

A IMAGEM DO NEGRO NO FUTEBOL BRASILEIRO: RETRATOS DO PERÍODO ENTRE COPAS (1938-1958)

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THE IMAGE OF THE BLACK IN THE BRAZILIAN FOOTBALL: PORTRAITS OF THE PERIOD BETWEEN WORLD CUPS (1938-1958)

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RESUMO: O presente artigo pretende abordar, ainda que de maneira breve, a construção da imagem do negro no futebol brasileiro sob o contexto das Copas do Mundo do período de 1938 a 1958. Destaca-se o papel dos cronistas esportivos de jornais como Diário de Pernambuco e Folha da Tarde, bem como o papel do Estado Novo na construção de um novo ideário político de identidade nacional.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Copa do Mundo. Futebol brasileiro. Questão racial.

RESUMEN: El presente artículo pretende abordar, aunque de manera breve, la construcción de la imagen del negro en el fútbol brasileño bajo el contexto de las Copas del Mundo del período de 1938 a 1958. Se destaca el papel de los cronistas deportivos de periódicos como Diario de Pernambuco y Diario de Pernambuco, Folha da Tarde, así como el papel del Estado Nuevo en la construcción de un nuevo ideario político de identidad nacional.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Copa del Mundo. Fútbol brasileño. Cuestión racial.

ABSTRACT: The present paper intends to portray, although briefly, the construction of the image of the black in the Brazilian soccer under the context of World Cups from the period of 1938 to 1958. It is important to highlight the role of sports journals such as Diário de Pernambuco and Folha da Tarde, as well as the role of the Estado Novo in the construction of a new political ideology of national identity.

KEYWORDS: World Cup. Brazilian soccer. Racial issue.

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Introduction

Addressing racial issues in Brazil is a decision that needs careful attention to detail. To approach the theme in relation to football means almost necessarily to allude to the myth of racial democracy present in Gilberto Freyre. Analyzing the context involved in the participation of the Brazilian national team in World Cups held from 1938 to 1958 leads us to discuss, albeit briefly, the social and political changes that occurred in Brazil in just two decades. These changes, also tied to the international framework, through the decisive periods for our historiography: World War II and the postwar period, the populist phenomenon and Brazilian national developmentalism and, especially, the racial reading present in all these moments.

The hopeful political, economic and cultural climate that followed World War II characterized, according to Hobsbawm (2004), the 1950s in much of the world, which could therefore be retrospectively synthesized under the label of “Golden Years” (DIAS, 2011). Dias² (2011) analyzes that in Brazil, this period was entirely different from the one that preceded it, the Vargas Era, and the one that followed it, the military regime, in terms of democratic normality, and is intrinsically relevant, for the interregnum that represented confidence and widespread optimism about the future of the country by its citizens.

Often, the Brazilian Golden Years symbolized the execution of intrepid projects, such as the development of the automobile industry and the construction of the new capital - Brasília, in the country's midwest - as part of Juscelino Kubitschek's plan of government. During this period, the first law against racial discrimination in Brazil, drafted by Deputy Afonso Arinos de Melo Franco in 1951³, is also drafted and promulgated. In cultural terms, it was also during this period that Bossa Nova emerged in Brazilian popular music. Recovering the national pride struck and wounded in 1950, Brazil wins for the first time, in 1958, the World Cup.

1938: Gilberto Freyre and the mulatto *foot-ball*

The 1938 World Cup, held in France from June 4 to 19, not only inaugurates the first time Brazil takes the podium in world championships - reaching third place behind Italy and Hungary respectively - but also marks, based on the good performances of the Brazilian team,

² DIAS, Aline Passeri *et al.* Sobre a memória social dos “Anos Dourados”: Fusca, Copa do Mundo, Bossa Nova e Missa Brasil. **Psicologia: Teoria e Prática**, v. 13, n. 3, p. 110-123, 2011.

