous people in the jungle and highlands) with the approach to games and sports espoused by the YMCA. Whereas the former might develop dexterity and speed, 'rightly directed play' such as the YMCA advocated was intended to bring about both physical welfare and 'national leadership actuated by the highest motives of Christian service'.<sup>51</sup>

The following year Jess Hopkins (now secretary for physical education of the South American YMCA) reflected with equal enthusiasm upon developments that had occurred since Springfield College graduate Maurice Salassa had been employed at Rio de Janeiro as the YMCA's first full-time physical director in South America. There now were more Brazilian-born leaders and YMCA (as well as playground) work was growing. Additionally, Fred C. Brown had been recruited in 1921 as the executive secretary of Rio de Janeiro's exclusive Fluminense Football Club, which had been founded in 1902 by Oscar Cox, a Brazilian of British heritage.<sup>52</sup> Brown also served as the technical director of a federation of the larger sporting groups in Rio de Janeiro and as technical director of the national Brazilian Confederation of Sports. According to Hopkins, it was Brown's leadership that helped to make the first Latin American Games to be held at Rio de Janeiro (as part of a 1922 international exhibition) such a success.<sup>53</sup> According to Elmer Johnson, Hopkins also was instrumental in fostering the playground movement in South America.<sup>54</sup> In Uruguay the playground movement had begun with the establishment of a National Committee of Physical Education in 1911. By 1924 more than 75 *plazas de deportes* (playgrounds) had been built or were being projected. In small towns these usually served both the schools and the community. Volleyball quickly became an especially popular game following its introduction. According to Hopkins, developments in Uruguay also were having a positive effect upon Chile and other South American countries.<sup>55</sup>

Before long the Rotary Club of Rio de Janeiro asked the physical director of the YMCA to speak about the importance of playgrounds, and a committee was formed to discuss the matter with municipal authorities. It was Hopkins's belief that the recently formed Instituto Tecnico soon would be producing graduates who would 'find their life's work' in the playground movement as well as the YMCA. Shortly thereafter Arabella Page Rodman (who made many such travels throughout the world and had come to Latin America to observe local conditions) reported that the American ambassador to Brazil had asked her to speak to a select group regarding the value play.<sup>56</sup> As a result, Arnaldo Guinle offered to pay the salary of a director brought in from the United States. One of five sons of Guilhermina de Paula Ribeiro Guinle and Eduardo Palassim Guinle, Arnaldo had been born in 1884. His father amassed a fortune as a fabric merchant, then became involved in the construction of railroads and founded the National Company of Docks. Arnaldo grew up in luxury and from an early age associated with families that had arrived when Brazil needed foreign engineers to build railroads and improve the country's economy. He learned to play soccer with English friends in the patio of the Leopoldina Railway – and to play cricket, tennis and rugby at the Payssandu and Rio Cricket clubs.<sup>57</sup> He also participated in Saturday soccer matches at the Rio Team club, which was directed by Oscar Cox, who had spent considerable time in Switzerland. The Fluminense Football Club, which Cox established in 1902, exists today as the most famous

soccer club in Brazil.<sup>58</sup> By the 1920s Western sports had spread considerably among the Brazilian population and now were one of the most innovative means for changes at all levels of life. With 21 athletes (all men), Brazil participated for the first time in the Antwerp Olympic Games of 1920. Its athletes brought home three medals: a gold, a silver and a bronze, all in shooting. With the exception of the 1928 games at Amsterdam, since then Brazil has competed in every Olympic cycle.<sup>59</sup>

Cesar Torres's recent article dealing with occurrences during the 1920s that brought athletes from a number of Latin American countries more fully into Olympic competitions sheds important light upon the emergence of the Latin American Games (originally called South American Games), the partnership of the IOC and the YMCA in developing the 1922 games and other previously neglected aspects of sport history.<sup>60</sup> In 1920, when Brazil's National Department of Physical Education was being established, Henry J. Sims (director of Rio de Janeiro's YMCA) had been invited to become a member of the planning committee for the organisation of the 1922 games. Originally scheduled for Chile, these took place at Rio de Janeiro as part of a centennial that celebrated Brazil's Independence from Portugal.<sup>61</sup>

In spite of recurring political upheavals, the legacy of the American School, Mackenzie College, the YMCA and introduced Western sports continued to grow in Brazil. The dictatorial government headed by Getúlio Vargas that was established in 1930 and remained in power for 15 years – 'The Age of Vargas' – was a period during which the federal government emphasised 'patriotism' and 'nationalism'. Foreign names as well as the use of foreign languages for commercial establishments, clubs, churches, and schools were not allowed. However, the YMCA did not have any conflicts with the government because it already had become what has been referred to as 'Brazilianised' as a consequence of policies that had that called for equal numbers of Americans and Brazilians on its boards of directors. Additionally, the YMCA of São Paulo gained governmental favour in the early 1930s by creating the 'House of the Soldier' to shelter military men who were in transit between the capital and countryside of the state of São Paulo.<sup>62</sup>

