61 - FOOTBALL AS AN OBJECT OF STUDY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES: THE URGENCY OF NEW APPROACHES

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INTRODUCTION

Football as a contemporary phenomenon permits several forms of approach. As a result, the existence of specific forums with the aim of discussing the economic, administrative, bureaucratic interventions, as well as all the other variants that involve and/or permeate a sports spectacle is verified. There are, therefore, questions raised by it and that only interest itself, remaining restrict to the context to which they belong. However, great part of the questions that involve the sport/football, are not restricted to a specific audience, once football can only be approached in its complexity when we comprehend it as a socially and historically produced phenomenon.

When observing football historically, it is possible to notice that it does not create new facts, only permits the advent of more general questions, initially forged in other spheres of the social life. Thus, instead of repeating old sayings such as "Charles Muller is the father of football in Brazil", or "Football is the people's opium", studies on this theme evoluted in such a way that it is fundamental to carry out an epistemological reflection about such "Founder Discourses", that is, it is necessary to realize how such discourses are created and why they fossilized in the collective memory, permeating academic studies that ended up by reproducing these thoughts, most times expressed within a positivist and functionalist view, becoming almost unquestionable truths that give support to a simplistic explanation of events which present a high degree of complexity.

From these notes, this work proposes to raise and discuss some theoretical and methodological questions which appear from the relations among History, Football and Society. Something that only became possible due to the new questioning present in History - regarding the use of quantitative as fundamental reference, the abandonment of geographical cuts and "classical" thematic, the new approach to concepts such as popular culture, mentality, social classes and mainly the disbelief in the interpretative models such as structuralism and Marxism - forcing the historian to seek new ways.

One of these new ways is the New Cultural History. Which, according to Burke (1996), enabled a significant transformation in the way one can work with the historical objects, making it possible to incorporate the everyday life as an object of analysis. Facing such a scenery, one can understand that the historian who tries to study football as a socio-cultural element must work hard to overcome the two most common difficulties found in the cultural studies: 1) escaping the interpretative prisons of economic or social contexts that explain/simplify everything; 2) tuning their sensitiveness to a specific logic of some popular manifestations, which are marked by contradiction and ambiguity, and in this becoming impermeable to the rational logic.

Our methodological option was to locate significant studies, which can substantially contribute to the possibilities of approaches to football, as a socio-cultural phenomenon. For this, we opted in this article to carry out the analysis of two areas of approach (history and anthropology), which together with the sociological theorization, form the theoretical framework of most studies carried out in the Brazilian post-graduation and besides that are fundamental aids to promote some rupture in the traditional view applied to the study of this sport.

THE ACADEMIC DESCASO TO THE STUDY OF THIS SPORT

Football had a trajectory marked by the scientific and literary marginality, being seen as an alienating element present in the mass culture. Authors such as Adorno and Horkheimer, representatives of the Frankfurt School, when analyzing the mass society issue, provide us with indications to how important it was to the consolidation of the cultural industry. This terminology is adopted by those authors and their followers with the aim of differentiate it from the mass culture, as for them culture is not produced by the masses2, ultimately it may be consumed by them. The concept of Cultural Industry differs the producer from the consumer, once the former usually manages to transform the imaginary of the latter, in this way:

Ideas, in the way they inculcate always come from the status quo. They are accepted without objection, without analysis, refusing the dialectic, even when they do not belong substantially to any of the ones under its influence (…). Through the ideology of the cultural industry, the conformism substitutes the consciousness.

These presuppositions are based on the Marxist theory, in which their thinkers are reticent to the idea, or possibility that there are groups that do not act as the theory predicted. Thus, the for of analysis of these groups was through the exclusion, once those individuals do not express the desirable consciousness of class (by this theory/theorists) and, therefore ended up by being academically despised.

This fact provoked some intellectual freezing, creating a certain stigma when analyzing determined themes. In this situation, instead of realizing the significance of the object in a certain context, a posture of distance and negation was applied. Such a posture led to the understanding that football at that moment was a practice that aimed at the masses and therefore did not deserve any academic interest.