³ GRIN, Monica; MAIO, Marcos Chor. O antirracismo da ordem no pensamento de Afonso Arinos de Melo Franco. **Topoi**, v. 14, n. 26, jan./jul., p. 33-45, 2013.

the incorporation of football to the racial theory of Gilberto Freyre. The team, composed notably of black and mestizos players of poor origin, is taken as a support base for the defense of footballing Brazilianness, or the so-called by Freyre mulatto foot-ball. Days after the Brazilian victory in Bordeaux on June 12 against Czechoslovakia, which secured the advance to the semifinals, Freyre publishes in the *Diário de Pernambuco*:

A Brazilian style of football has just been unmistakably defined, and that style is a further expression of our agile mulattoism in assimilating, mastering, softening in dance, curves or music, the most angular, for our taste, European or North American techniques for football: be it game or architecture. Because it is a mulattoism an enemy of our - psychologically, to be Brazilian is to be a mulatto - Apollonian formalism being Dionysian in its own way - the great mulatto feat (FREYRE, 1938).⁴

Using a romanticized discourse, Freyre seeks to highlight virtues arising from bonds established between different races, which became more inflamed in the act of football. The construction of his analysis points out that, due to the physical rigor of the Europeans, the Brazilian black players had adopted the sinuosity of the bodies. This, as far as he was concerned, was not inherent in football. The lightness of Brazilians would have its genesis linked, neither more nor less, to folkloric and musical popular expressions; such as Carnival wiggles, samba oblique passes and capoeira's dodging ability. Thus, football would enter the Brazilian Expression Hall as an element that carries within it other components already rooted in Brazilian culture, as stated in the same article published by the *Diário de Pernambuco*:

Our style of playing football seems to me to contrast with that of Europeans by a set of qualities of surprise, cleverness, cunning, lightness and at the same time brilliance and individual spontaneity in which the same mulattoism as of Nilo Peçanha is expressed. It has been to this day the best statement in political art. Our passes, our *pitus*, our dropouts, our flourishes with the ball, have something of dance or capoeira that marks the Brazilian style of playing football, which rounds and sweetens the game invented by the English and other Europeans played in a most angular way, all this seems to express in very interesting ways to psychologists and sociologists the flamboyant mulattoism and at the same time rogue that is today in all that is true affirmation of Brazil (FREYRE, 1938).⁵

⁴ Acaba de se definir de maneira inconfundível um estilo brasileiro de futebol, e esse estilo é uma expressão a mais do nosso mulatismo ágil em assimilar, dominar, amolecer em dança, curvas ou em músicas, as técnicas européias ou norte-americanas mais angulosas para o nosso gosto: sejam elas de jogo ou de arquitetura. Porque é um mulatismo o nosso – psicologicamente, ser brasileiro é ser mulato – inimigo do formalismo apolíneo sendo dionisíaco a seu jeito – o grande feito mulato (FREYRE, 1938).

⁵ O nosso estilo de jogar futebol me parece contrastar com o dos europeus por um conjunto de qualidades de surpresa, de manha, de astúcia, de ligeireza e ao mesmo tempo de brilho e de espontaneidade individual em que se exprime o mesmo mulatismo de que Nilo Peçanha foi até hoje a melhor afirmação na arte política. Os nossos passes, os nossos pitus, os nossos despistamentos, os nossos floreios com a bola, tem alguma coisa de dança ou capoeiragem que marca o estilo brasileiro de jogar futebol, que arredonda e adoça o jogo inventado pelos ingleses e por outros europeus jogado tão angulosamente, tudo isso parece exprimir de modo interessantíssimo para

Or even later, in 1945 in the work *Sociologia*:

Unmistakably, a Brazilian style of football was formed; and this style is a new expression of our mulatto, adept at assimilating, mastering, and slowing down winding and choreographing European and North American techniques, which are very angular to our taste - these are game techniques or architecture. For our kind of mulattoism [...] is the enemy of Apollonian formalism, is the Dionysian in its mobility. [...] In football, as in politics, the Brazilian mulattoism is characterized by the pleasure of elasticity, surprise, rhetoric, reminiscent of dance steps and capoeira feints (FREYRE, 1945. p. 421-222).⁶

