

## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis:                   CONTEXTUALIZING THE POLITICS OF “BRAZILIAN”  
SPORT MEGA EVENTS

Victor Brito Lopes, Master of Arts, 2015

Thesis directed by:           Professor David L. Andrews  
Department of Kinesiology

The first two decades of 21<sup>st</sup> century were times of great social, economic and political changes in Brazil where sport mega events (FIFA WC 2014, Rio 2016) played a key role in how the nation portrayed and promoted itself in a global scale. Despite the undeniable importance of Presidents Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff in attempt to present the country as global protagonist with more political power and social advancements, this works is intended to discuss and extended the discussion upon mega events as different ways of repeating old traditions and practices, (radically) contextualizing the role of other players and agents (sport officials, local politicians, sponsors and local media), their biases and interests, in accordance to traditional colonial processes and the dominant neo-liberal paradigm.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE POLITICS OF “BRAZILIAN” SPORT MEGA EVENTS

by

Victor Brito Lopes

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
2015

Advisory Committee:

Dr. David L. Andrews, Chair

Dr. Jay Coakley

Dr. Shannon Jette

©Copyright by  
Victor Brito Lopes  
2015

## **Table Of Contents**

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Rio De Janeiro And Brazil Of Barbara And Lula .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Sport Officials And The 'Política' Of Sports In Brazil.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>“Brazilian” Sport Mega Events, Neoliberal Agenda And Lula’s Populist Rhetoric .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Colonial Traditions And Local Politics: Sport Mega Events "Para Inglês Ver" .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Media And Sport Mega Events: .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>The Local Monopoly Of Globo Network And Its Political Roots.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Reflections Upon The Age Sport Mega Events In Brazil - Failed Or Successful Project?.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>63</b>

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### **Politics and/within Mega Events in Brazil**

The purpose of this thesis is to identify and discuss the significant relationship between (governmental, economic and social) politics in Brazil during the first two decades of the 21st century, and the sport mega events hosted in the country, especially the 2014 FIFA World Cup and Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

This particular period is marked by the rise and consolidation of the Workers Party (PT) represented by the President Lula da Silva (2003-2010) and his successor, President Dilma Roussef (2011-2018), with a dubious political agenda, in line with both the socialist roots of the party's foundation, in favor of social progress, as well as the continuation and extension of policies with clear neo-liberal bias that favored the advancement of a market-driven society, as regularly endorsed by the President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1994-2002).

Sport mega events in Brazil provide an opportunity to see this dual relationship, sometimes contradictory, between government practices that supposedly (in public discourses) benefit all, and the political and economic gains generated by/for specific groups and (personal) projects to obtain (or simply maintain) power in a conflict between public and private interests.

Therefore, this paper aims to go beyond the analysis of a single political party (PT) or its leaders (Lula / Roussef) while ruling the nation, and aims to identify examples of the main public (government) and private (organizations / corporations) groups,

responsible for and interested in the hosting of mega events in Brazil. These will be contextualized at different scales, identifying practices and actions that may portray political interests or particular biases that underlie and characterize Brazil in recent years. Traditionally, the discussion of mega events in Brazil has focused on the central figure of President Lula da Silva (Athaide 2011, Castelhana Filho, 2009, Resende 2010, Boudens 2007, Almeida & Marchi Junior 2014) who, despite being a central figure, is not the only relevant actor that explicates the relationship between politics and the sport mega events in Brazil. As an ultimate goal, this thesis seeks to analyze the context around President Lula, extending the research to other actors/agents in search of conquest (or maintenance) of political / economic power, and how they (re)produce (A) local and global paradigms such as neoliberalism and its roots and manifestations in Brazilian society. In combination with the (re)production of neoliberal ideology, the (B) submission to foreign interests expressed and exemplified by the importance of nature/natural resources and beauty which, in times of mediated and spectacularized sport mega-events, provide both the neoliberal manifestations as well as ancient (exploratory) practices of Brazil in colony times manifested in new ways.

Therefore, this thesis seeks to recognize that in addition to the actions and political agenda/strategy of Presidents Lula and Rousseff - (chapters I and IV), the role of sports organizations and their respective officials/managers (chapter III) combined with local politicians at the federal, state and municipal levels, and the conflict of public versus private interests expressed by the use of positions of power for own political/personal interests and appropriation of public images/identities by corporations (chapter V) . In the end, and not least important, the role of local media in the context of the Brazilian

political formations, and narratives related to the organization of such events that reinforce the (Brazilian) neoliberal agenda (chapter VI). Ultimately, this work sets the current stage of this project of power dispute that has been appropriated by different groups and individuals, to be concluded in the year 2016 after the conclusion of the Olympic Games.

Understand and contextualize different agents and actors within a single perspective (Sport Mega Events) requires an interdisciplinary approach to be put into practice in order to provide a broader understanding of the power bargaining processes, and public and private interests is presented. For this, the use of articulation / radical contextualization under (Physical) Cultural Studies intellectual paradigm was employed.

## **METHODS - Interpretative Theory/Method:**

### **Radical Contextualism of “Brazilian” Sport Mega Events**

As Stuart Hall has explained, to articulate can mean '*utter, speak forth*', as well as '*make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions*' (1996, p. 142). Most important, though, was Hall's statement that:

'the theory of articulation asks how an ideology discovers its subjects rather than how the subject thinks the necessary and inevitable thoughts which belong to it; it enables us to think how an ideology empowers people, enabling them to begin to make some sense or intelligibility of their historical situation, without reducing those forms of intelligibility to their socio-economic or class location or social position.' (p.142)

Using articulation as a research method involves more than simply identifying linkages and formations. It also identifies how formations are related (or not) one

another, and brings context and its importance as focal point to the discussion, rather than merely situating a phenomenon in context (Slack, 1996). In other words, this thesis is not simply an attempt to describe sport mega events in Brazil within a particular context, but to bring to the discussion relevant social, political and economic formations related, expressed and linked together with and by sport mega events to compose a first and introductory piece of what are “Brazilian” Sport Mega Events, primarily, but not exclusively during the first two decades of the 21st century when sport mega events were key in contemporary Brazilian conjuncture.

Appropriating (Physical) Cultural Studies (PCS) and its commitment to interdisciplinarity allows for a broader understanding and avoids anticipated conclusions or interpretations that ignore the wider context of Brazilian society offering epistemologies committed to present an analysis covering different specificities of events (empirically) portrayed. Important to note, however, is that the success of this attempt to articulate “Brazilian” Mega Events will be through 'radically contextualizing' them, and this must rely on how to identify, build (or break) multi-scale linkages to 'form' its conjuncture, yet avoiding the pitfalls of simply (re)producing common discourses and practices, as Grossberg (2006) emphasized:

"Cultural studies is a project not only to construct a political history of the present, but to do so in a particular way, a radically contextualist way, in order to avoid reproducing the very sorts of universalisms (and essentialisms) that all too often characterize the dominant practices of knowledge production, and that have contributed (perhaps unintentionally) to making the very relations of domination, inequality and suffering that cultural studies desires to change. Cultural studies seeks to embrace complexity and contingency, and to



avoid the many faces and forms of reductionism."  
(p.2)

It is not uncommon seeing Brazil reduced to stereotypes considered immutable, (some canonized), as part of national identity. Stereotypes focus primarily on land/home of football, samba, carnival; creative and happy people full of trickery and improvisation of those who are racially miscegenated and (supposedly) proud of this. It is also not rare (the temptation) to appropriate exclusively hegemonic paradigms such as globalization and neoliberalism, to portray contemporary social formations, without the commitment to local specificities that explain how those paradigms are integrated and experienced in Brazil.

While assuming a position advocating in favor of Cultural Studies, and recognizing what would be a post-identity condition as necessarily "*relational and contextual*" granting to language (reaching up to the vernacular sense) as pivotal to identity construction, Andrews (2007) presents in Hall (1990) words to the effect of the following:

"instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact . . . we should think, instead, of identity as a 'production,' which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation" (Hall, 1990a, p. 222)

After Rio de Janeiro was chosen to host the Olympic Games, interest in the city/nation grew, and this is noted by the frequent number of works intended to analyze the combination of the sport mega events, either produced by local or non-Brazilian journalists, scholars or researchers, all interested in understanding and describing what is occurring in Brazil, leading to a new level of global (self-)promotion at the end of the first decade of the 21st century.

There is tendency to analyze, in an isolated manner, two commonly addressed: (1) the foundations that led Brazil to this prominent political and economic position; and (2) the legacy of mega-events (with their economic impact), or simply put: what led Brazil to host the sport mega-events, and what may happen afterwards, being that Brazil is a developing nation with many socio-structural challenges that could take priority over any sport mega event. More precisely, there are many works focused on identifying a deeper relationship between President Lula / Dilma policies expressed by their local political strategy in relation to the recent sport mega events: Rio 2007, FIFA WC 2014, and Rio 2016.

Although many of these works may have good quality, they usually lack the desired (if not required) self-reflective dimension that is called for in (physical) culture studies, which this thesis, produced by a Brazilian, intends to offer to PCS as intellectual project. Additionally, PCS has been criticized as being "*northern hemisphere-centered*" (Grossberg, 1997), and this thesis provides an opportunity to expand the boundaries of its ontological and epistemological possibilities.

With this in mind, this study of "Brazilian" Sport Mega Events attempts to differentiate itself by bringing into central focus the context formed by a complex framework constituted by many articulations seen through and by the agents/actors in relation to power disputes and efforts to maintain power.

The challenge, then, it is not simply combine local concepts with global paradigms to explicate a context, but to understand how the Brazilian Sport Mega Events allow broader social, political and economic interpretations at different scales

(local and global) in light of the events of the 21st century that motivate change. As Andrews (2013) explains:

*“PCS is concerned with identifying, interpreting, and intervening into the ways physical cultural structures and institutions, discourses and representations, and/or practices and embodiments, are linked to broader social, economic, political, and technological formations. By contextualizing physical culture in this way, PCS looks to explicate how active bodies become organized, represented, and experienced in mobilizing, or at times immobilizing, the conjunctural inflections and operations of power within a society. The aim of PCS is thus to generate and circulate the type of knowledge that would enable individuals and groups to discern, challenge, and potentially transform existing power structures and relations as they are manifest within, and experienced through, the complex field of physical culture.” (p.3)*

As stated, it is necessary to avoid the temptation of simply taking possession of reductionist "stereotypes", as those identified with Brazilian national identities, despite recognizing the importance they may have as a starting point (eventually to be disrupted) to demonstrate the potential importance of Physical Culture in Brazil, since (active) bodies and their representations are at the heart of what is "*being Brazilian.*"

The football pioneered and organized by the English has turned into the "mulato" style as defined by Freyre (1938) after Brazilians started to play as if they were dancing, creating a unique fashion of performing in the game. A style of play which, according to Freyre, derived from samba and capoeira, the first being a dance style and the second being a "martial art" played with music and rhythmic movements, like dueling dancers. Both of these cultural practices are genuinely Brazilian, despite the vast influence of African immigration during the times of slavery (Maranhão, 2007). The opportunity

posed here, then, is how the Brazilian reality - political, economic and social, can be understood in its local circumstances.

### **'Articulating' theory and method**

As already stated, what is ideally desired, therefore, is the use of PCS/radical contextualism to formulate (i.e. articulate) an interpretative and contextual analysis of “Brazilian” Sport Mega Events, and eventually, return to PCS its contribution in a reciprocal relationship. In order to connect PCS to “Brazilian” Sport Mega Events, articulation is employed both as a theory and method as noted by Slack (1996):

*"theoretically, articulation can be understood as a way of characterizing social formation without falling in the twin traps of reductionism and essentialism ... On the one hand, articulation suggests the methodological framework for understanding what a cultural study does. On the other hand, it provides strategies for undertaking cultural study, the way of 'contextualizing' the object of one's analysis' (p.113)*

Andrews (2002) points out that it is not possible to separate method and theory. Theory and method share characteristics already intrinsically associated with Cultural Studies *'to lie in its interdisciplinarity, anti-formalism, and flexibility - Particularly in its sensitivity to changing economic, political, and social conditions.'* (King, 2005, p. 21)

In an effort to delineate (physical) cultural studies, Andrews (2002), Grossberg (1997), King (2005), and Slack (1996), have defended this intellectual project recognizing the attempt of many who appropriate it without performing the fundamental precepts of what is understood as cultural studies. The authors advocate the need to

delimit and identify fundamental principles to recognize a proper practice/application of this intellectual project.