Following the same line of thought, Hannah Arendt tries to justify the adhesion of thousands of citizens to the European totalitarian regimes, indicating that the masses were a social deviation, resulting from the failure of the society of classes. For Arendt, while the working class organized their movement and the bourgeois their political parties, the masses constituted without a social link, and consequently, without any political project that would confer them social cohesion. In such a way that this author disqualifies those individual calling them "the rabble":

The rabble is fundamentally a group in which the residual of all classes find representatives. And this is what makes it easy to confuse the rabble with the people, which comprehend all the social layers. While the people (…) fights for a really representative system, the rabble cry out for the strong man, the great chief. Because the rabble hate the society from which they are excluded…

Supported by the Marxist theory that elects the proletariat and the bourgeois as the fundamental classes and the only capable of possessing a real class awareness, these intellectuals could not create tools that permitted to comprehend

1- Professor in the Physical Education Course at the State University of Ponta Grossa and PhD of History student at the Federal University of Paraná.
2- Regarding that cf. ADORNO, Theodor. The Cultural Industry. In: COHN, Gabriel. Comunicação e indústria cultural. São Paulo: Editora Nacional, 1977.
3- *Ibid.* p.293.
4- For further understanding of the critics established to the Marxist thought *cf.* CASTORIADIS, Cornelius. **A instituição imaginária da sociedade.** Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1982. THOMPSON, Eduard Paul. **A formação da classe operária.** Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1987.
5- HORKHEIMER, Max & ADORNO, Theodor W. Basic Themes of Sociology. São Paulo: Cultrix, s/d. p. 78-88. To these authors the Popular Mass is defined as the more immediate or primary nexus between the individual and the society, being those unable to present class awareness.
6- ARENDT, Hannah. **O sistema totalitário.** Lisboa. Dom Quixote, 1978. p.164-165.
7- CASTORIADIS, Cornelius. **A instituição imaginária da sociedade.** Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1982.
8- SOARES, Antonio Jorge. **Futebol raça e nacionalidade no Brasil: releitura da história oficial.** Rio de Janeiro, 1998. Tese (Doutorado em Educação Física) Programa de Pós-graduação em Educação Física, Universidade Gama Filho, 1998.
9- DA MATTA, Roberto (org.). **Universo do Futebol.** Rio de Janeiro: Pinakotheke, 1982.p. 22.

how citizens could have adhered to totalitarian regimes or then join around a sports practice, this way acting differently from what the theory had predicted. When facing this problem the solution was to despise. As indicated by Castoriadis, it is the Theory and not the experience of individuals and their groups that defines what a social class is, or what the class awareness should be.

This fact provoked that for a long time the history of the Brazilian football was written by memorialists, mainly sports journalists who did not present any scientific rigor. However, this situation is in a moment of transition, in which it is possible to verify some studies that have contributed substantially to a new academic look on football. Due to temporal limitation, this article will only emphasize the production of two authors, which already exemplify the way the football has been approached nowadays in different areas of knowledge.

FOOTBALL AND HISTORY - THE AFRO-BRAZILIANS IN THE BRAZILIAN FOOTBALL

This book was firstly published in 1947 and its author is the journalist Mario Rodrigues Filho. The preface of the book written by Gilberto Freyre, presents a significant view that certainly helped to validate it to the intellectuality of that moment. Freyre indicates that this study is an invaluable contribution to the understanding of the Brazilian society and culture, in its transition from the predominantly rural phase to the urban one, taking into consideration issues between rationality and irrationality of the human behavior.

Through the ascension of this sport the sublimation of the Brazilian man was made possible, something that in the past could only be achieved through heroic deeds, or extraordinary actions that the army, navy and the revolutions more or less patriotic conceded to the white men, and mainly to the miscigenated or black men.

Football has in the Brazilian society, mostly formed by primitive elements of culture, a very special importance that took a long time to be studied. This sport assumed an expression contrary to the morality that prevailed amongst us. The development of football, not a sport like the others, but a real Brazilian institution, made possible the sublimation of several of those irrational elements of our social and irrational formation (for example, the 'samba' and 'capoeira', elements which are present in the Brazilian game), which enabled the Brazilian football to abandon the original British style and become a dance full of irrational surprises and variations the way it is.