### Concluding remarks

The exportation of play, games and sports to Brazil – as well as to other countries – might be seen as a way for the United States to extend its power. However, this does not entirely reflect what missionaries, the YMCA and others sought to – and actually did – achieve. Chamberlain's work in creating the American School and fostering the development of Mackenzie College has benefited millions of Brazilians. So have the contributions of Marcia Browne, Myron Clark, Henry Sims and many others who arrived from the United States. The Young Women's Christian Association of Brazil had been established in June 1920 by two North American teachers in a location donated by Arnaldo Guinle. Incentives that would be made by the YMCA during the 1940s enabled several women to become associates, and opportunities were extended for them to participate at the YMCA in sessions of gymnastics, volleyball and basketball. In 1944 the São Paulo YMCA hired the first woman teacher, Maria Ohl.<sup>63</sup> Disseminating education and sports throughout Brazil remains an important part of Brazilian YMCAs' and YWCAs' work.<sup>64</sup>

In 1917, in the midst of what was then the most devastating war the world had ever seen, George J. Fisher, MD (secretary of the Physical Department of the International Committee of the YMCA) had summarised what had been accomplished by

promoting play and athletics in foreign countries. He optimistically, but unfortunately not accurately, stated that in the future the world's battles 'will not be fought with cannon . . . but on the athletic field' when more people learn that 'play makes people happy' and builds 'international understanding'.<sup>65</sup> Nine years later Arabella Page Rodman would be equally optimistic as she reflected upon her recent six-month visit to Latin America, where she had seen 'a surprising interest' in recreation and 'a remarkable achievement' that had been fostered by organisations such as the YMCA. It was her hope that bringing teams from many lands together for 'one great meet' would become 'a wonderful step in world understanding'.<sup>66</sup>

If major televised sporting events today such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games give almost exclusive emphasis to personal victory and national prestige, there still remain some forms of play, games and sports that seek to foster personal health and sound moral values for children, youth and even adults. These are the legacy of individuals such as George Whitehill Chamberlain, Marcia Browne and Maria Guilhermina Loureiro and of organisations such as the YMCA, who and which brought an array of sports to Brazil and thereby did much to modify its 'cultural landscape'.

### Notes on contributor

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### Notes

1. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIFA\\_World\\_Cup](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIFA_World_Cup); [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Football\\_at\\_the\\_Summer\\_Olympics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Football_at_the_Summer_Olympics).
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIVB\\_World\\_Championship#Women](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FIVB_World_Championship#Women).
3. Barman, *Citizen Emperor*; Azevedo, *Brazilian Culture*.
4. Tesche and Rambo, 'Reconstructing the Fatherland'; Nicolini, *Tietê: O Rio de Esporte*.
5. Guedes, *Escola de Educação Física*.
6. James A. Mangan has written and edited a number of insightful books regarding the introduction of English sports to other countries. See for example, Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism*; Mangan and Da Costa, *Sport in Latin American Society*.
7. Caldeira, *Mauá, Empresário do Império*.
8. Schwarcz, *O Espetáculo das Raças*.
9. MacLachlan, *A History of Modern Brazil*, 179–81.
10. See for example, Da Costa, *Atlas do Esporte no Brasil*.
11. Gardner *et al.*, *Creation of the American Empire*, vol. I, pp. 191–203.
12. Cited in *Handbook of the American Republics* (Bulletin no. 11, Bureau of the American Republics, Feb. 1891), 5–6.
13. Hutchinson, *Report on Trade Conditions in Brazil*, 9.
14. It is interesting that although the lengthy report was about Brazil, Hutchinson chose to refer to 'the yoke of Spain'.
15. Da Costa, *Formação Profissional em Educação Física*. For an overview of education in Brazil during the late 1800s and early 1900s see Freyre, *Order and Progress*.
16. [http://www.theopedia.com/George\\_Whitehill\\_Chamberlain](http://www.theopedia.com/George_Whitehill_Chamberlain).
17. See Thompson *et al.*, *Education in the State of São Paulo*.
18. Love, *São Paulo in the Brazilian Federation*.
19. Garcez, *O Mackenzie*.
20. Thompson *et al.*, *Education in the State of São Paulo*, 41–3.