Slack (1996) highlights the need to be committed to different levels of political discussion about the investigated object and to avoid reductionism and, oversimplified conclusion(s) that do not consider the breadth of possibilities to be interpreted. As Slack assesses articulation as both theory and method, she emphasizes the importance of not appropriating it rigidly, as an previously conceptualized process, but as a continuous one.

Specifically in regards to theory in (physical) cultural studies, Slack (1996) provides an insightful understanding of it, reinforcing the vision of its the practice, while describing it as a:

*"'detour' to help ground our engagement with what newly confronts us and to let that engagement provide the ground for retheorizing....Successful theorizing is not measured by exact theoretical fit but by the ability to work with our always inadequate theories to help us move understanding 'a little further on down the road' " (p.114)*

Additionally, Slack described method as being a process of literally articulating, (re)working assemblages, adapting or developing linkages that will build research. It is important to note that it as a never ending process, meaning that it is *'a complex, unfinished phenomenon that has emerged and continues to emerge genealogically'* (p.115)

When discussing sports studies more specifically, King (2005) emphasizes the importance of a bidirectional relation between sports and society when articulation is applied to (physical) cultural studies, strengthening Hall's *'unity in difference'*, which in

Andrew's (2002) words can be "*characterized by multiple theoretical influences, research methods, and sites of analysis.*" (p.111)

Finding 'unity in difference' among diverse actors and agents is the central objective of this work which aims ultimately to '*radically contextualize*' Brazilian Sport Mega Events on several possibilities, being this a major challenge. It is not to overestimate what is wanted, nor to underestimate the network of complexities to be regarded. Finding unity without being reductionist, in a country with continental dimensions combined with social and cultural diversity, is a challenging task. Fundamentally, local features should be regarded in conjunction with aspects resulting or derived from global paradigms, so another relevant part of this study is to investigate what "Brazilian" expressions of sport mega-events may have in common with similar events in other countries and how these mega-events can be differentiated by their local specificities, even as they are global practices. In order to achieve this goal, neoliberalism will be transversely analyzed across all sections where empirical examples will be presented.

Therefore, in order to achieve the goal of "*discuss Brazilian local specificities, it's mandatory to bring*' Brazilian literature into the discussion. At first, it's important to recognize that there is a vast Brazilian literature that seeks to understand physical activity and, more specifically, sports in Brazil, based upon interpretations of individuals as they relate to one another and to the space in which they live, using both sociology and anthropology as basis for analysis. Discourse analysis, semiotics and ethnographies can be commonly noted, ranging from the already mentioned football mulatto (Freyre, 1938), whose pioneering spirit led to the classic "O negro no futebol

brasileiro" - The black in the Brazilian football (Rodrigues, 2003), seen as romanticizing and celebrating the racial diversity acceptance myth within football (and society).

While using a sociology of sport approach, de Souza & Marchi Junior (2010) identified its local development in three possibilities: "(1) *via sociology of football or, in other words, socio-anthropological studies of football*; (2) *via critical theory of sport, advocated by authors of Physical Education in 1980*; (3) *via the history of sports practices.* " (p.54)

More recently, the body and mythology on sports heroes and celebrities have become popular issues to discuss in academia. Helal used semiotics and discourse analysis (1999,2001a,2001b,2003) mainly in advertising and traditional media, to investigate the mythology of heroes in football, with Zico, portrayed as the "classic hero," Romario, the 'malandro' (2012a), and more recently, Neymar as a hero still under construction (2012b). Despite the predominance of focused work for football, the author also developed studies concerning the interpretation of "Olympians", where the image of the classic hero is used more frequently (2012c). When it comes exclusively to Olympic Games, however, there is a vast literature by Rubio, who has devoted much of her career to the historical and interpretative analysis of the myth of "*Brazilian Olympic heroes*".(2001; 2004; 2006; 2007)

Indeed, there are many studies that seek interpretations that go beyond sport, followed by sport practice in leisure time, always in the Brazilian context. There is no intention, however, to delve into these works that were briefly mentioned in previous paragraphs, because the main issue is not exactly what they have, but what they all somehow fail to present at least in clear and incisive way, exploring all its possibilities.

The Brazilian literature oriented in the practice of sports studies is rich indeed, but it lacks studies that value interdisciplinarity, with analyses at different levels and scales (from individual to structures) where power relations must be absolutely considered, and most importantly, by putting politics as a transversal (if not central) theme throughout the work. In addition, it's rare to find works intended to develop critical analysis in which hegemonic beliefs are questioned.

Recognizing the importance of these characteristics, there is a great opportunity for appropriating what Grossberg defines as "radical contextualism", which *"is embodied in the concept of articulation. Articulations names both the basic processes of the production of reality, of the production of contexts and power (i.e., determination or effectivity), and the analytic practice of cultural studies."* (p.261)

Still according to Grossberg (1997), what makes Cultural Studies absolutely unique among other projects is that:

*"only cultural studies ... enact the particular relationship between context, knowledge, and power The features, ..., are constitutive of the practice of cultural studies are que it is disciplined; contextual radically (with three corollaries: it is anti-reductionist ; its objects are discursive alliances; its method is articulation); theoretical, political, interdisciplinary, and self-reflective (about its theoretical, political, cultural, and institutional sites) ".* (p.253)

These 'sites' are the overarching themes to be articulated/radically contextualized in this study, reflecting how power relations are established and are related to social, cultural and economic factors over time in Brazilian society. After all, could someone interpret the portrayal of Lula (and Dilma) as exclusively responsible for political moves that made possible sport mega-events in Brazil as a reductionist approach? What other



factors must be considered when going beyond the discussion of the host cities' infrastructure legacy? What interpretations could be made of Nike's ad in the newspaper's front page on the following day after the winning bid?

This thesis does not simply aim to address these questions, but to extend the discussion across many scales and planes, with its similarities and contradictions embedded on them, bringing context to the discussion. Needed to state the importance to recognize the challenge, complexity and difficulty to develop work fitting in (physical) cultural studies paradigm. Therefore, it is recognized beforehand that this study is fundamentally an elaborated attempt of articulation / radical contextualization of "Brazilian" Sport Mega Events in the first two decades of 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, as Grossberg (2010) interestingly defined:

"Cultural studies is, I believe, committed to telling us things we don't already know; it seeks to surprise its producer; is interlocutors; its audiences; and its constituencies, and in that way, by offering better descriptions and accounts-again, accounts that do not shy away from complexity, contingency, and contestation-it seeks to open up new possibilities." (p.51)

Grossberg words summarize one of the goals of this work. Achieving partially or fully one or more of these "cultural studies commitments" would demonstrate an adequate path to be followed continuously in the quest of a greater academic contribution for Physical Cultural Studies as intellectual project.

## CHAPTER II

### Rio de Janeiro and Brazil of Barbara and Lula

On October 3rd, 2009, a day after Rio de Janeiro was selected to host the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the traditional local newspaper, *O Globo* (2009), featured on its front page a picture of approximately 30,000 people celebrating at Copacabana beach the unprecedented, and for many, unlikely bid win. In spite of the festive spirit, the headline already contained a questioning tone: *"2016, the year that has already begun. Now only 7 (years) to go and: Make one subway station per year; Duplicate the hotel vacancies capacity; Depoluate the bay and lagoons of Barra; Build and renovate 33 sports venues. "* (p.1). At the bottom of the same page occupying about 20%, a drawing as if done in freehand, with a single stroke, forming two urban landmarks of the city: Sugarloaf and the statue of Christ the Redeemer, which drawing trace ends in "just do it", sided by the Nike logo.

The newspaper's front page is emblematic, presenting in such a small space so many possibilities of interpretation of the same event, where it aims to the future with a vision of a challenging present. It was not simply the Olympic Games, though. In 2007, the same year when the city of Rio de Janeiro hosted the Pan American Games, Brazil was confirmed as host of the 2014 FIFA World Cup, creating a rare occasion in recent history where the two largest and most popular sporting events are hosted in the same country. Only Mexico and the United States experienced such situation, respectively in 1968/1970 and 1994/1996. But the size and scope of the events in Mexico were considerably smaller than they are today, and in the United States there was no need for major structural developments and improvements as there has been in Brazil.

The year of 2009 seemed to be a singular opportunity for the choice of Brazil. The first FIFA World Cup on the African continent was scheduled for 2010 with promises of great social transformations through sport (mega event) in South Africa, a nation also marked by severe social disparities. Additionally, while the United States and European nations were still suffering the serious consequences of the major global financial crisis of 2008, which President Lula defined as a *marolinha* (small wave), the Brazilian economy was growing, driven by a (new) local middle class boosted by a government program that was intended to maintain economic stability and social inclusion policies.

This was the scenario in which Lula went to Copenhagen to defend the candidacy of Rio de Janeiro as the Olympic host city in 2016, personifying the image of a country seeking recognition and political affirmation, supported by his own personal trajectory as a former union leader with poor childhood, reaching decades later a new and unimagined level of prominence. In his speech, Lula's words were carefully chosen to confirm such interpretations about the nation's imagery and its of regional and global significance, and to celebrate sport, the Games, and characteristics commonly associated with what it means to be a "*Brazilian*." This can be seen in the following selection from his speech:

*"With great pride, I represent here the hopes and dreams of more than 190 million Brazilians. ... We are a passionate people for sports, passionate about life. Looking at the five rings of the Olympic symbol, I see on them, my country. One Brazil of men and women from all continents: Americans, Europeans, Africans, Asians, all proud of their origins and more proud to feel Brazilian. Not only are we a mixed people, but a people that loves to be mixed. This is what makes our identity. ..."*

*Among the ten largest economies in the world, Brazil is the only country that has not hosted the Olympic and Paralympic Games. ... For the others it will be just another Olympics. For us, it will be a unique opportunity. It will increase the self-esteem of Brazilians, will consolidate recent achievements, stimulate new advances. This candidacy is not only ours. It is also of South America, a continent with almost 400 million men and women and about 180 million young people. A continent that, as we saw, never hosted the Olympic Games. It's time to correct that imbalance.(...) We have taken all possible guarantees for (hosting) the Games. We approved significant and comprehensive financing aware of the legacy that the Games will leave for Rio de Janeiro. My friends, Brazil is going through an excellent moment. We worked hard in recent decades. We have an organized and thriving economy, which faced smoothly the crisis that still plagues so many nations. We live in a climate of freedom and democracy. In recent years, 30 million Brazilians came out of poverty and 21 million have joined the new middle class. Overcoming difficulties is what marks the recent history of Brazil and the trajectory of millions of Brazilians. I have just attended the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh, which designed by consensus, a new world economic map. This map recognizes the importance of emerging countries such as Brazil on the world stage and especially in overcoming the global crisis. I am proud, as a Brazilian, to have participated in this process and to see Brazil as part of the solution. The partnership that Rio's bid proposes to the Olympic Family takes into account this new scenario in which our country has earned its place. The gates of Brazil are open to the biggest party of Humanity: the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio, one of the most beautiful and welcoming cities in the world. We need the support and vision of future from you, ladies and gentlemen. Rio is ready. Those who give us this chance will not regret it. Be assured: the Olympic Games in Rio will be as unforgettable as it will be full of the passion, joy and creativity of the Brazilian people. Thank you." (Da Silva, 2009)*

Immediately after President Lula's speech, a video was played simulating Rio already in the year of 2016 where athletes from all over the world arrive, enchanted by the beauty of the city and the receptivity of the natives. One young woman standing by the feet of the Christ the Redeemer statue is responsible for welcoming everyone, representing Brazilians (athletes). She was Barbara Leoncio, a track and field athlete, about to turn 18 while in Copenhagen, two years before winning first place in the 200 meter sprint event at the junior world championship.

Barbara was used extensively in Rio's presentation. She was also included in another video showing her day-to-day athletic and student life, as well as being put constantly on stage sided by Lula and Brazilian sport legend, Pelé, creating a possible link between a glorious sporting past (Pelé), a vibrant and socially inclusive present, and a promising future represented by Barbara.