The sublimation of football also helped to recognize and give importance to the black people in the Brazilian culture. "And amongst the more recent means - that is in the last twenty or thirty years - of social ascension of the Afro-Brazilian, 'black', 'mulato, or 'cafuzo' none exceeds, in relevance, the football.

Mario Filho's book became "obligatory reference" to any researcher that wants to carry out a historiographic approach to the theme. This author managed to show how football played a decisive role in the racial democratization of the country and, therefore, in the construction of a more integral nation. For this, he organized his book from three argumentative positions: 1 - segregation and racism; 2- resistance, 3 - social integration.

The originality of Mario Filho's work resulted in a certain conformism and limitation of the work to the historical sources for the comprehension of the Brazilian football at that time, that is, his view was "crystallized" as something official. However, the doctorate thesis developed by Soares (1998), throws light on another view for the events. According to this author, Mario Filho's work presents literary characteristics rather than scientific ones, mainly due to the lack of research and the fact that the author referred to his own memory (as well as some of the footballers at that time) and from this have the possibility of creating a scenery in which he can choose who the heroes (black players) and the villains (urban white elite) will be.

Soare's incisive critic relies on the fact that Mario Filho tries ultimately to use football as an example that demonstrates the end of Brazilian racism. The critics and notes presented by Soares are extremely pertinent and relevant to the study of Brazilian football. Nevertheless, when trying o justify his positions, the author ends up "trapped' by not noticing the importance of Mario Filho's work, not as an official source free of criticism, as some contemporary authors that Soares qualifies as the "new narrators", who ended up by reproducing the author's views, but this book should be seen as an original document, which presents evidence of the feelings and atmosphere of an era.

THE FOOTBALL AND SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF ROBERTO DA MATTA

DaMatta is an anthropologist who approaches themes related to the Brazilian Culture (carnival, rascality, the Brazilian way...).This author approaches the football issue from the idea of *DRAMATIZATION,* as a fundamental part of the ritual. According to DaMatta, without drama there is no rite and the distinctive trace of dramatizing is calling attention to the relations, values or ideologies that otherwise could not be properly isolated from the routines that form the everyday life, that is, ritual and drama would be a determined angle through which a given population tell their history. In this sense, it has nothing to do with discussing how true the facts are, but with realizing how the Brazilians express, introduce and reveal themselves in one of their moments of social freedom.

The author's proposal is in making the analysis relative, escaping from the traditional model in which "any" object studied, which has the society as a parameter, ends up by being reduced and usually keeps a relation of confront with that society. For him, it is a result of this ideology the thesis of the "Football as the people's opium", in the same way that the economy is considered the base of society. In this sense, Brazilian football would be an ideological instrument used by the (thinking) elites as a means of deviating attention of the (irrational) masses from their social problems.

DaMatta, indicates that it is fundamental to visualize football beyond its functional character, only this way it is possible to comprehend the political and social function of this sport, which brings about several social tensions, as he emphasizes: "Once they are problems of our own society it is difficult to notice and discuss them.

When analyzing the existing relation between sport/football and society, there is the possibility of using a filter that permits to visualize the totality and the particularities of a determined context, once the objectives leave the question of function and usefulness of the sport and bet support on the social implication and consequence. Thus, while one of the society's activities, football is the society itself, being expressed through its actors, rules, objects, ideologies, etc.

The methodological proposal expressed by the author for this scale of analysis, was through the comparison of football in different societies. He chose the English (due to the "origin" of football), the American (due to the world economic and political significance) and the Brazilian (his focus of analysis).

Carrying out a semantic analysis between football as a game for the Brazilians and football as sport for the Americans and English, DaMatta indicates that in Brazil football is associated to playing football, which denotes certain link to "games of chance", differently from what occurs in the other nations.