Junior (2013) points out that Freyre does not have such elements, at first glance, as suppressive categories, since, for the author, the distinction of Brazilian society is flexibility and malleability in different situations, so that it became possible “A harmonious coexistence”. This argument contributed to the creation of a myth in which polarizations were modified by peaceful relations, leading to an idyllic view of reality (COSTA, 1998). Thus, the myth of racial democracy, in turn, was a distortion of the reality of existing racial relations in Brazil, from a paternalistic model to a competitive model to the stagnation of social conflict.

As Junior (2013) assures us, it can be said that for Gilberto Freyre any object that was imported, including football, would be adapted in Brazil by our hybrid culture. In this context, it is clear that the value of Brazilian culture, for this author, lies in the relationship established with social antagonisms such as master and slave, white and black. It is possible to see, however, that from Freyre's perspective, from this tense but harmonious coexistence, the richness of our culture was created. It is no exaggeration to say that throughout this series the figure of the mulatto can synthesize and express this process.

The political ideology of the Estado Novo and national identity

The modification of the power bloc in 1937 contributed to the redefinition of the national identity, allied to vicissitudes in the cultural and social field in the country. Thus, intellectuals emerge to compose this vast ideological field at the center of this civil society with a desire to build itself. Accompanied by a process of economic and social modernization that took place

psicólogos e os sociólogos o mulatismo flamboyant e ao mesmo tempo malandro que está hoje em tudo que é afirmação verdadeira do Brasil (FREYRE, 1938).

⁶ De maneira inconfundível formou-se um estilo brasileiro de futebol; e esse estilo é uma nova expressão da nossa mulatice, perito em assimilação, domínio e abrandamento coreógrafo sinuoso e musical das técnicas européias e norte-americanas, que são muito angulosas para o nosso gosto – trata-se de técnicas de jogo ou de arquitetura. Pois nosso tipo de mulatice [...] é inimigo do formalismo apolíneo, é o dionisíaco na sua mobilidade. [...] No futebol, como na política, a mulatice brasileira caracteriza-se pelo prazer da elasticidade, da surpresa, da retórica, que lembra passos de dança e fintas de capoeira (FREYRE, 1945. p. 421- 222).

in a "Prussian" way - that is, with the preservation of pre-capitalist traits (COUTINHO, 1990), either in the infrastructure or in the State - the cultural changes of this period retain traces of a relationship of political and economic dependence on European standards. It is in this sense that some authors such as José Murilo de Carvalho and Carlos Nelson Coutinho resort to the category of national-popular, coined by Marxist political scientist Antonio Gramsci, to explain the construction of the political ideology of the Estado Novo.

In Gramsci, culture plays the fundamental role of mediating between the historical processes of transformation of society and the construction of a new class hegemony in civil society (ALENCAR, 2017). In practice, it is necessary to forge political and cultural conditions in which the political party and the intellectuals engender and assimilate these basic principles in the new social relations, which also apprehends new economic and political relations, as well as new ethical and moral conduct. Football, interpreted as a synthesis of multiple determinations of Brazilian society, becomes a political field for the cultural transformation intended by the Estado Novo ideology, which finds in this horizon the "active awareness of historical necessity, as the protagonist of a real and effective historical drama" (GRAMSCI, 1978, p. 9) of overcoming racial impasse and mestizaje.

In this sense, José Murilo de Carvalho points out that the main innovation involved in this process was the effort to create a positive view of the Brazilian people - challenged by much of the intellectuality until the 1930s - since "Brazil was the Brazilian people, It was up to the elites to draw from this people and their culture the inspiration of Brazilianness" (CARVALHO, 1999, p. 360). Among the intellectuals responsible for this shift in thinking about the Brazilian people, Gilberto Freyre, in *Casa Grande & Senzala* (1933), appears as a thinker from the political elite who had a positive view on mestizaje, contributing, among other things, to the official adoption of a government stance that praised the popular over the scholar or, in other words, the people over the elite.