Like President Lula's words, the choice for Barbara was also carefully made. As a resident of Curicica, a very poor neighborhood less than 10 kilometers from Rio's Olympic Village and Park, she experienced severe physical limitations and malnutrition as a child due to a lack of adequate resources. At eight, she had a contact with the "social project" created by physical education professor, Paulo Servo, a resident of the same neighborhood and retired teacher of the local public school. Interested in offering track and field classes to local students, Paulo personally:

*". . . painted lanes on the little public square, and made it as a track, put sand in the back of the school, creating a sandbox for (long and triple) jump practices. It's improvisation. It's Track and Field ... Last year, he was doing all this alone ... The project drew attention of the sporting apparel*

*organization. Footwear is no longer a problem and the NGO provides food." (Jornal Nacional, 2007)*

This is a passage extracted from national TV news with the largest audience in Brazil. Barbara was the main character in a redemption story grounded in the individual merits of her talent and athletic quest, and Paulo, with his initiative to build something relevant completely alone, won recognition and financial aid/investment after he was featured on prime time. Barbara can be seen not just as the face of Rio, but as the country's idealized embodiment as it hosts the Olympic Games: the social upward mobility of the athlete, and the country's (geo)political relevance, both mixed and leveraged by sport and ideologies associated with its practice and major events organization.

Similarly, as soon as the IOC president at that date, Jacques Rogge, announced Rio de Janeiro as the host city for the Olympics in 2016, Barbara, her hometown and country, effectively became the center of everyone's attention. If sponsors saw in Barbara a great new investment opportunity, turning her life into a new reality of abundant resources, the same may be inferred about the global interest in this emerging nation. Growing interest in the country has resulted in a considerable number of journalistic and academic publications that sought to understand what was happening in the global puzzle of nations, precisely at a time when the traditional great powers (USA and Europe) were still struggling to recover from a major economic crisis. Weeks after the choice of Rio de Janeiro as host for the 2016 Olympic Games, the *Economist* magazine coincidentally published an iconic edition whose cover featured the image of Christ the Redeemer lifted, flying as rocket, and the headline, "*Brazil Takes Off*", publicly reiterating the momentum experienced by the country. Despite the

proximity of dates, curiously, the magazine's content made no direct mention of the Olympics (*The Economist*, 2009)

### ***From a promising future to a challenging present***

*"Brazil is the country of the future and will  
always be"* - Popular quote by unknown author

The transition from the first to the second decade of the 21st century was remarkable for Brazil and seemed to confirm that the *"sleeping giant"* had emerged, and the city of Rio de Janeiro was a major representation of this new reality. Encouraged by that particular momentum, a global icon of consumer culture, the whiskey brand Johnnie Walker launched in 2011 an advertising campaign in which, apparently, an earthquake hit the city of Rio, attracting the concern of all inhabitants. Stones began to roll off a large mountain, which turned out to be the iconic Sugar Loaf. While the film continues, it shows that Sugar Loaf was revealed to be actually the great Brazilian "sleeping giant" made by rocks, which had finally awakened, standing up, to start walking. In the end, the campaign closes with the famous brand slogan "keep walking", Brazil.<sup>1</sup>

Reaching the second decade of this new century, however, emerging nations move from euphoria to suspicion. For Brazil, the life of Barbara Leoncio and the reality of the country seem to remain intertwined. After all, she no longer has the same prestige while the nation experiences a great moment of mistrust. Due to several injuries and accusations of possible performance enhancing substance use, her success on the track and her sponsorship deals are things of the past. She currently

---

<sup>1</sup> Advertisement can be accessed at: [https://youtu.be/Onp\\_fQ5awSk](https://youtu.be/Onp_fQ5awSk)

<sup>2</sup> Definition by online Oxford dictionaries

<sup>3</sup> <http://esportes.estadao.com.br/noticias/futebol.copa-no-brasil-batera-todos-os-records-financeiros-da->

has little chance of competing in Rio 2016 (Extra online, 2012). For the country, at a time when Lula had left the command in the hands of his successor, Dilma Rousseff, Brazil is again the main story in the *Economist* magazine, which revisited a version of its past cover with the same Christ the Redeemer in flight, but in free fall, without power to rise. Their article raised doubts about Brazil's chances to reach predicted levels of achievement, especially in light of the June 2013 demonstrations of popular discontent (The Economist, 2013).

The first protest demonstrations occurred in the city of São Paulo. They were sparked by an increase in public transportation fares, but as they spread to other cities, there were a variety of social and political issues that motivated people to go to the streets (Assad Filho, 2013). Among the main targets of dissatisfaction were the FIFA 2014 World Cup and the Confederations Cup, which was to be a test event for the World Cup. For the government to invest in these two sport events rather than providing needed social services served as fuel for pervasive street demonstrations. Therefore, what was supposed to be a cause for celebration and resulting legacies became a source of frustration, even for the people notoriously passionate for football and for hosting its most important event –as president Rousseff constantly proclaimed, "*The Cup of Cups*" was to be in Brazil.

Indeed, the 2013 protests were a marked a turning point in contemporary Brazilian society. Popular feelings changed from hope to distrust and dissatisfaction that resulted in a tight presidential election dispute in of 2014. Rousseff was re-elected by a narrow margin, and her second term has been marked by political instability, economic recession, and constant threats of impeachment. Ironically, all these have



come at a time preceding the Olympic Games, which had been described as transformational for Rio de Janeiro and Brazil, bringing both the city and the nation to new levels of acclaim and prosperity. As Brazil sought affirmation as a global power, sport was constantly presented as both a problem and solution to the issues that impact the lives of Brazilians. The same football that enchants and elicits pride in the country globally and is used as a symbol of national identity is also criticized as an instrument of alienation and as a source of major problems. And the 2014 FIFA World Cup became a symbolic representation of both pride and problems.

This brief description of events from 2009 through the middle of the following decade is merely introductory, but it provides an insight into the complexity of political, economic, and social structures within this short term. Having them simply as starting point, the ultimate goal of this study is to *articulate* on the recent (trans)formations in a society that attracted global attention recently, mainly due to sport mega events.

### CHAPTER III

## Sport Officials and the 'Política' of Sports in Brazil

*"Brazil will not get to the Olympics to win half a dozen of insignificant medals. Each town in the interior of the country, starting next year, must become an Olympic city and the kids start practicing sport. In every favela in Rio de Janeiro ... that boy who likes to play beating the other, let's bring him to boxing" (LULA da Silva, 2009)*

In the English language, *politics* and *policy* are words with different meanings yet they are closely related to one another. Politics is associated with principles or 'a set of ideas or a plan for action followed by a business, a government, a political party, or a group of people' whereas policy is related more directly to the action of government and the power practices of/among individuals or groups.<sup>2</sup> In the Portuguese language, however, there is just one single word for both--'política'—as if 'policy' and 'politics' are one and the same in all circumstances. In fact, hosting mega events was indeed part of president Lula's 'política' for Brazil. As will be further discussed, he used sport mega-events to promote an ideology and support his practices of administering power and meeting the (economic) interests of many groups, allies and individuals. Although President Lula played an undeniable leadership role in bringing these events to Brazil and promising that they would be financially supported, it's necessary to acknowledge that these 'projects' were not completely under his control. In fact, many other factors were influential in turning the sport mega-events into reality. This section is intended to analyze the 'política' of sports in Brazil where mega-events have played a key role during the first two decades of 21st century.

---

<sup>2</sup> Definition by online Oxford dictionaries

Before discussing the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games , it is worth noting that Brazil had hosted two sporting events in the past. In 1950, while Brazil was in an early stage of development, the country hosted the FIFA World Cup for men, and in 1963, the Pan American Games were hosted in the city of São Paulo. Despite the historical significance of these events, it is not possible to classify them as "mega", be it by their impact and size, or due to lack of globalization features that took sports into a large scale mediated/promotional activity. Socio-political characteristics surrounding those events were also different than current sport mega-events.

Throughout 20th century, Brazil experienced an agrarian/oligarchic regime based on exportation. This period, from 1898-1930 was identified as 'Política do Café com Leite'-- Coffee and Milk Politics-- in which the presidency of Brazil was alternated between the governors of the two states producing these goods (São Paulo, for coffee and Minas Gerais, for milk). The regime was fully oriented to be aligned with the economic interest of foreign importers.

According to Bresser Pereira (2015), it was only after 1930 with the government of Getulio Vargas, that a "Capitalist Revolution occurs.' He explains that it was only during the period from 1930 to 1980 that *'these people become a nation, create a Sovereign State, dominate a territory and carry out its industrial revolution'* (p.10). Under this perspective and based on an economic bias, the author provides a brief historical background:

*"In Brazil, where economic development was late, during the Empire (1822-1889) and the First Republic (1889-1930) the social formation remains oligarchic, patriarchal, but practicing economic liberalism in relation to the exterior. From 1930, helped by the crisis that shook the rich world and*

*its imperialism towards the south, the country becomes developmentalist ... Between 1930 and 1980, the average growth per capita rate is high: 4% ... the democratic and developmental government established in 1985 fails to overcome the economic crisis and the country is still characterized by high inflation and economic stagnation. This failure makes room for, in the early 1990s, Brazil ... undergoes to the North and return to economic liberalism, now called neoliberalism. (p.133)*

The turn to neoliberalism occurred during the presidency of President Fernando Collor de Mello, the first president elected by direct vote after 21 years of military dictatorship. He defeated the former union leader, Lula. Coming from the Northeast and a traditional family that owned a local media conglomerate, Collor de Mello's victory represented the start of new/modern. He was a youthful 40 years old when elected. On several occasions, the press media published photos of him practicing sports/physical activities, and his campaign slogan, the "*maharajas hunter*," was connected with his promise to end the privileges of those who only sought to use state and public properties for their private interests. The "new" or neo, according to Bresser Pereira, referred to the return of economic liberalism, this time in the form of opening the internal market, which aligned Brazil with global/foreign interests and led to increased national deindustrialization. It was during this new political phase that President Collor de Mello took it upon himself to have a Brazilian city host a sport mega-event. In the early 1990s, 'Brasilia 2000' bid was created primarily by Collor de Mello who proposed a bid for the 2000 Olympic Games to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Brasilia, the federal capital, and the country's 500th anniversary since the arrival of the Portuguese colonizers. Interestingly, the bid proposal did not have the support of the Brazilian

Olympic Committee, which prevented participation in the selection process according to IOC criteria. Other attempts for Brazil to host the 2004 and 2012 Olympic Games have also occurred without success (Rubio,2010).

Despite the clear importance of President Lula as guarantor of the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games , it is critical to understand the political games played within sports organizations, specifically by FIFA and the IOC, and how they relate to the '*política*' and local politicians. For Rio 2016, there is Carlos Nuzman, president of Brazilian Olympic Committee (BOC), playing a role of mediation and representation within the IOC structure as a Brazilian representative, leading the selection process and working internally among IOC selectors to obtain the votes needed to secure Rio as the 2016 host. when explaining the success of the 2016 bid, Nuzman highlighted the importance of his relationship with the then IOC president, Juan Antonio Samaranch and his role as articulator of Brazil's initial candidacy:

*'President Samaranch invited me to lunch in Switzerland years ago and told me, "If you want to organize the Olympics, make the Pan American Games in 2007 and then the Olympic Games in 2016 ... The bid for the 2004 Olympics was political and tragic. I am glad I was not in charge of it. Due to this bad campaign, we didn't try the 2008 Games. We went back to try for 2012 but sometimes you come to lose as a matter of strategy. We wanted to send a message:... that we were organizing a PanAm with Olympic level and we would return in 2016. This campaign was necessary to say that we were there. (Nuzman, Carlos Arthur in Cavalcanti, 2009)*

The political game within sports organizations is extremely relevant and should never be disregarded, because despite public figures trying to promote the idea that these two worlds are different and independent, it's not possible to separate them. This

is especially the case in Brazil where many sport officials and (former) athletes are elected to public office after achieving fame in sports, or they are traditional politicians who develop parallel activities as directors or supporters of football teams or NGOs that promote sports.