Based on this indication the author shows that in Brazil, football is associated to technique and tactics, physical and psychological strength, but unlikely the Anglo-Saxon society, in Brazil factors such as luck and/or fate are also attributed great importance. One example of that would be the football pools in the Brazilian society.

Besides that, Brazilian football differs from the European for its improvisation and individuality. In this way, the football is in the Brazilian society, a source of individualization and possibility of individual expression, rather than expression of collectivism. It is through this dialectic between individualization and collectivism that the Brazilian football permits to express the conflict present between the impersonal destiny X individual will. To a certain extent this a dilemma of the Brazilian society itself, that the Brazilian football focus and dramatizes, once even showing individual will this sport is ruled by

impersonal laws, presenting unpredictable factors that might give the victory to a team which is considered less prepared to be the winner, that is, there is no way of predicting accurately a direct relation (rational) between the means and the ends.

A significant point and to a certain extent also controversial in this author's thought, is that the football match is a clearly marked moment of the life in society, which permits that everything that is situated by the ritual, be temporally and spatially circumscript. In this sense, the advantage of football is to be able to bring about many fundamental problems and despite being only a game, be also a point of central importance of sports activities for the modern societies.

What can be noticed is that by trying to justify the popularity of football in Brazil, DaMatta used concepts of rite and social drama, in order to treat football as a privileged means to observe a series of significant problems of the Brazilian society, which to a certain extent justifies the popularity of this sport in our country.

METHODOLOGICAL POSSIBILITIES

Due to a question of temporal limit and mainly for the objectives proposed in this study, we limited ourselves to presenting only two authors that have approached in a very distinct way, though both of them with extreme significance the study of football as a socio-cultural phenomenon. Besides these authors, we could highlight Norbert Elias and his followers from Leicester, who are amongst the pioneers to report the intellectual despise with this sport, as well as deal with the historical issue of this sport, as one of the categories of analysis of the civilization process. The Scottish sociologist Richard Giullinaotti, who arrived in Brazil in 2002 through the translation of his book "Socio-cultural and Historical Dimensions of the crowds sport". This work opens perspectives to a series of gaps in the football theme that deserve being studied.

However, none of the author cited provides us with methodological elements that make possible to carry out a more rigorous analysis on the importance of football within a determined society (in this case, the Brazilian society). These theories are excellent starting point although they do not permit to comprehend the essence of the events.

This has been a constant worry of some research groups, focusing on the historical and social analysis of football. Amongst them we highlight the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and more effectively the Federal University of Paraná, and as a result of the discussions carried out by this group that we visualize new methodological possibilities that permit to approach football. That is what Ribeiro indicates:

To affirm the football social and historical character, however, does not mean to ignore its autonomy as a specific field. Its study must keep track of the social dimension and at the same time cannot bury it under a structure, in such a way that does not permit to realize its specific dynamics, which no doubt is not the same as the social classes, the State, the religions, the unions or the political parties one. The method to comprehend the social dimension of football, must originate from a dense ethnographic description, explaining its dynamics in as much detail as possible.

In this sense, one understands that football is an object that can significantly contribute to the methodological renewing of studies developed by the Social and Human Sciences, since as well as other themes it needs to be understood in its relation between what is specific (feeling, irrationality, passion) and the social context in which the facts happened. Studying the feelings either in football or in politics, refer to the necessity of objectivate/rationalize something that is subjective, and there seems to be the neuralgic point of this kind of approach, as it is imperative to the researcher to realize the human impossibility of coping with such a complex phenomenon, for this reason it is necessary to delimit the object without trying to establish a dichotomized relationship between truth and lie, since to do that it would be necessary to understand the reason present in feelings, that is, it would be necessary to take out the "irrationality" and by doing that, one would be referring back to the old traditional approaches that do not make it possible to comprehend the climate experienced by certain social groups.

This apprehension turns us to other kinds of source, in which literature deserves emphasis, either through Brazilian intellectual books and/or journalistic chronicles. What is presented is a primary documentation full of subjectivity either by the emotional involvement or by the author's autonomy, which expresses himself by the possibility of presenting "another reality", however, it is in this paradox that the richness of this kind of analysis is found.