The resumption of the positive view of the people and their adversities meant that the mixture of races and the integration of Brazilian black people were no longer treated as a barrier to the progress of national development, and was to some extent transformed into a stage or path for social ascension. However, it is possible to see that freedom and participation do not automatically lead to the resolution of social problems and that, against the backdrop of the 1930s under the government of Getúlio Vargas, the sense of conquest of citizenship through civil rights and the exaltation of the ethnic origin of the lower classes was used as a bargaining chip for the political rights suppressed by the Estado Novo. According to Carvalho (2001), in Brazil first came social rights, implemented in periods of suppression of political rights and

reduction of civil rights by a dictator who became popular. Thus, it is no exaggeration to state that it is possible to have civil rights without political rights (CARVALHO, 2001, p. 219).

The prelude: 1950 e 1954

After a hiatus between the 1938 World Cup and World War II, the realization of the World Cup returns to activity. The country chosen to host the 1950 games is Brazil. This choice has as its political and social scenario a Brazil governed by Getúlio Vargas, and as stated by Roberto Da Matta (*apud* MORAES NETO, 2000): “the beginning of a decade in which Brazil sought to mark its place as a nation that had a great destiny to fulfill” towards the consolidation of Brazilianness and the diffusion of the image outside a country that was moving towards development (COSTA *et al.*, 2015).

It was necessary to meet the post-war international demand in which scientific methodologies based on diagnostics and databases are required by the United Nations (UN) and its financial agents such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Also during this period, in 1948, the creation of ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean), a strategy for the development of Latin American countries.

Based on underdevelopment and dependence, Brazil began to build, in the late 1950s, participation in a system of “spectacle” and highly specialized capital, from which the conversion of dependence through formal subordination into dependence through real subordination, i.e., Brazilian football, as well as its players, eventually become economic assets to be exported as raw material to the world market (MARINI, 2013, p. 48). In addition, national football becomes a producer of raw material for Europe, to the detriment of an autonomy of Brazilian football, or even a central position in this market. In this movement, Brazilian football is subordinated not only to commercial capital, but also and, above all, to international industrial and financial capital (COUTINHO, 1990, p. 40). This transfiguration creates, according to Carlos Nelson Coutinho, new dispositions for Brazilian cultural history.

Under this international framework, organizing the first post-war World Cup, building the largest stadium in the world - the Maracanã - and providing a growing development of its industry and still winning the unprecedented title were conditions to insert Brazil to the long-awaited level of “first world” country and assert itself nationally. On the field, defeat to Uruguay on July 16, 1950 in the final square⁷ in Maracanã with record attendance in World

⁷ In fact, the match between Brazil and Uruguay was not the final (in the sense we ascribe today). It turns out that for the first and last time the World Cup had a format change that made this erroneous - but acceptable - historical

Cups. Thus, painfully, the last goal failed. The blame for the defeat was placed, in particular, on goalkeeper Barbosa, defender Juvenal and left-back Bigode, all black.

Supported by the 1950 try, which goes from exaltation to disappointment, Brazilian football sought to stabilize again for the 1954 World Cup. Part of the reconstruction was the attempt to make a professionally and planned preparation for the national team. However, beyond the rational and concrete actions, the symbolic character of the desired changes and restructuring stood out in the choice of changing the uniform of the team, changing the white shirts of 1950 for the yellow ones or for the establishment in 1954 of the ritual of kissing the National Flag before the team enters the field (COSTA *et al.*, 2015 *apud* NOGUEIRA *et al.*, 1994).

Four years later, the World Cup organization is again based in a European country. This time, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the founding of FIFA (International Football Federation), the 1954 World Cup was held in Switzerland, the host country of the organization. During the group stage, the rout against Mexico and a 1-1 draw against Yugoslavia ensured the quarter-final advance to the Brazilian team. The opposing team in the next round would be the current gold medalist of the Olympic Games two years earlier: the powerful⁸ Hungary. Even playing without the main and most dangerous Hungarian player⁹ – Ferenc Puskás –, Brazilian newspapers of the time marked this departure as "The Game of the Century"¹⁰.

