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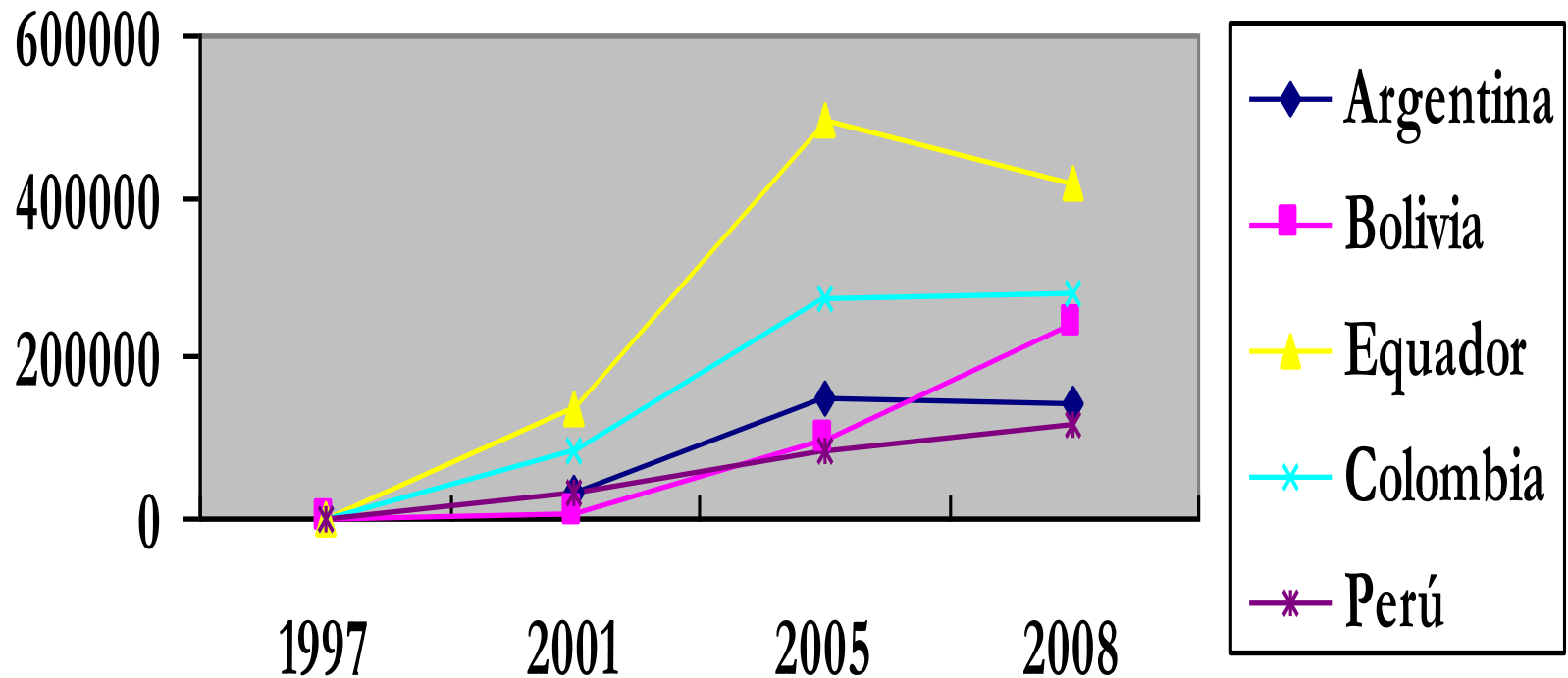
Football Practice
among Bolivian Migrant Women in Seville (Spain)

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Introduction

- The number of South American migrants in Spain has grown from 200.000 in 2000 to approximately two millions in 2008 (OPAM 2008). Main countries of origin: Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Argentina, Paraguay
- High percentage of undocumented persons among them, many women are pioneer migrants
- Sports Clubs and Football Leagues are the main associative forms of the migrants, especially of those from the Andean countries, it is an activity independently from their legal status
- Women migrants participate in league playing, an estimated 90% of them come from Bolivia and Ecuador
- Immersion of the ethnographer in a football team was used as a means of inquiry for an anthropology not just *of* the body, but *from* the body as a “vector of knowledge” (Wacquant 2005: 446);
- This presentation: dynamics and meanings of Bolivian women migrant football in Seville

South American migrants in Spain, main countries of origin



Changes in female football performance

- Differences in football performance within the women's in Seville teams are significant: scarce childhood of rural born women against better schooling and physical education trajectories of urban born women
- All migrant women in Seville have some earlier playing experiences due to participation in sporadic, festive tournaments in Bolivia (anniversaries, mothers' day, local and national holidays, participation of all ages and both sexes (see Goldstein 1998, 2004; Bigenho 2002; Paerregard 2003))
- In Bolivia, football is legitimated as a female activity in extra-daily contexts; in Seville, women participate in the constant frame of a league system and demand more competition
- Overlapping of traditional social motives (which do not disappear) with the new striving for strict rule application, equal opportunities and improvement; Bolivian women's football became more performance-oriented

Source:

Las Futbolistas de los Andes, Carmen Butta, 2006, documentary



Team *Bolivia*, July 2007, Park Stadion San Jerónimo, Seville



Individual and public action

- In Seville, women adopt interaction rituals that regulate face-to-face-interaction in professional football: postural sets, gestures and interactions that have an eminent social character
- Shake hands and other expressive behaviour of team spirit, identity and differentiation are more and more globalized through transnational media broadcasting (Giulianotti/Robertson 2009); density and intensity of corporeal contact in professional football is growing (Martínez 2006) – so it did within the women's football under study
- Ethnographic experiences encouraged me to think of individual-group-relationship in football which is, in my opinion, especially ambivalent
- Expressive interaction techniques can be seen as channels to convert *private sentiments* in *public action* (Hochschild 1983; Bromberger 1999; see Rapport 2007:321f.), the women widened their space of action, football as public, expressive behaviour

Discussion

- Through participation in a team, the ethnographic gaze is not just centred on the *environment* of playing, but on *practice* itself; it is a joint activity with the subjects that provides a *common ground* of action and expectation (Jackson 1989); it means to explore socio-cultural differences from a team sport that minimizes social hierarchies
- Considering football as cultural element on the move (one of the categories for a transnational analysis (Marcus 1995)), then changes in playing performance and meaning occur due to the diffusion of the sport: within the migration process of people and football from South America to Spain, both, *indigeneization* (Appadurai 1996) and *sportization* (Elías/Dunning 2003; Eichberg 1975) processes of playing performance take place
- Football seems a trans-culturally especially attractive (Guttman 1994:ch.2) and rather „weak cultural form“ (Appadurai 1996), easy to apprehend locally and to embed in new contexts of socio-cultural practice

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