Within this context, the year of 2007 was a milestone, because it created the foundation for subsequent bids to host sport mega-events. Brazil hosted the Pan American Games from 13 to 29 of July, 2007, earning the credentials needed to launch a bid to host the 2016 Olympics. Months later on October 30th, 2007, FIFA chose Brazil to host the 2014 Men's Football World Cup. The choice of Brazil was made prior to staging the Pan American Games, and was a result of other factors.

In 2000, FIFA decided on a continent rotation system to host the World Cup, and 2014 was the one dedicated exclusively to South America. In a 2003 meeting of national federations from South America, the delegates decided to support Brazil, promoting the country as the single candidate thanks to political alliances formed by Ricardo Teixeira, the then president of the Brazilian Football Confederation. This guaranteed that no competing candidate would submit a bid. Selecting Brazil as host was also strategic for Joseph Blatter, the president of FIFA, because he viewed Teixeira as a potential opponent in future FIFA elections. Blatter knew that Teixeira came from a country with a great tradition in football and strong ties with his former father-in-law, Jean Havelange, who preceded Blatter as FIFA president for 24 years. In order to diminish Teixeira's political capital during bid selection process, Blatter tried to create opponents for Brazil. For example, Colombia presented its bid on the last possible day.

But Columbia withdrew months later, and Brazil was confirmed as the only candidate (Chade, 2014).

Brazil's victory was announced in Zurich at an event where Teixeira led the Brazilian delegation. He was accompanied by dozens of state governors with potential vested interests in the possibility of hosting World Cup games, and some renowned Brazilian former players, such as Romario. One day after the confirmation of Brazil as host for the FIFA World Cup, the newspaper O Globo, published headlines that were similar in tone with future headlines related to Rio's selection as host of the 2016 Olympic Games: *"The Cup is ours. Now only missing airports, highways, trains, metros. And Pelé "*. (O Globo, 2007). Pelé, in fact, was not in Zurich. The ambassador of Brazil's candidacy was Romário, who accompanied Ricardo Teixeira, Lula and many Brazilian politicians. He publicly declared support for hosting the World Cup, justifying his position with the following statement:

*"I represent a country with 180 million people. These people are anxious, impatient, nervous and waiting for a positive response. Defending Brazil, no matter in what the situation, is a great responsibility. That's what happens here. I do not see difference to be here or as player in the national team. It's like I'm in the field with Brazil's jersey, defending the country. I hope that the document (bid proposal) has a positive response and Brazil hosts the World Cup ... I believe that if (Brazil) is really the World Cup host, Brazil will have a socioeconomic and huge educational advancement. We are progressing little by little, thank God, and from the moment that Brazil receives the green light from FIFA, many Brazilians feel, even obligated, to have a better country in 2014 than now. In every way, the candidacy is very positive, I feel proud and happy."*  
(Faria,Romario in O Globo 2007,p.36)

If there were any doubts about Romario's words Teixeira emphatically guaranteed that every source of investment would be private: *"The great advantage of this World Cup is it will not cost a dime of taxpayer money. We do not need it"* (Chade,2014 p.). However, as people learned later, the World Cup, along with the necessary construction and renovation of stadiums was financed almost exclusively. In addition, it was the most expensive World Cup in history.<sup>3</sup>

In August 2007, the day that Brazil presented its candidacy as World Cup host, FIFA president Blatter was asked about Rio de Janeiro's failure to meet IOC criteria to host the Olympic Games in 2004 and 2012. In response, Blatter sharply criticized the IOC for rejecting those bids, even though he was also an IOC member. He said the following: *"The IOC does not have athletes. It's a club. A very special club and this club of 141 members only 15 come from international federations, 15 National Committees and 15 athletes. All others are selected. FIFA is not the IOC."* (O Globo, 2007 p. 34)

Notwithstanding previous rejections, in 2009, two years after Brazil was chosen to host the World Cup host, the IOC selected Brazil and the city of Rio de Janeiro to host the 2016 Olympic Games. On October 2, 2009, this time in Copenhagen, President Lula was again seen advocating Brazil's candidacy to host another sport mega-event. If Pelé was not in Zurich in 2007 for the World Cup, he was now placed next to the Brazilian authorities asking for votes in support of Rio de Janeiro, using his global fame to endorse the project. It can be said, however, that the presentation of the Brazilian candidacy was supported by two basic pillars: (1) the Brazilian presentation led by Nuzman, who emphasized the opportunity for the Olympic movement to diminish the

---

<sup>3</sup> <http://esportes.estadao.com.br/noticias/futebol,copa-no-brasil-batera-todos-os-records-financeiros-da-historia-do-futebol,1170551> (In Portuguese)



inequality of never selecting an Olympic host from the South American continent, and used several videos extolling the importance of sports and the natural beauty of Brazil and Rio, and the hospitality of the nation's people; and (2) the image of Lula and his words, representing a new Brazil, economically and socially vibrant and socially combined with political and economic guarantees for the success of the Games.

After a few rounds of voting, Rio de Janeiro became a finalist, facing off against the Spanish city of Madrid. Coincidentally and ironically, Madrid was the city supported by Juan Antonio Samaranch, whose suggested strategy for Brazil was to host the Pan American Games in 2007 before bidding to host the 2016 Olympic Games. When Jacques Rogge unfolded the envelope and announced Rio de Janeiro as the winner of the bid process, a burst of joy and celebration gripped the Brazilian delegation. Pelé cried intensely while being comforted by President Lula, who few hours after the announcement couldn't continue his speech amid his tears as he talked about what the selection of Rio meant to him and to Brazil. Moments later, in another interview, Lula explained his emotions in the following manner:

*"Actually, I was thrilled in the moment of the presentation. When Barbara, who was next to me started to cry and Isabel (Swan) called me, I headed to stage counting on ten to avoid crying because I think president cannot cry during such presentation. After the climax, we had won already, Nuzman began his speech, I started to recall moments of my life, the things we were achieving; things that seemed impossible, and then came the feeling of start crying. And I guess when we feel like crying, we must cry. We got to stop being 'namby-pamby' to think that men can't cry; that a president can't cry. We cry because we have heart, we have sentiments.. Because we live the drama that society lives.*

*I guess that... for Brazil to win the Olympics is something very sacred, is more than sports... today's achievement was like issuing a passport, almost special for Brazil... Meaning...Brazil is now part of the world that already conquered the Olympics. There are few... None from South America. None from Africa...*

*I guess after Brazil hosts in 2016, we can run to Africa and elect an African country to host the Olympics. Because... It's achievement of citizenship. It's an achievement of self-esteem, respect.*

*I wanted to say that after being Union leader, president of the party, president of the country, after losing 3 elections, after 500 political rallies, after participating in Diretas (movement), after participating in UN opening session, G20, G8, G14, G13, of BRICS... I thought I had already overcome all the emotions of my life. But when I arrived at IOC's plenary, seeing the defense my partners were making for Brazil: Nuzman, Jean Havelange, Sergio Cabral (Filho), Eduardo Paes.. Then Isabel (Swan) speaking, and calling me to speak. Barbara on my side, crying... I realized that the emotion of human being is unlimited... Meaning, emotions are something we cannot control. And I was very nervous. I guess it was an exceptional moment. I didn't have the idea I could still live the emotion that I had in the presentation of Brazil...*

*And one beautiful thing is "selling" Brazil upward. Because we are tired to hear news pushing Brazil down. We are currently in a contradiction in the world. The international press extolling (us) and national press pushing Brazil down. The international press extolling Brazil, its economy, the politics, the security... Well, today it was like taking a lump out of our throat. Brazil was promoted with its dimension. The film... was something incommensurable. I thank God to have lived to see this because that end of the presentation of Rio de Janeiro was something, sincerely, above the level of comprehension of population.*

*So I just have to be happy, grateful, thrilled, and say: finally, we Brazilians are leaving our*

*colonized mindset to have one mindset of independency. We are owners of our noses. We respect everyone, but we above all, also want to be respected. And today, the indication of Brazil (as host) is a signal that Brazil went to the economic first world, to the political first world, and for the Olympic world.`*

Lula, in fact, was the protagonist of mega-events being omnipresent in all major political opportunities, knowing how to capitalize them in his political ideology.

## CHAPTER IV

### “Brazilian” Sport Mega Events, neoliberal agenda and Lula’s Populist Rhetoric

The way Lula spoke in that interview was not an exception. In fact, since the days he was in position of union leader, Lula has always sought the popular language to express his thoughts and ideas, creating a strong link between him and the masses. An avid fan and football practitioner, he abused of the use of political rhetoric in analogies about this particular sport to exercise and express his political thoughts. An early sign was seen in the documentary "Entreatos" (2006) which recorded the backstage scenes of the successful presidential campaign of 2002, while in a moment of relaxation, he was asked by his vice president candidate if he would organize football matches in the gardens of Alvorada Palace, Lula responded in informal tone, but clearly delineating why he is also part of the masses, unlike his political opponent and former president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso: *"Yeah.. we put a post on that green lawn. That thing (the Palace) is sad because Fernando Henrique Cardoso never played football. He does not dance. Never take a `sip`<sup>4</sup>. I'll take my little goats to put there. "*

Throughout his career as president there were numerous speeches that used football to communicate with the people<sup>5</sup>:

*`Everyone knows I like football, I follow football, have played football - was not good, but I have played - and I use much of football in my speech because it is the thing that at least 90% of Brazilians understand or think they understand`*

---

<sup>4</sup> Meaning he never had alcoholic beverages

<sup>5</sup> All quotes provided by UOL at: <http://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2015/10/27/como-o-futebol-de-lula-explica-o-mundo.htm?mobile&width=600>

*"In football it is like this: a frightened team gives so many corners, so many ball crosses, that in a certain moment the ball is in (the goal). We made the decision not to allow the crisis to reach Brazil, because there is a problem in the crisis, and it's panic (created)."*

*'When government is reaching its end, we have the feeling of like watching a football match, and I'll talk in football, because the most ordinary people understand more if I philosophize using football. So in this game of football, I have no doubt that we are winning the game four-zero, five-zero'*

*'Some people do not like my optimism, but I am Corinthians fan, Catholic, Brazilian and am still president. How could I not be optimistic?'*

Lula's political agenda has frequently appropriated sports since his first year in office, in 2003, when a ministry was created to be fully devoted to sports in Brazil. Previously, sports were always dividing attention and resources with education and tourism, for example, but were never elevated to the status of ministry, until they were designated as such by Lula.

The Ministry of Sports since its inception until the end of the first term of Dilma Rousseff, Lula's successor, was handed to political allies belonging to the Communist Party of Brazil (PC do B) as a natural result of the electoral process which brought Lula / Dilma and the PT party to the command of the country. In this the current term (2015-2018), by mere strategic reasons, the command passed to a minister from the Brazilian Republican Party (PRB), an evangelical pastor who openly declared not to be a

specialist in sports, but explained that he was able to handle the responsibilities of the position because he "*understands people*."<sup>6</sup>

In Brazil, to nominate ministers of allied parties is both a common and expected practice. The country, though, has a complex system with currently thirty-five registered political parties, and elections for positions in the Executive branch are fought by these alliances in which each may have any number of supporters. The larger the size of the party and its representation in Congress and Senate, more TV campaign time, and, thus, more Executive positions a party can claim to receive if the alliance is successful. It is not a practice created or institutionalized by President Lula, though. Since the new Constitution, passed in 1988, confirmed the rights of citizens after decades of military dictatorship, there emerged the existence of what has been identified as '*presidentialism of coalition*' in which any government is only viable by broad and extensive political party-alliances, regardless of the ideology that is supposedly followed by the political party (Codato & Costa, 2006).

Lula knew very well the need for such moves, after all, he lost three elections prior to his victory in 2002. He saw the potential that sports, mega events and athletes / celebrities support, could exert both to disseminate his ideas of what would be an ideal Brazil, and offer a new asset to be bargained and negotiated between allies (and adversaries).

Although the Ministry of Sports has three subdivisions: (1) Sport, Education and Leisure, and Social Inclusion; (2) Elite Sports; and (3) Soccer and Rights of the Fans, the largest investments in the early years of Lula's government were heavily directed to

---

<sup>6</sup> [http://espn.uol.com.br/noticia/471861\\_novo-ministro-posso-nao-entender-de-esporte-mas-entendo-de-gente](http://espn.uol.com.br/noticia/471861_novo-ministro-posso-nao-entender-de-esporte-mas-entendo-de-gente)

Elite sports, despite Brazilian constitution clearly stating that educational sports / social inclusion must be prioritized by federal government (de Almeida, 2012).