The fall to Hungary did not cause the same trauma of four years earlier. This time, the Brazilian press read the game in such a way that no matter how superior the Brazilian team was, the Hungarian victory was guaranteed under technical inferiority, as shown on the cover of *Folha da Manhã* on June 29, 1954: “[...] the Hungarians were inferior in all points of view. We admit the value of magyar football, but the Brazilian technique is unsurpassed”¹¹.

However, according to Costa et al (2015) in reference to Von der Lippe and MacLean (2008), Brazilian players have been portrayed by English, Norwegian and Swiss newspapers as “technically brilliant” and “undisciplined”, but at the same time “primitive” and “warm-blooded”. Racial stereotypes were used as a way of unraveling the behavior of Brazilians in

understanding possible. To know more: GILARDI, Juan José Torres. 1950: o olhar da imprensa. **Revista Contemporânea**, n. 10 p. 128-129, 2008.

⁸ BRÁS, O. Os super-homens. **Folha da Manhã**, São Paulo, p. 7, 22 jun. 1954a. Acervo Folha. Disponível em: <https://acervo.folha.com.br/index.do>. Acesso em 20 de junho de 2018.

⁹ CHIORINO, Aroldo. Com Puskas ou sem Puskas passaremos pelo Brasil. **Folha da Manhã**, São Paulo, p. 7, 25 jun. 1954b.

¹⁰ MENDES, A. O jogo do século não tem vencedor antecipado. **Folha da Manhã**, São Paulo, p. 7, 26 jun. 1954. Acervo Folha. Disponível em: <https://acervo.folha.com.br/index.do>. Acesso em 20 de junho de 2018.

¹¹ ELIMINADA a seleção brasileira em um jogo no qual deixou patente a sua superioridade. **Folha da Manhã**, São Paulo, capa, 29 jun. 1954. Acervo Folha. Disponível em: <https://acervo.folha.com.br/index.do>. Acesso em 20 de junho de 2018.

relation to Hungarians and had as their background the classification between cultures in which Brazilians were inferior compared to Europeans,

Brazilians were not presented without self-control just because of their blackness, but also for their South American origins. As 'negroes', Brazilians were less civilized than Hungarians, as Latinos they were more volatile, like their Southern European counterparts (COSTA *et al.*, 2015 *apud* VON DER LIPPE; MACLEAN, 2008, p. 84).¹²

Still according to Costa *et al.* (2015) “national defeats for a long time were explained by a psychological reading of national character”. It is in this sense that Nelson Rodrigues (1993) states that it was necessary control and the willingness to succeed, characteristics that the Brazilian lacked in decision-making moments. In addition, the author refers to the failure against Uruguay in 1950 and Hungary in 1954 under the extensive scope of national character:

And it wasn't an individual crash: it was a collective drowning. The players, the fans, the head of the delegation, the delegation, the coach, the masseur were wrecked there. On these occasions, the main one is missing. Players, coach and masseuse are in place. But who wins and loses the matches is the soul. It was our soul that collapsed against Hungary, it was our soul that collapsed against Uruguay. [...] only one Freud would explain Brazil's defeat against Hungary, Brazil's defeat against Uruguay and, in short, any defeat of the Brazilian man in or out of football (COSTA *et al.*, 2015 *apud* RODRIGUES, 1993, p 26).¹³

1958: Paulo Machado de Carvalho Plan

Twenty years after the Brazilian defeat to Italy in Marseille on June 16, 1938, the Brazilian team goes to Sweden to compete for another World Cup to finally become champion. With the accumulation of experiences and analysis of factors that negatively influenced the image of Brazil and Brazilian players in the last two editions of the World Cup - in 1950 and 1954 -, a team of journalists and sports leaders, selected by the Brazilian Confederation of Sports (CBD, Portuguese initials), was tasked with creating a Modernizing Project for the

¹² Os brasileiros não eram apresentados como sem autocontrole apenas por sua negritude, mas também por suas origens sul-americanas. Como ‘negros’, os brasileiros eram menos civilizados do que os húngaros, como latinos eles eram mais voláteis, como seus homólogos do sul da Europa (COSTA *et al.*, 2015 *apud* VON DER LIPPE; MACLEAN, 2008, p. 84).