CONCLUSION

In this article the problem of football historical studies was surveyed and from this picture a challenge was proposed by the new approaches that are being currently produced. Thus, only the way the social/human sciences analyze the mass cultural phenomena was presented and our hypothesis, from some innovative authors' point of view was pointed out, once we believe that if the "irrationality" is explored one can perceive the great theoretical mistake of attributing lack of social awareness to the mass phenomena.

The irrationality attributed to the masses, such as the ones around football, is the result of excessive zeal of intellectual for their paradigms, producing with that the scientific and political prejudice to the popular and mass manifestations. The limits of this article and of our own capability to give definite answers to our own challenges, only permit that we point out some indications of these possibilities, once we understand the need for multidisciplinary studies that can help to overcome the traditional prejudices, but if we are not careful and try to analyze the totality of the phenomenon we run the risk of falling into the trap that has been described in this work, that is, carrying out a classical analysis, which can only reveal the appearance, but does not touch the essence. Thus, we hope to have at least managed to denounce and show the necessity of employing new theoretical models.

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FOOTBALL AS AN OBJECT OF STUDY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

ABSTRACT

The present article analyses the classical problem that the historical studies that attempt to analyze football face. From this reality, a challenge to the new approaches being currently produced is proposed. The methodological option was to present the problem of the way the social/human sciences analyze the mass cultural phenomena. After reviewing the methodological proposal of different authors it was possible to point out to the necessity of seeking methodological elements that make the "irrationality" of this theme to be turned into an object of study, which will certainly point out the necessity of multidisciplinary works.

Key words: History of football, Sports Sociology, Mass Sports.

LE FOOTBALL COMME OBJECTIF D'ÉTUDE DES SCIENCES SOCIALES

RÉSUMÉ

Le présent article analyse le problème classique lequel s'affrontent les études historiques qui cherchent analyser le football. À partir de ce cadre, on a cherché établir un défi pour les nouvelles approches qui sont realisées actuellement. L'option méthodologique a été pour problematiser la manière comme les sciences sociales humaines analysent les phénomènes culturels de masse, après la révision de la proposition de differents auteurs a été possible indiquer pour la necessité de chercher les élements méthodologiques qui viabilisent objetiver « l'irrationalité » présente dans ce thème, ce que certaiment envoye pour la necessité de la réalisation de travaux multidisciplinaire.

MOTS CLÉS : Histoire du football, Sociologie du sport, Sport de masse.

FÚTBOL COMO OBJECTO DEL ESTUDIO DE LAS CIENCIAS SOCIALES

RESUMEN

Los análisis del artículo del presente el problema clásico ese los estudios históricos que procuran analizar la cara del balompié. De esta realidad, un desafío a los nuevos acercamientos que son producidos actualmente se propone. La opción metodológica era presente el problema de la manera que las ciencias de social/human analizan los fenómenos culturales totales. Después de repasar la oferta metodológica de diversos autores era posible precisar a la necesidad de buscar los elementos metodológicos que hacen el "irrationality" de este tema que se dará vuelta en un objeto del estudio, que precisará ciertamente la necesidad de trabajos multidisciplinarios.

Palabras claves: Historia del balompié, sociología de los deportes, deportes totales.

O FUTEBOL COMO OBJETO DE ESTUDO DAS CIÊNCIAS SÓCIAIS

RESUMO

O presente artigo analisa o problema clássico com que se defrontam os estudos históricos que buscam analisar o futebol. A partir deste quadro, buscou-se estabelecer um desafio para as novas abordagens que estão sendo produzidas atualmente. A opção metodológica foi a de problematizar a maneira como as ciências sociais/humanas analisam os fenômenos culturais de massa, após a revisão da proposta metodológica de diferentes autores foi possível apontar para a necessidade de buscar elementos metodológicos que possibilitem objetivar a “irracionalidade” presente neste tema, o que certamente remete para a necessidade da realização de trabalhos multidisciplinares.

TERMOS: História do Futebol, Sociologia do Esporte, Esporte de Massa.