More on the Brazilian footballers dancing debate

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Abstract. This paper considers the celebratory dances by the Brazilian football team against South Korea in the 2022 World Cup. I propose a reason for why it can be rational to do dances which some people find disrespectful.

Draft version: Version 2 (7 December 2022, final para, final three sentences)

A dispute has suddenly arisen in the football World Cup, or soccer as it is called in some places. The Brazilian team celebrated after scoring against South Korea by dancing. A question has been posed: should they have danced? And it is discussed (e.g. Aarons 2022). Is this some sort of examination? Okay I will take it.

I heard someone say that the dancing had a pre-prepared quality which he did not like. (It was in an online video, whose link I must search for.) Was it pre-prepared though? Let’s assume so. I suppose a calmly done pre-prepared celebratory routine of dancing might make some people feel safe. It seems natural to be overcome with joy after scoring at the World Cup, but the dancer is still in control of themselves, they are at home on this stage, they are a grown up in the world of football. (Imagine if someone expected you to not just go to the World Cup and score but also calmly do a dance afterwards!) If there is a problem in this setting, they won’t lose their head. Teammates look up to them. The successful carrying out of the dance matters more than the content of the routine. (The medium is the message?) You could be symbolizing —— even: what does it matter? Maybe it is better even to courageously symbolize that, for some nervous
teammates. (Someone says, “I think it is not the dancing but the dancing-as-they-interpret-it which is bothering some spectators at home.” Can that work?)

I should say that I am putting this manuscript out there all excited and is it humanly possible to feel more at home here? “But what about the title question of whether they should have danced?” I don’t know. It may have been a good idea given the context and I have presented some details regarding why, the details being the main contribution.

Reference

Aarons, E. 2022. Samba in the soul: Brazil’s dancing celebrations part of a rich tradition. The Guardian. Available at:

https://www.theguardian.com/football/2022/dec/06/samba-in-the-soul-brazils-dancing-celebrations-part-of-a-rich-tradition