¹³ E não era uma pane individual: era um afogamento coletivo. Naufragaram, ali, os jogadores, os torcedores, o chefe da delegação, a delegação, o técnico, o massagista. Nessas ocasiões, falta o principal. Estão a postos os jogadores, o técnico e o massagista. Mas quem ganha e perde as partidas é a alma. Foi a nossa alma que ruiu face à Hungria, foi a nossa alma que ruiu face ao Uruguai. [...] só um Freud explicaria a derrota do Brasil frente à Hungria, do Brasil frente ao Uruguai e, em suma, qualquer derrota do homem brasileiro no futebol ou fora dele (COSTA *et al.*, 2015 *apud* RODRIGUES, 1993, p. 26).

national team, which would represent Brazil's Pelé - then 17 years old without the King of Football crown - at the 1958 World Cup.

This project, which became known as the Paulo Machado de Carvalho Plan, aimed, according to Junior (2013), to state that “in the last resort, (...) the local elites were ashamed to be represented by black/mulattos, uncultivated, toothless and with great difficulties of self-control in situations of adversity”, this project sought to “educate them through a pedagogical planning that sought to modify the physical appearance, cultural habits and behavior of Brazilian players”.

Having as historical moment the transition from the populist model characteristic of Getúlio Vargas's government to the national-developmental mold of Juscelino Kubitschek, the national team would act “so that they [the players] could represent the image of a modern country, which had surpassed the sociocultural backwardness - usually attributed to myths such as the mixture of races and the lack of self-control of the Brazilian man”.

The preparation prepared by CBD was structured to exemplify that just like the Brazilian economic model, the Brazilian team would present players free of their natural determinations - such as the Latin American racial inferiority pointed out by European journalists in 1954. Thus, Junior (2013) in reference to Rodrigues (2007), analyzes that the report presented by João Havelange - president of CBD at the time - consisted of “who did not fit the program that we made with the help of doctors and psychologists would be cut from the team. Would only go to the Swedish Cup who was mentally prepared”.

Mario Filho, a journalist with strong Freyrean influences, described these events as follows, after the 1958 World Cup victory:

[...] CBD wanted to bring the smallest number of black players to Sweden. He had not forgotten 56, the report of Flavio Costa advising, because of the negro Sabará, the summoning only of player who at least could dress and sit at a table. Hence the concern of a team, if not white, the less black as possible. There was still discussion of the deterioration of mulatto, more of the mulatto than the negro, in Nordic weather. So, CBD's concern was not racist: they believed more in the white man to play in the cold, although the World Cup season fell in the Swedish summer. The proof of non-racism is in the summons of mulattos and black players who ended up playing and contributing decisively to the Brazilian victory. [...] The concern to whiten the team went so far that in the debut against Austria the only black player was Didi. It was a position, Didi's, in which there was no choice. The reserve was another black: Moacir. Where one could choose between a white and a black one, was initially white (RODRIGUES FILHO, 1964. p. 322-323).¹⁴

¹⁴ [...] A CBD queria levar o menor número de pretos para a Suécia. Não esquecera 56, o relatório de Flávio Costa aconselhando, por causa do preto Sabará, a convocação só de jogador que, pelo menos, soubesse vestir-se e sentar-se a uma mesa. Daí a preocupação de um escrete, senão branco, o menos preto possível. Ainda se discutia a

While on the field fitness begins to guide the decisions of the coaching staff, outside of it the messages expressed by sports chroniclers expose the aspiration that football was the means of emancipation of black people and mestizos. The literati sought to associate soccer's success with one of the ways in which negroes were admitted and, as a result, "whitened".