Contributed to such policy organizing the Pan American Games in 2007, in which large amounts of public investments for sports structures and preparation of athletes, which in addition to funds from the federal government, many were sponsored by state-owned corporations. Among the programs to support elite athletes created under Lula's regime, stands out "Bolsa Atleta" (Athlete Stipend), an income transfer program for athletes of different competitive levels, whose name refers to another program, the most notorious in the years of Lula, and for many, responsible for his political success: "Bolsa Família" (Family Stipend). The program was extremely successful to bring millions out of extreme poverty by guaranteeing minimum income to Brazilians by conditional cash transfer in which families could receive a certain amount of money if their children were kept in school and following health procedures, such as vaccination needed for specific ages. Creating an income transfer programs became a major criticism target from conservative / neoliberal supporters who accused Lula of trying to develop such (populist) practices as a way to perpetuate his power, especially supporting his re-election in 2006, and thus, not encouraging people to seek jobs because they were fully supported by the government. Bolsa-atleta was not the only program created by federal government to support athletes, though. Focusing exclusively on high performance sport athletes, investments estimated in R\$ 1 billion were granted to improve the performance of Team Brazil in Rio 2016, achieving the goal of being included in the TOP 10 in the medal table, as another example of a populist strategy of the country's image promotion.

Moving towards the end of his second term, the year of 2009 was indeed remarkable for Lula's political plans and strategies. If the Pan American Games were only a path to reach bigger events, and still, having more freedom and less requirements from ODEPA (event organizer) to host it, the same could not be stated about FIFA/World Cup and IOC/Olympic Games.

Despite Lula's words declaring a (supposed) "independence" after the victory for 2016 Games, federal government faced a tough game of bargaining, negotiations with FIFA and World Cup before having to deal with issues related to the Olympics. On the one hand, the government proposed a more inclusive agenda, politically (to its allies) and populist (for the people). On the other, there was FIFA concerned with their economic interests (Chade,2014).

If FIFA insisted on eight host cities, Lula did everything to guarantee twelve as hosts, which ended up being confirmed in May 2009, bringing negative consequences for some teams during the World Cup. The United States team, for instance, had to travel about 15,000 km in the tournament's group stage, playing in the extreme north, south and northeast of a country with continental extensions (Chade, 2014). Lula's victory, therefore, was to include the World Cup in more states, allowing him to flatter more political allies. It was not enough, however, to bring the Cup to reach more Brazilians.

On October 27th, 2009, nearly two years after the statement that no public funding would be occur in the FIFA World Cup, and three weeks after the confirmation for the Olympics, the first move was made to invest public funds in building stadiums for FIFA's World Cup. In a well calculated political maneuver, the government created a



program through the National Development Bank (BNDES) to loan funds to state hosts. Despite being classified as loans, in practice the investment was public, because BNDES is a bank owned by federal government lending to state governments, with subsidized interest rates, lower than the market, resulting in public debt to build stadiums, always in accordance with the technical requirements/ standards of FIFA (Chade, 2014).

Although the city of São Paulo, the largest and richest in the country, had already at least three major stadiums, one publically owned, it was decided that a brand-new one would be built to be owned by Corinthians, the team that President Lula supported, and had no stadium at that time. The total cost of the stadium was 1.2 billion reais, with BNDES financing estimated at 300 million in addition to resources of the municipality of São Paulo.

Building and renovating 12 stadiums was not the only responsibility of the government. In respect of "rights and obligations" between the Brazilian government and FIFA, the 'General Law of the Cup', published by the government of President Dilma, sounded as a contract between parts, each interested in their own agenda and flexibilizing local legislation to be adapted according mostly to FIFA interests. The government demanded that game tickets be offered on special conditions to specific social groups or minorities, as is usually already guaranteed by local legislation when it comes to sporting and cultural events held in Brazil. As for FIFA, they demanded protection of their brand, earnings and sponsors. Among the most prominent protection were (1) authorization to sell alcoholic beverages in stadiums during the games of the World Cup (which was forbidden at that time), (2) the assumption of responsibility by the

Brazilian government for damage or accidents related to the event, and (3) tax-exempt status for FIFA and its partners (sponsors, suppliers and stadium builders) in activities related to organizing and hosting the World Cup, which is estimated to have cost Brazil an exemption of nearly 1.1 billion *reais*.

In response to accusations of acting unfairly with Brazil, especially in regards to tax exemption, FIFA has published a document called "*Setting the record straight*" counter-arguing that exemptions are applicable only to taxes for importing equipment.

In the political and commercial relationship with FIFA, there is evidence, therefore, be it in Lula's words, and the actions of his successor Dilma Rousseff, be it in the interests of state governors in hosting games and all the infrastructure legacy promises, that rulers wanted to promote an image that the World Cup would benefit the population, and all investments would be justified. One year ahead of the World Cup, however, popular dissatisfaction was evident.

In June 2013, social groups, still in a small number, took to the streets of São Paulo in protest against an increase in bus fares. In an attempt to contain these movements, police reacted with disproportional violence, firing rubber bullets at protesters and journalists covering the event. Dissatisfied with police violence against journalists, the press strongly condemned the police action, arousing further dissatisfaction and bringing people to the streets in greater numbers. Boosting dissatisfaction was the realization of how the "*padrão FIFA*" (FIFA standard) worked during the 2013 Confederations Cup. At that time, people discovered that stadiums were mostly financed or supported by public funds. If the federal government insisted on promoting Brazil as "a country for everyone" thanks to social programs mostly, the 2013

protests shed light on the ongoing neoliberal policies through which private interests were prioritized over social welfare and the provision of essential public services. "If my child is sick, should I take him to a stadium?" and "I want schools and hospitals with FIFA standards!" were some of phrases seen during 2013 protests, and largely exemplify the vision expressed in the streets.

"*Padrão FIFA*" (FIFA standard) was not the only expression adopted largely by Brazilians before the World Cup as they explicitly criticized inverted priorities by government, eventually used with irony to express dissatisfaction, as seen in protests calling for improved schools and hospitals. When any (public) service was deemed unsatisfactory, Brazilians called for the application of the "*FIFA standard*." Also, people in the general population had doubts about the country's capability to host the event: Brazilian airports were already crowded. "*Imagine in the (World) Cup!*" The traffic in my town is awful. "*Imagine in the (World) Cup!*" The police cannot handle the violence. "*Imagine in the (World) Cup!*"

General feelings went from distrusting Brazil's ability to host a mega event to widespread dissatisfaction and revolt. What started with, "Imagine in the Cup, social movements in protests adopted "Cup for whom?" and "There won't be Cup". With distrust and dissatisfaction came questions about who would benefit from the World Cup being hosted by Brazil. As a result, people took a more aggressive stance promising to protest further, and even threatening to disrupt the event.

The Rousseff government was directly affected by the protests of June 2013. The president's approval ratings fell from 57% to 30% immediately after the Brazilians

went to the streets and then continued to fall, despite her re-election (Folha de São Paulo, 2013).

As stated previously, sports and their mega-events had been co-opted by Lula / Rousseff as a political strategy in a proposed coalition of interests. Despite being originally from the left-wing and inspired by socialist principles, Lula and his party adapted to power by maintaining and expanding the neoliberal policies that had been implemented previously by Fernando Henrique Cardoso. However, they also tried to follow a new path by initiating a more inclusive social agenda and creating cash transfer programs for low income and less privileged populations. Therefore, as Lula spoke about leadership values, political and economic independence, and the general benefits of sport mega events, he also maintained a social / economic elite that was satisfied with their earnings, aligned with foreign interests, and supportive of mega events and their forms of organization. Lula's support of neoliberal policies provoked dissent in his own party, causing some founders and traditional members to strongly criticize his political approach and migrate to other parties or create new ones, such as the PSOL<sup>7</sup>. If the slogan of Lula's government was "Brazil: a country for everyone" it was indeed evident in his interest to please all social classes and groups, but the beginning of the 2013 protests, already in Rousseff's government, showed that (few) seemed to be more benefited than (many) others.

---

<sup>7</sup> PSOL - Partido Socialismo e Liberdade (Party of Socialism and Freedom)

CHAPTER V  
**Colonial Traditions and Local Politics: Sport Mega Events "Para Inglês Ver"**

Excerpt of the letter by Pero Vaz de Caminha to King of Portugal, 1500

"... one of them stared at Captain's collar, and began to wave his hand to the land and then to the collar, as if telling us that there was gold. He also looked at a silver candlestick and so also waved to the land and back to the candlestick as if there were also silver ... "

"Waters are many;.. Endless. And in such manner is gracious that, wanting to take advantage of (the land), anything can be cultivated. However, the best fruit that can be cropped seem to be save these people. And this should be the main seed that Your Highness should throw. " (de Caminha & Cortesão, 1943)

Song by popular artist, Raul Seixas, 1965 - Aluga-se (For Rent)

The solution to our people  
I'll give  
Deal so good  
Nobody has ever seen  
Everything's ready here  
Just come and grab  
The solution is to rent Brazil!

We will pay nothing  
It's all free!  
It's time now; it's free  
Let's go  
Give place to foreigners  
This property is for rent

The foreigners  
I know they will like  
It has the Atlantic  
It has the Ocean view  
The Amazon  
Is the backyard garden  
And their dollar

We pay our porridge<sup>8</sup>.

The alignment to foreign interests to the detriment of the nation's may not be simply expressed or resulted from the adoption of political and economic (neo)liberalism. There are deep roots in the exploratory colonization of Brazil by foreign nations, initiated and developed by Portugal, that overcame later disputes with the French and Dutch. On April 22nd, 1500, Portuguese navigators landed on the Brazilian coast as part of an overseas expansion project undertaken by European nations with commercial interests in lands and new navigation routes. Accompanying the Portuguese fleet, the scribe Pero Vaz de Caminha sent to the King of Portugal a letter that became the "birth certificate" of the country. In the letter there was a broad description of the local indigenous population and their reactions to contact with the Portuguese, in addition to the description of the new lands found. In the words of Pero Vaz Caminha, one may notice a constant tone of superiority while looking at the local population and the need to identify the potential for exploitation of natural resources, which then occurred for many centuries. In 1822, the country reaches its political independence on an Empire system already under strong influence of English mercantile expansion, and then becoming a republic in 1889, one year after abolishing the system of slavery in the country (Schawrcz & Starling, 2015). Coming from those times was the expression "Pra Inglês ver" (For the English to see). While discussing the mega events in Brazil, Barbassa (2014) related recent events with the epoch when British sailors were in the Brazilian Empire age:

*"There's a Brazilian expression for something that's only a façade: para inglês ver, or "For the English to see". It comes from the years after England abolished slavery and campaigned to end the human*

---

<sup>8</sup> With connotation for basic cheap food.

*trade. Brazil signed an international treaty and passed a law promising to stop, but the traffic continued. Would the changes of the next few years be just pra inglês ver, or were we looking at a transformation that would go to the core, reforming the violence and inequality that had historically hobbled the city?" (p. 182)*

It can be seen that the exploitation and exporting of natural resources over the centuries, from colonization to the present day, whether being pau-brasil, sugar cane, precious metals or later agricultural / mineral products (commodities) were / are a constant in Brazilian economic history upon the eyes of foreigners, and is the way many of the socioeconomic and political elite see how the development of the nation must be by the exploitation of its wealth, regardless of local consequences.

Still in the 70s, at the pinnacle of the "economic miracle" when the country recorded high growth rates during governments of the military dictatorship, it became notorious the statement by Minister of Planning, João Paulo dos Reis Velloso, during a preparatory interview for the first Conference on World Environment where political leaders met to envision mechanisms to control global industrial production to avoid environmental impacts. Speaking about the tendency of Brazil to attract capital from rich/developed countries, declared that restricting the impact on natural environment would affect their industrial expansion, he added: *"we (Brazil) yet still have plenty of area to pollute"* (Duarte, 2015).