21. Mackenzie College was very successful and continues today as Mackenzie Presbyterian University: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universidade\\_Presbiteriana\\_Mackenzie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universidade_Presbiteriana_Mackenzie). See also *Brief Description of Work of Mackenzie College, S. Paulo, Brazil, S. A., October 1902*, available at [http://books.google.com/books?id=TGZHAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=TGZHAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).
22. *Revista Comemorativa dos Cem Anos do Basquetebol*. See also Mota, 'A Procura das Origens do Mackenzie'; Arquivos da Universidade Mackenzie, São Paulo, Brazil (hereafter Arquivos da Universidade Mackenzie).
23. *Minutes of the Brazil Mission of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America Magazine* 4 (Dec. 1900), 5–10, Arquivos da Universidade Mackenzie.
24. Reyes, *The Two Americas*, 123–4.
25. Chamberlain, letter to Robert McBurney, 26 March 1890. Chamberlain Correspondence, Arquivos da Universidade Mackenzie.
26. See for example Ferreira, *História da Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil*; Levine, *The History of Brazil*, 77–96.
27. Ferreira, *História da Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil*.
28. Ibid.
29. Born in Buffalo, New York in 1866, Clark had worked as secretary for YMCAs in Minnesota and Missouri after graduating from Macalester College in St Paul, Minnesota: Kautz Family YMCA Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota (hereafter Kautz Family YMCA Archives).
30. Johnson, *The History of YMCA Physical Education*, 166–73; 249–53. See also YMCA Biographical Files, Kautz Family YMCA Archives.
31. Johnson, *The History of YMCA Physical Education*, 167.
32. *Relatorio Annual da Associação Christã de Moços do Rio de Janeiro, 1893–1894* (Rio de Janeiro: Aldina, 1894), Kautz Family YMCA Archives.
33. *Decimo Relatorio Annual da Associação Christã de Moços do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1902–1903* (Rio de Janeiro: Casa Publicadora Baptista, 1903), Kautz Family YMCA Archives.
34. Johnson, *The History of YMCA Physical Education*, 169–70; *Relatorio Annual da Associação Christã de Moços do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1913*, 10–11, Kautz Family YMCA Archives.
35. The statement is included in the section dealing with the physical department of the *Relatorio Annual da Associação Christã de Moços do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1913*. Report 32, Box 4; YMCA Papers, Arquivos da Universidade Mackenzie.
36. Ibid., 10–11; 19–21.
37. H.J. Sims, Physical Director, Young Men's Christian Association, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Annual Report for the Year Ending 30 Sept. 1915 (typescript), Kautz Family YMCA Archives.
38. Ibid.
39. The YMCA won first place.
40. Regarding the earlier years of basketball and the YMCA in Brazil see Sims, 'Histórico do Basket Ball no Brasil'.
41. Sims, Annual Report for the Year Ending 30 Sept. 1915. With regard to lectures on hygiene and physical education, the number had increased from 830 to 3,521.
42. In the YMCA Annual Report for the year ending 30 Sept. 1915 Sims referred approvingly to these and the other accomplishments that were under way.
43. Tucker, 'Rio de Janeiro's First Playground', 382–5.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. V. P. Bowe, 'Survey 1920–24: Questionnaire for Rio de Janeiro, Brazil', Kautz Family YMCA Archives.
48. Johnson, *The History of YMCA Physical Education*, 168–9.
49. In 1922 James S. Summers, secretary of the YMCA's International Committee, arrived in Montevideo: Johnson, *The History of YMCA Physical Education*, 250–2.
50. Johnson, *The History of YMCA Physical Education*, 250–1; Sims. 'From "Zicunate" to the "Instituto Technico" in Brazil.
51. Ibid. In *zicunate* only the head could be used.

52. Hopkins, 'Fifteen Years of Association Physical Education'. Located in what was then the aristocratic neighbourhood of Laranjeiras, the Fluminense Football Club was formed by sons of well-established Brazilian families who had learned about the game while they were studying abroad.
53. Hopkins, 'Fifteen Years of Association Physical Education'.
54. Johnson, *The History of YMCA Physical Education*, 169.
55. Hopkins, 'The Playground Movement in Uruguay', 439–41; 450; 456–57.
56. Rodman, 'Recreation in Latin America', 265–8. Apparently Rodman was one of those Progressive Era women who 'campaigned for a wide range of issues, from the establishment of juvenile courts and daily inspection for "pure" milk production, to municipal playgrounds and public school kindergartens'. She subsequently would write about her experiences in a book entitled *Through Opening Doors*. These comments about Rodman are from Engh, 'Mary Juila Workman', 3–19.
57. The Guinle family often received invitations to attend functions at clubs formed by English immigrants.
58. A useful account of these matters may be found in Napoleão, *Fluminense Football Club*. The name Fluminense derives from the Latin Flumen or 'river'. The original intent had been to call it the Rio Football Club.
59. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazil\\_at\\_the\\_Olympics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazil_at_the_Olympics).
60. Torres, 'The Latin American "Olympic Explosion"'.
61. 'South American Olympic Games', *New York Times*, 25 Aug. 1920.
62. Araujo, *As Instituicoes Brasileiras da Era Vargas*. Regarding Getúlio Vargas and the Estado Novo regime see also Dulles, *Vargas of Brazil*.
63. Mario Ribeiro Cantarino Filho, 'Associação Cristã de Moços: Movimento Voluntário da Educação Física no Brasil', cited in DaCosta, *Atlas do Esporte no Brasil*.
64. See, for example, <http://www.acfdobrasil.org.br>; <http://www.ymca.int/423.0int>.
65. Fisher, 'The Work of the Young Men's Christian Association'.
66. Rodman, 'Recreation in Latin America'.

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