A consideration far from final

The historical reconstruction of the image of black people linked to the formation of the ideology of Brazilian football is a contradictory process regarding the insertion of Brazilian society in modernity. Some chroniclers, shrouded by the racial theories of their day, sometimes construct a theatrical picture of the national apprehension of overcoming the backwardness; overcoming racism as evidence of progress.

Thus, football stands as an alternative to understand the “Brazilian national character”, in which the trauma of 1950 was narrated as evidence of an unwary people. After the drastic match against Uruguay, the Brazilian team returned to having a black goalkeeper in Cups only in 2006 (Dida), 56 years after what was, perhaps, Barbosa's worst day - the goalkeeper of that July 16th. Already in 1954, it was even assumed that due to its miscegenated people, Brazil was essentially a scared country.

The portrait painted by the sports chroniclers, influenced by Gilberto Freyre, showed flamboyant football as a result of the cultural background between the different races. The choir made by Brazil's ruling elite showed concern about the way the country would be represented. This concern was based on the fact that a significant part of the Brazilian team was composed of black people, mestizos and/or of poor origin - condition that made the ideal pattern did not correspond with the various types of problems presented by these players, such as the low cultural level and aesthetics not in keeping with the European standard.

In 1958, the apex of developmentalist belief, the construction of Brasília and the acceleration of industrialization, the national team went to Sweden with the distrust of Brazilian fans. Perhaps, ironically, the national team won the first World Cup in European territories. The

deterioração do mulato, mais do mulato do que do preto, em clima nórdico. Portanto a preocupação da CBD não era racista: ela acreditava mais no branco para jogar no frio, embora a época do campeonato do mundo caísse no verão sueco. A prova do não-racismo está na convocação dos mulatos e pretos que acabaram jogando e contribuindo, decisivamente, para a vitória brasileira. [...] A preocupação em embranquecer o esporte chegou a tal ponto que na estréia contra a Áustria o único preto foi Didi. Era uma posição, a de Didi, em que não havia escolha. O reserva era outro preto: Moacir. Onde se podia escolher entre um branco e um preto ficava-se inicialmente com o branco (RODRIGUES FILHO, 1964. p. 322-323).

triumph underpinned the building of a new national collective imagination, which has in Juscelino Kubitscheck's government the herald of a successful brand of modernity.

The conquest of the championship associated with transformations in the Brazilian economic infrastructure in the late 1950s did not separate, even after numerous attempts, the ideal constitution that separates, in the body of society, "what is" from "what should be" (FERNANDES, 2009) or else, real Brazil - that of racism embedded within society - from ideal Brazil - theorized by Freyre and his racial democracy.

Even after eighty years of Leonidas da Silva's mulatto foot-ball and sixty years of the first Brazilian conquest with Pelé, Garrinha and company, later numerous efforts by intellectuals, athletes and sports chroniclers to remedy the problem of racial discrimination in sports commonly associated with Brazilianness, unfortunately, racism is still present in society and in sports practice in general. Not yet exhausted, still in memory, regrettable cases of racial injuries recently occurred. Be the goalkeeper Aranha (Santos) in a match for the Brazilian Cup against Grêmio in Porto Alegre, Elias (Corinthians) against Danube (Uruguay) for Libertadores and Neymar and Daniel Alves playing for Barcelona in Spanish Championship matches are just a few examples of racist narratives lived by Brazilian players in various scenarios and regional contexts.

The impasse of the racial issue is shown as a record to verify the existence of racism in Brazilian society, which puts in debate the myth of racial democracy. Thus, for Emília Viotti da Costa (1988), the understanding of race relations in Brazil, the formation of myth and criticism involves the understanding of the patronage system, as well as its disruption, although weakened, such relationship patterns are not yet completely buried within Brazilian society.

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