In times of late capitalism and mega sporting events in format of global spectacles powered by the mainstream media in search of beautiful stories and images, countless natural beauties of Brazil, especially in the city of Rio de Janeiro, become an important asset for "stakeholders", be them sponsors who promote their brands in a cosmopolitan / urban environment, differing themselves by well-known natural beauty,

be them local politicians representing the same political/socio economic elite, with neoliberal proclivities, which gives all the conditions for the exploitation of such natural resources that belong to public domain, yet are put in benefit of specific groups.

The front page of O Globo newspaper with Nike's advertising campaign and the video played during Rio's presentation in Copenhagen for 2016 Games are examples already cited as exploitation of public/natural resources. There are other possible examples, such as FIFA's official video played as introduction and closure for all matches, which showed a sequence of beautiful Brazilian landscapes (Sugarloaf, Christ the Redeemer, beaches, forests, birds,) where football is practiced. As the video protagonist, presented as a mestizo boy, with straight hair and brown skin, wearing the yellow jersey of national teams and sandals apparently in a slum (full color and glamorized), absolutely delighted with the arrival of the World Cup to his country, joining more people in the streets in celebration, by the end of the video.<sup>9</sup>

In 2015, Adidas launches an advertising series showing Brazilian Olympic athletes practicing their respective sports: the gymnast, gold medalist in London, Arthur Zanetti<sup>10</sup>, and the judo world champion, Mayra Aguiar<sup>11</sup>. The great differential of this advertising campaign is to put both athletes practicing their respective sports at the top of famous and iconic mountains of Rio de Janeiro, Sugar Loaf and Pedra da Gavea, with all images shot from an aerial vision with a circular motion by the camera, emphasizing the natural beauty of the city, seen from above, serving as background for every athletic movement, which are eventually displayed in zoom or slow motion. The symbiosis between the moving bodies within a broad natural landscape, integrated with

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JP67IM1LX-M>

<sup>10</sup> [https://youtu.be/Xz3O\\_HQhmlI](https://youtu.be/Xz3O_HQhmlI)

<sup>11</sup> <https://youtu.be/SCgjqmM1JMU>



urban interventions compose the film and is its differential, after all, athletes are merely performing common athletic movements of their daily lives, and the natural landscapes of the city are shown in angles already publicly disclosed. Because it is a sport apparel brand, it is clear that the goal was not to promote any natural beauty and its public spaces, but appropriate them to enhance the brand Adidas.

There are also issues more directly related to the natural (public) environment and its appropriation / utilization over private interests, represented by FIFA's World Cup and the Olympic Games. The golf course to be used for the Olympics is being built exclusively by the private sector thanks to municipal government grant of a land portion that included a nature reserve. Private investors were attracted by the opportunity to build next to the golf course, a luxury apartment complex consisting of 22 towers with 22 floors each. Protests took place against the initiative to use the nature reserve space for private purposes. They questioned why any existing golf club in the city was not being used as well as the reasons to change legislation that, at first, allowed only buildings with a maximum of six floors in the region, to twenty-two now. In response, the city hall drew up a dossier saying that the International Golf Federation (IGF) concluded that it would be better to build a new field instead of reforming an existing one, within a private club, due to costs, operational issues, and legacy of the Games.

Intended to promote the sport in the country and in South America, it was established that the new Olympic golf course would be public, but twenty years after the Games it will be converted to private property. To attract investors, the city shows a new regulation allowing instead of 96 six-story towers, the luxury apartment complex will have 22 towers with twenty-two floors each, also resulting in less built-up area that,

according to government, would result in more environmental preservation. Still according to Rio's government, the area used for the project was already largely privately owned, and was degraded by serving previously as sand extraction site and concrete dump. The city argues that the nature reserve space granted is equivalent to 3.5% of the total, and accounts for 6% of the total space of the field.<sup>12</sup>

In the moment of presenting the proposal to host the Games, there was the promise to depollute up to 80% of the Guanabara Bay to be the venue of sailing competitions. To accomplish the goal, the sewage system of the city/state needed major renovations because the pollution caused by untreated waste is dumped directly in the bay. However, the state government has declared that it will not achieve its own goal, saying that only competitive conditions are ensured in respect of the commitment with International Sailing Federation (ISAF). It should be noted, though, that the Brazilian federal legislation indicates that access to proper sanitation is a universal right for Brazilians and should be provided to citizens as a public health policy (Law 11,445).

These two episodes briefly exemplify how private / economic affairs end up being privileged over what would be considered as public interest, ultimately more important than considering what would be regarded as social and collective welfare, either to meet demands of (foreign) sports organizations, or politically / economically aligned with the neoliberal ideology in governance of cities and states. As reported, in the specific case of Rio de Janeiro, the ideology is expressed differently by the spectacle of the city by sport mega-events placing the natural beauties as place of commercial transaction, business affairs and marketing, using it at best convenience of private interests.

---

<sup>12</sup> In Portuguese - <http://www.rio.rj.gov.br/dlstatic/10112/5263319/4136849/DOSSIEGOLFE.pdf>

To illustrate the context of Rio de Janeiro, one may realize then, how these initiatives go beyond the "*política*" initiated by Lula to be related to more local interests of Rio de Janeiro, being neoliberalism transversal to the policies in the city, state and country. As representatives of such policies, the mayor Eduardo Paes and the former governor of the state, Sergio Cabral Filho were also present in Copenhagen in 2009.

Cabral Filho began his term in 2007, being reelected in 2010 for additional four years, always in alliance with Lula. His main government program that secured the second term was the implementation of a so-called pacification program in *favelas* (slums) by the UPP (Police Pacification Units) inspired by a public security policy that was used in Bogotá, Colombia to disrupt local drug trafficking. The UPP's main concept is the permanent occupation of policemen while trying to establish personal connections with residents, knowing them by name and participating in daily activities so that they are perceived as belonging to the community. The program of "pacifying police" began in 2008 and extends to the present day, with 42 occupied *favelas*. When Cabral Filho defended Rio's bid to host the 2016 Games, four *favelas* had already been occupied, all in the city's southern region, the most affluent and the closest to Games competition venues. If public safety was a major concern of the bid, the UPPs were a promising answer to solve the problem. After confirming the city for the Olympics, the program was expanded, but the violence has not ceased completely. In fact, to complicate the topic, the perpetrators of violent acts were in many cases, police officers, who instead of protecting, assaulted, tortured and eventually killed innocent residents.

The most emblematic case was a resident of *Rocinha*<sup>13</sup>, Amarildo Souza, who in July 2013 was called by police to testify and didn't return home. Two months later, investigations showed that Amarildo was tortured and killed by police officers. While no one knew the whereabouts of Amarildo, his disappearance and the search for answers were incorporated into the agenda of the mass protests during the 2013 Confederations Cup, with Cabral Filho as a major target.

Having the governor as a target was also related to the major renovation of Maracanã stadium, the most traditional in Brazil and symbol of popular culture to the locals. With the total cost of renovation over a billion Reais (\$ 500 thousand dollars at that time), Maracanã, which was property of the state of Rio de Janeiro, was undergoing a privatization process. In order to suit the study of economic potential made by a private company that also had interest in being the new owner of the stadium, the initial project proposed to terminate a public school, a running track and a swimming pool, all open to be used daily by the community to exercise. Protests were able to reverse the full for destruction of these facilities, but the process of privatization was completed.

Despite many protests and demonstrations of dissatisfaction, Cabral Filho's vice-governor, Luiz Fernando Pézão, was elected as his successor. He continued Filho's and the pacification program was used as part of the political campaign pitch that enabled the secretary responsible for the administration of security public policy to remain in office. As another signal of the importance and power of sports theme has to the Brazilian political game, and how personal interests may overlap public ones, the son of Cabral Filho, 24 years old, was nominated Secretary of State for Sports where

---

<sup>13</sup> Biggest favela in Rio de Janeiro curiously located in the same region of one of the most expensive neighborhoods of the city.

next Olympic Games will be hosted despite the lack of any background in sports theme, or even further professional experience since he has just graduated in college.

Pézão was not the only one to follow Cabral Filho's paths. Mayor Eduardo Paes, from the same political party, was elected in late 2008 still at a time of a greater popularity of the former governor, and was also re-elected with a wide margin in 2012. The eight years under Paes mandate are intertwined with 7 years the city had to organize the Olympic Games when Paes expanded neoliberal policies through PPPs (Public-Private Partnerships) in providing public health services, culture, environment, education and sports.

Paes strategically used the Olympics as his main political platform, promoting the city as prepared to receive private investments, taking credit for all urban and social transformations in the city, even in areas not directly affected by the Games. In recent official publicity, a city resident of Rio de Janeiro circulates for several locations in the city featuring various interventions, many resulting from PPPs. The character goes through Madureira Park, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations, public day care, Porto Maravilha, Museums, Naves do Conhecimento, Smart city lab, clinic of the family, saying that all this happened after a sheet of paper, in allusion to the envelope with the result indicating Rio de Janeiro as the host for the Games.<sup>14</sup>

In celebration of five hundred days to the start of the Games, being interviewed for a TV program, Mayor Eduardo Paes, who thanks the urban transformations, has been considered as a potential candidate for president in 2018, shows his vision of the mega-event, the appropriation of sport, as well as exemplifying

---

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zaa8VObkkmo>

once again the constant comparison to what is foreign, or more specifically, the comparison with hegemonic nations like Great Britain:

*"London made an Olympic Stadium that until today was not reopened. It should have had twenty thousand seats, but ended with eighty (thousand). They still do not know what to do. But it's Londoner, so ... Imagine if here in Rio January we keep the stadium with 80 thousand seats closed for three years. We would be arrested, being beaten insanely.*

*The city will not be perfect ... but will be better. The Olympics .. sports will have helped the worker of Santa Cruz, the farthest location in Rio, that come here to Barra da Tijuca, and spends two hours, spends forty minutes to now. The worker of Deodoro who lives in Curicica, thanks to the Olympics, will take twenty minutes in a comfortable BRT. This is what Brazilian sport is giving to our city." (Paes, 2015)<sup>15</sup>*

There are many examples of the use of sport mega events of appropriation for political benefit, or even personal / economic. Despite all the examples cited were related to his supporters and organizers, there are those who represent the dissatisfied or critical. Romario, the ambassador of FIFA World Cup 2014 changed side and leveraged his political career being a hard opponent to the organizers of the World Cup, widely criticizing the misuse of public money. In 2010, he was elected federal deputy, and in 2014, became the most voted Senator of Brazil, already making plans to possibly try for mayor of the city of Rio de Janeiro in 2016.

What is evident, therefore, is the political force that the sport and its related activities can provide to individuals and (economic elites) groups widely supported in what Coakley (2015) defines as "Great Sport Myths" based on three beliefs, that: "sport

---

<sup>15</sup> [http://espn.uol.com.br/noticia/494838\\_eduardo-paes-faz-criticas-a-londres-e-promete-obras-no-prazo-para-jogos-do-rio-2016](http://espn.uol.com.br/noticia/494838_eduardo-paes-faz-criticas-a-londres-e-promete-obras-no-prazo-para-jogos-do-rio-2016)

*is inherently pure and good, the purity and goodness of sport is transmitted to those who participate in or consume it, and sport inevitably leads to individual and community development "*.(p.404) Neoliberal ideology appropriates through discourses and practices, bringing in fact, benefits mostly to a select group of individuals who have obtained their personal interests in detriment of public services that actually improve people's lives in a broader and unrestricted way. What should be asked, thus, is not simply the existence of any legacy, but more broadly, its efficiency: how much was spent on urban interventions versus how much will be generated as benefit to the population compared to the profit for private investors, after all, it's very common to have speeches awarding only to mega-events the possibility and credit for major changes in cities that already were needed.

Finally, it may be observed in the Brazilian Case of "Sport Mega Events" that they were a great opportunity to demonstrate neo-liberal "*políticas*" in course within a short period where Brazil offers a reflection of how this paradigm, being so hegemonic globally, can disguise and adapt to local conditions, after all since its effective implementation in the country still in the nineties, its evolution haven't stopped, even after twelve to sixteen years of federal government ruled by a party initially identified with socialist ideologies and strong social inclusion programs. Mega-events and their policies are the big stage of these policies in place, but it is also important to emphasize the fundamental role of the actors who embody this ideology complementing and reinforcing those practices, thus needing to be contextualized.

## CHAPTER VI

### **Media and Sport Mega Events:**

#### **The local monopoly of Globo Network and its Political Roots**

Coakley (2014) presents interesting approach pointing out that (professional) sports and media are co-dependent, especially television, in cases where this is not state-controlled, being guided by private interests that seek to profit. Large audiences and massive investments in advertising / sponsorship build such a mutual relationship. Aiming to discuss the context / Brazilian conjuncture, it is also important to reinforce the need to critically discuss the role of mass media in relation to sports when it commercializes “players” (celebrities and corporate sponsors) and messages decoded messages (see Andrews , 2001).

It wasn't without purpose that this work has highlighted the newspaper O Globo as well as the usage of the NGO story involving retired teacher Paul Servo, which revealed Barbara Leoncio and let to several sponsorships/ financial aids after exposed in primetime news from TV Globo. Globo Network, after all, is the largest of media conglomerate in Brazil (TV, radio, newspaper, publishing and Internet) and one of the world's largest in revenue, coverage and market share. It is noteworthy that Brazil in times of sport mega events, is also Brazil portrayed and published by the Globo thanks to media rights contracts and sponsorships that give the network benefits such as the right to an exclusive studio in format of big tower inside the Olympic Park at Rio de Janeiro.



In a recent profile of the Economist (2014) entitled "*Globo Domination*" contextualizing the power of the group, with revenues of 6.3 billion dollars, being compared as Brazilian version of News Corp, of Rupert Murdoch. Emphasis of the magazine however, is the large audience of television, at World Cup time, in comparison to US perspective:

*"When the football World Cup begins on June 12th in Brazil, tens of millions of Brazilians will watch the festivities on TV Globo, the country's largest broadcast network. But for Globo it will be just another day of vast audiences. No fewer than 91m people, just under half the population, tune in to it each day: the sort of audience that, in the United States, is to be had only once a year, and only for the one network that has won the rights that year to broadcast American football's Super Bowl championship game." (p.1)*

The power and impact of the Globo network have already been widely discussed and are constantly revisited by other media groups while discussing the subject in Brazil. The power of the conglomerate has been clearly demonstrated and recognized in many of country's important historical events that go beyond sports. The newspaper, first to be established in 1925, paved the way for all the others over the decades. It is noteworthy, however, the creation of television as the most powerful one. TV Globo was established in 1965, one year after the beginning of the military dictatorship that ousted President João Goulart on March 31, 1964. As it's described in its own timeline, the newspaper was prevented by the military to publish the edition on April 1st, returning the next day with the headline: "*Democracy returns*".

As one of the results of the 2013 protests, in which (TV) Globo was also seen as the target of protests, the group published an editorial acknowledging that it had erred while covering the military coup:

*"Since the protests of June, a chorus returned to the streets:.. "A verdade é dura, Globo apoiou a ditadura" (the truth is hard, Globo supported the dictatorship). Indeed, it is a truth, and also in fact, a hard truth. For many years in internal discussions, Globo Organizations recognize that, in the light of history, this support was a mistake. "(O Globo, 2013 p.3)*

This was not the only mistake being recently recognized by Globo Network. In April 2015, when the television channel completed 50 years of existence they also assumed to had failed when there was social and political movements to end the military dictatorship, in 1985. The movement called "Diretas Já" (Direct Elections Now) mobilized millions of people across the country streets and initially was not widely covered by Globo. In one of the major protests, on January 25, 1985, the headlines on primetime news made reference to "a day of festivities in São Paulo. The city celebrated its 430 years with more than 500 ceremonies. The biggest was a rally in the square of the Cathedral" (Globo Memória, 2015). In the introduction of the news story, there was no mention of the real reason for the "festivity", which was actually a protest in favor of democracy and direct votes. More than half of the news addressed the festivities, just with a brief mention to cover the rallies, gathering 1.5 million people. The text seemed to diminish the impact of the social movement, saying, "Was not only a political demonstration At first song ... At the podium, more than 400 people, including deputies, mayors and many artists." Emphasis was given to artists, with several cited by name. Only one politician's name was mentioned at the end: the governor of São Paulo,

Franco Montoro, who while speaking, had beside him the future President of Brazil, Lula.

With direct elections back in 1989, Lula reaches the second round against Fernando Collor de Mello. On the one hand, Lula and his career as northeastern immigrant who moved to Sao Paulo in search of better living conditions as many peers, aligned to the left socialist ideals. His opponent, Collor de Mello, owner of Gazetta conglomerate, in the state of Alagoas, in northeastern Brazil, direct partner of Rede Globo, retransmitting their TV content, promoting a new Brazil.

On 14 December 1989, the two candidates faced off in the final debate, just three days before Brazilians decide who would be the next president. Edition of Brazil's main television news primetime, "Jornal Nacional" (National News) of TV Globo, the broadcaster clearly edited images of the debate favoring Collor de Mello's performance, as if he had "won" the debate. There were about ten minutes of debate in which Collor de Mello's performance was highlighted. Many years later, Globo declared its opinion using an analogy of football, as traditionally and commonly done by Brazilians:

*"Those responsible for editing the "Jornal Nacional" said some time later, they used the same criteria editing a football match in which the best moments from each team are selected. According to them, the goal was to make it clear that Collor had been the winner of the debate, because Lula actually had gone badly ...*

*But the episode provoked an unequivocal damage to the image of TV Globo. So today, the media channel adopts as norm to not edit political debates; they should be seen in full and live. It was concluded that a debate cannot be treated as a football match, because in the confrontation of ideas, there is no objective elements comparable to those in a game, may point out a winner. To condense them, good and bad moments of*

*candidates will be necessarily out, according to the choice of an editor or group of editors, and there is always the possibility of one of the candidates to question the choice of excerpts and feel unfavored." (Globo Memoria, 2015)*

The citation of such episodes aims to show the great influence that a private media group admittedly exercised, and still exercises, in the political context of the country. More than influence, there is a power relationship with society that goes beyond the political sphere. Hall (1986) relates to media as:

*"the machinery of representation in modern societies. What they exercise is the power to represent the world in certain definite ways. And because there are many different and conflicting ways in which meaning about the world can be constructed, it matters profoundly what and who gets represented, what and who regularly and routinely gets left out; and how things, people, events, relationships are represented. What we know of society depends on how things are represented to us and that knowledge in turn informs what we do and what policies we are prepared to accept. (p.9)"*

The discussion of representation in the media and its forms is key to a better understanding of the sport, especially when it reaches an almost monopolistic stage of television media, as the case of Brazil with Globo Network. Coakley (2014) reinforces the different discourses appropriated by the media while portraying competitive sports (de)constructing sports celebrities in their roles as heroes and / or villains as their attitudes in the field of play, and this wouldn't be different to the case of Globo in Brazil, which remains aligned to a (neo)liberal / conservative ideology since its foundation through the produced and distributed content.

In its early years, TV Globo has developed partnership with the US media group, Time-Life, receiving financial investment and content production consultancy. Over the years, the corporation developed a method, based mainly in drama and the soap operas leading to TV Globo to be recognized as one of the major producers (and exporters to peripheral nations) of soap operas in the world, creating its own know-how and narratives captivating Brazilians (and foreigners) for decades. The influence of soap operas in Brazilian popular culture is extensive:

*"The soap opera takes daily lives as if they were food still raw and natural, and cooks them adding spices in certain way, that is, elaborates, or re-elaborates the daily lives according to the desired values of the dominant ideology. This is a silent and continuous process. If we ask the simple street person who sees the soap opera every day, what is "family", what is "political", how should be a "school", we see that common opinion to "public opinion" it is the opinion that was created, developed or re-developed by the media, especially in soap operas." (Lazzarato, 1991; p.64 in Bern, 2010; p.57)*

CHAPTER VII  
**Reflections upon the age sport mega events in Brazil - failed or successful  
project?**

*"neoliberalism as an extraordinarily malleable technology of governing that is taken up in different ways by different regimes, be they authoritarian, democratic, or communist." (Ong, A. 2006)*

On June 12, 2014, the beginning of realization of the FIFA World Cup was celebrated in Brazil; a milestone in a project developed by multiple fronts, different responsible and interests, overcoming or ignoring all protests events and previous years of obstacles. Lula, who had co-opted the organization of sport mega events as part of his political strategy of (self-)promotion seemed to finally be reaching his vision of elevating the country to a new level by the demonstration of power and influence via sports. The opening match, Brazil vs Croatia, was held at the new stadium in São Paulo, designed and funded by Lula's government, to be used in the future by Corinthians, his favorite team. If there was constant concern about how, and whether the country could effectively host the World Cup, the popular and political imaginary was based on the belief that good performance in the game and victories of the national team would further unify the country, as had always occurred. The organization of the World Cup in Brazil was successful, however, the event that was to celebrate the national identity has become one of the biggest ruptures of national self-esteem.

Before the team debut, booings and insults against President Dilma Rousseff inside the stadium, curiously, as occurred in the Pan 2007 opening ceremony with

President Lula, despite his high popularity at that time. In response to the public reaction, Dilma opined hours later:

"Those who were in the stadium, this we cannot disregard, were the ones with purchasing power to pay FIFA's price for the tickets. And there, was majorly one white elite, in some cases 80 ou 90 percent, was a dominant white elite."  
(Rousseff, 2014)

In just one statement, Dilma deconstructed many myths about Brazil and her "Cup of Cups" as she admitted that the country popularly recognized as miscegenated, is actually racially and socially segregated. Necessary to recall that five years before, in 2009, Lula's words meant exactly the opposite while speaking at the IOC in defense for the Brazilian bid: *"Not only we are a mixed people, but a people that loves to be mixed. This is what makes our identity."* (Da Silva, 2009)

The World Cup funded almost entirely with public money, which the "World Cup General Law" tried to (supposedly) make possible the direct participation of the poorest people in the spectacle, in fact, served only an economic elite that was able to afford the tickets cost.

In the opening match, the Brazilian team scored the first goal of the World Cup. Own goal (in reality and metaphorically). Croatia 1 to 0. Despite the adversity, Brazil won the match and advances in the tournament to up to the semi-finals facing Germany for, not only lose the game but have the greatest defeat of all history to time in the FIFA's World Cups by 7-1 at home. Brazil is the country with the most world championships (five) and participation in all editions of the tournament. A collection of front pages of newspapers with headlines showed overwhelming public sentiment of

Brazilians: "shame", "humiliation", "disgrace", "massacre", "fiasco", were some words to describe what happened. Newspapers transformed the "Cup of the Cups" in "Shame of Shames" and "Defeat of Defeats".<sup>16</sup>

Tomlinson & Young (2006) assessed across several different sport mega events (Olympic Games and Men's FIFA World Cup) how national identity interplayed with culture and politics in host nations, helping to build reflections about this work in a macro level.

Given the negative impact of the Brazilian defeat, it is appropriate to ask: If Lula and his political partners imagined that Brazil would suffer the worst defeat in history, at home, there would also be (public) investment, harming his project of "nationalism"? Despite the disastrous defeat, Brazil managed to properly host the World Cup without major incidents. The expectation of Brazilians was exactly the opposite: having problems in the organization of the event, but dominate the playing field.

Dilma, despite the growing unpopularity, could still be reelected, completing 16 years of government of her party, PT. In late 2015, Lula declared that *"The ideal of a party is that it could win the presidency, 27 governors, 81 senators and 513 deputies without partnering with anyone. But often we have to accept the result and build governance"* (O Estado de São Paulo, 2015).

The controversial speech and Lula's totalitarian mindset show that he recognizes the importance given *"presidentialism of coalition"* and the difficult task of political articulation in the country. The sixteen-year government there was a conjunction of political and economic interests of Lula / Dilma and the groups represented by them, whether in discourse or in practice / policies. In the first two decades of the 21st century,

---

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.b9.com.br/50229/brasil/50-capas-de-jornais-brasil-apos-derrota-de-7-x-1-para-a-alemanha/>



it is evident how sports have been elevated to a place of power (dispute) and interest, being appropriated by neo-liberal ideals, strengthening the Brazilian case as Silk & Andrews (2006) recognized:

*"how sports serves as an economy of affect through which power, privilege, politics, and positions are (re)produced.... however, and contrary to the many standard commentaries that neoliberalism as a largely uniform and undifferentiated identity, we highlight the heterogeneous complexity of neoliberal ideology and political praxis." (p.5)*

It is noteworthy that in recent years in Brazil, sports in the era of mega events is a site of political and economic power (struggle). The governments of Lula and Dilma have appropriated all possible opportunities to use the power to foster their own agendas via political and business alliances, helping us to understand the strategies and behaviors adopted by politicians, extending and complementing the neoliberal paradigm. Sports are (an increasingly important) part of political power site, economic and social, be it for public, private interest or both.

The moment however, is based on doubts, questions and tensions. In the first year of her second term, between the World Cup and Rio 2016, Rousseff's government is being constantly threatened. Brazil is going through a severe political and economic crisis. The political one, due to allies wanting more power, using threats of impeachment against the president, which accusations of corruption and leniency involve contractors and the state-owned company, Petrobras. Many of these contractors, such as the Odebrecht Group, whose president is currently in prison, were responsible for building or renovating the expensive World Cup stadiums, and even are the current owners of stadiums, like the Maracana in Rio de Janeiro. At the same time, the economic crisis

will result in a fiscal deficit estimated in more than 50 billion reais in 2016, the year of the Olympics. Important to note that, until now, there has been no questioning from large media groups that could relate the deficit to public spending on mega events.

The era of mega events in Brazil, then, is still under construction. So it would be premature to make any attempt or deepening previous conclusion about post-mega events in Brazil, despite the current troubled scenario. It can be argued, however, that the final balance of the World Cup after the historic defeat by Germany is felt to this day in the new Brazilian's relationship with the team (or their own national identity), marked by distrust and eventually disbelief that one day the team will have as many good players as in the past, as well as distrust of the political and economic future of Brazil. For the continuity of government project until 2020, re-election that seemed a victory for the Lula / Rousseff group, demonstrates uncertainty for the future. Government representatives still hope for great Olympic Games with the best performance of Brazilian athletes, justifying the massive investments in recent years (including the billionaire "Brasil Medal Plan"), promoting, if not recovering from the World Cup, self-esteem of population.

Brazilian society is full of contradictions, and the sixteen years of Lula / Dilma have confirmed by and through sport mega-events, the heavy, intense and embedded political characteristics of those events in Brazil, a developing country constantly mixing and negotiating public with private interest, whether under the direct influence of neoliberalism, or the quest for the appreciation of national development, seeking to recognize or refute its own (self) image.

## REFERENCES

- Almeida, B., & Marchi Júnior, W. (2014). O Brasil e os megaeventos esportivos: os subsídios da política externa. *MotrivivêNcia*, 26(42), 13-26.
- Andrews, D. L. (2001). *Michael Jordan, Inc.: Corporate sport, media culture, and late modern America*. SUNY Press.
- Andrews, D. L. (2002). Coming to terms with cultural studies. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 26(1), 110-117.
- Andrews, D. L. (2007). Response to Bairner's "Back to Basics: Class, Social Theory, and Sport". *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 24(1), 37.
- Andrews, D. L., Lopes, V. B., & Jackson, S. J. (2015). Sport Celebrity and Performative Cultural Politics. *A Companion to Celebrity*, 421.
- Athayde, P. F. A. (2011). O "lugar do social" na Política de Esporte do Governo Lula. *Revista SER Social*, 13(28), 184-209.
- Barbassa, J. (2014). Dancing with the devil in the City of God: Rio de Janeiro on the brink.
- Bresser-Pereira, L. (2015). *A construção política do Brasil: Sociedade, economia e Estado desde a Independência* (1a ed.).
- Cavalcanti, M. (2009, October 3). Leia mais;Espanhol 'ajudou' a traçar estratégia do Rio, diz Nuzman. Retrieved September 26, 2015, from [http://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2009/10/091003\\_nuzmanmaluebc.shtml](http://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2009/10/091003_nuzmanmaluebc.shtml)
- Castellani, Filho, L. (2009). O PT, a política esportiva brasileira e a síndrome de Estocolmo.
- Coakley, J. (2015). *Sports in society: Issues and controversies*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Coakley, J. (2015). Assessing the sociology of sport: On cultural sensibilities and the great sport myth. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 50(4-5), 402-406.
- Chade, J. (2014). *A Copa como ela é, a história de dez anos de preparação para a Copa de 2014*. Companhia das Letras.
- Codato, A., & Costa, L. D. (2006). *O que é o presidencialismo de coalizão*. Folha de Londrina. Londrina-PR, 2.

- Da Silva, L. U. L. A. (2009). Discurso do Presidente da República, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, na sessão de apresentação da Candidatura Rio 2016 ao Comitê Olímpico Internacional (COI). Copenhagen, Denmark. Retrieved December, 10, 2012.
- Déficit fiscal do governo atinge R\$ 20,9 bilhões de janeiro a setembro. (2015, October 29). Retrieved October 30, 2015, from <http://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/economia/noticia/2015-10/deficit-fiscal-do-governo-atinge-r-209-bilhoes-de-janeiro-setembro>
- Souza, J. D., & Marchi Júnior, W. (2011). Por uma sociologia da produção científica no campo acadêmico da educação física no Brasil. *Motriz rev. educ. fís.*(Impr.), 17(2), 349-360.
- de Souza, D. L., & Pappous, S. (2013). Legados esportivos de megaeventos esportivos: uma revisão da literatura. *Motrivivência*, (41), 42-56.
- de Almeida, B. S., Coakley, J., Marchi Júnior, W., & Starepravo, F. A. (2012). Federal government funding and sport: The case of Brazil, 2004–2009. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 4(3), 411-426.
- de Caminha, P. V., & Cortesão, J. (1943). *A carta de Pero Vaz de Caminha*(No. 1). Livros de Portugal Ltda..
- Depois de colocar silicone, 'xodó' Bárbara Leônico corre para brilhar na Rio-2016. (2012, December 25). Retrieved October 9, 2015, from <http://extra.globo.com/esporte/rio-2016/depois-de-colocar-silicone-xodo-barbara-leoncio-corre-para-brilhar-na-rio-2016-5894813.html>
- Duarte, R. H. (2015). “Turn to pollute”: poluição atmosférica e modelo de desenvolvimento no “milagre” brasileiro. *Revista Tempo*, 64, 0087.
- Entreatos [Motion picture]. (2006). Videofilmes Produções.
- Folha de São Paulo. (2013, June 29). Popularidade de Dilma cai de 57% para 30%, indica Datafolha. Folha De São Paulo.
- Freyre, G. (1938). Foot-ball mulato. *Diário de Pernambuco*, 17.
- GLOBO (2007), O. A Copa é nossa. *Jornal O Globo*, v. 1, p. 1, 2007.
- GLOBO (2009), O. 2016, o ano que já começou. *Jornal O Globo*, v. 1, n. 27.816, p. 1, 2009.

- Lawrence Grossberg. (1997). *Bringing it all back home: Essays on cultural studies*. Duke University Press.
- Grossberg, L. (2006). Does cultural studies have futures? Should it? (or what's the matter with New York?): Cultural studies, contexts and conjunctures. *Cultural Studies*, 20(1), 1-32.
- Grossberg, L. (2010). *Cultural studies in the future tense*. Duke University Press.
- Hall, S. (1990a). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222-237). London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Hall, S. (1996). On postmodernism and articulation: An interview with Stuart Hall (edited by Lawrence Grossberg). In D. Morley & K. H. Chen (Eds.), *Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies* (pp. 131-150). London: Routledge.
- Helal, R. (1999). Mídia, ídolos e heróis do futebol. *Revista Comunicação, Movimento e Mídia na Educação Física*.
- Helal, R., & Coelho, M. C. (2001). Mídia, construção da derrota e o mito do herói. R. Helal et alii, *A invenção do país do futebol*. Rio de Janeiro: Mauad, 149-162.
- Helal, R. (2001). Cultura e idolatria: ilusão, consumo e fantasia. *Cultura e idolatria: ilusão, consumo e fantasia*.
- Helal, R. (2003). A construção de narrativas de idolatria no futebol brasileiro. *Revista Alceu*, 4(7), 19-36.
- Helal, R. G., do Cabo, A., Amaro, F., Alves Pereira, C. A., & Vieira Teixeira, J. P. (2012). A construção de um ídolo futebolístico na imprensa: estudo de caso. *Revista Organicom*, 8(15).
- Helal, R. (2012). Idolatria e Malandragem: a cultura brasileira na biografia de Romário. *Intercom-Revista Brasileira de Ciências da Comunicação*, 26(2).
- Helal, R., & Amaro, F. O esporte e seus heróis: a narrativa jornalística sobre os medalhistas brasileiros nas Olimpíadas de 2012.
- Lula: 'O Brasil não vai disputar meia dúzia de merreca de medalhas' (2009, December 21). Retrieved November 25, 2015, from [http://espn.uol.com.br/noticia/93716\\_lula-o-brasil-nao-vai-disputar-meia-duzia-de-merreca-de-medalhas](http://espn.uol.com.br/noticia/93716_lula-o-brasil-nao-vai-disputar-meia-duzia-de-merreca-de-medalhas)
- Maranhão, T. (2007). Apollonians and Dionysians: The Role of Football in Gilberto Freyre's Vision of Brazilian People. *Soccer & Society*, 8(4), 510-523.

- Mascarenhas, G. (2007). Mega-eventos esportivos, desenvolvimento urbano e cidadania: uma análise da gestão da cidade do Rio de Janeiro por ocasião dos Jogos Pan-americanos-2007. *Scripta Nova: revista electrónica de geografía y ciencias sociales*, (11), 12.
- Montanha, F. A. R. P., & Helal, R. G. (2014). Futebol, Corpo e Publicidade: um estudo de caso. *Comunicação Mídia e Consumo*, 11(32), 139-161.
- Mostaro, F., Amaro, F., & Helal, R. G. (2014). Futebol-arte e Consumo: as narrativas presentes na campanha "Ouse ser brasileiro". *Revista Eletrônica do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Mídia e Cotidiano*, 4(4), 105-122
- King, S. (2005). Methodological contingencies in sports studies. *Qualitative methods in sports studies*, (1), 21.
- Lula: 'O Brasil não vai disputar meia dúzia de merreca de medalhas' (2009, December 21). Retrieved November 11, 2015, from [http://espn.uol.com.br/noticia/93716\\_lula-o-brasil-nao-vai-disputar-meia-duzia-de-merreca-de-medal](http://espn.uol.com.br/noticia/93716_lula-o-brasil-nao-vai-disputar-meia-duzia-de-merreca-de-medal)
- Ong, A. (2006). *Neoliberalism as exception: Mutations in citizenship and sovereignty*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Resende, C. (2010). O Esporte na Política Externa do Governo Lula: o importante é competir?. *Meridiano 47*, 11(122), 35-41. Retrieved from <http://periodicos.unb.br/index.php/MED/article/view/1595>
- Rodrigues, M. (2003). *O negro no futebol brasileiro*. Mauad Editora Ltda.
- RUBIO, K. (2001). O atleta e o mito do herói. São Paulo: Casa do Psicólogo, 238-249.
- Rubio, K. (2004). *Heróis olímpicos brasileiros*. Zouk.
- RUBIO, KATIA. *Mega Eventos Esportivos, Legado E*. Casa do Psicólogo, 2007.
- Rubio, K. (2010). Olympic games of modern era: a proposal of periodization. *Revista Brasileira de Educação Física e Esporte*, 24(1), 55-68.
- Saad-Filho, A. (2013). Mass Protests under 'Left Neoliberalism': Brazil, June-July 2013. *Critical Sociology*, 39(5), 657-669. doi: 10.1177/0896920513501906
- Schwarcz, L. M., & Starling, H. M. (2015). *Brasil: uma biografia*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- Slack, J. D. (1996). The theory and method of articulation in cultural studies. *Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies*, 112-127.

The Economist, Brazil takes off. (2009, November 14). Retrieved November 11, 2015, from <http://www.economist.com/node/14845197>

The Economist, Has Brazil blown it? (2013, September 28). Retrieved November 11, 2015, from <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21586833-stagnant-economy-bloated-state-and-mass-protests-mean-dilma-rousseff-must-change-course-has>