

EX-SOCCER PLAYER ARTHUR FRIEDENREICH IN MUSEUMS IN THE CITY OF SAO PAULO

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ABSTRACT

Arthur Friedenreich is one of the first football Brazilian idols to become engraved in the memory of this sport. Regarding the writing of the history of this sport in Brazil dealing with the mechanisms of national identity, what can we learn with its main character in the first decades of the 20th century? To answer this question, we deal with the writings and images of the former player Arthur Friedenreich in three exhibitions in museums, which are located in the city of Sao Paulo. In the study, we refer to photographic images as a concept of denotative and connotative meaning and textuality as documentary analysis. The results revealed that these exhibitions sought to present the former player not only as one of the biggest black (or mulatto) heroes of football due to his competence and merit in this field, but also contributed to the democratization of the sport in the country. Besides, the research expressed the specificity of “the Brazilian way of racism”. The prodigious performance of Friedenreich has been recurrently recalled by the museums that hold the memory of football. His biography draws attention to the success of the idol presenting the ambiguities of racial identification in Brazil.

KEYWORDS

Arthur Friedenreich; soccer; museum; memory

O EX-JOGADOR DE FUTEBOL ARTHUR FRIEDENREICH EM MUSEUS DA CIDADE DE SÃO PAULO

RESUMO

Arthur Friedenreich é um dos primeiros ídolos na memória do futebol brasileiro. No que diz respeito à escrita da história deste esporte no Brasil às voltas com os mecanismos da identidade nacional, qual leitura podemos fazer sobre a apresentação do seu principal personagem nas primeiras décadas do século XX? A fim de responder a esta pergunta, o objetivo deste artigo é analisar os escritos e as imagens sobre o ex-jogador Arthur Friedenreich em museus da cidade de São Paulo. Como fontes, utilizou-se o conteúdo de três exposições dessa cidade. Para a análise das imagens fotográficas, baseamo-nos em conceitos de sentido denotativo e conotativo presentes em uma imagem fotográfica e, para textualidades, em uma análise documental. Os resultados revelaram que estas exposições procuraram apresentar o ex-jogador como um dos heróis negros ou mulatos do futebol que, pela competência e mérito no jogo, contribuiu não só para a democratização da modalidade no país, mas também expressou a especificidade do

“racismo à brasileira”. Recorrentemente lembrado pelos museus que guardam a memória do futebol brasileiro, a biografia de Friedenreich chama a atenção para o sucesso do primeiro grande ídolo como orgulho étnico e nacional do país, ao mesmo tempo em que revela as ambiguidades da identificação racial no Brasil.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Arthur Friedenreich; futebol; museu; memória

INTRODUCTION

Museums with their exhibitions are guardians of collective memory, reminiscent of the elements necessary for the construction of the mindset of national identities¹. Through them, we can capture ideological projects present in the intentional mechanisms of remembering and forgetting. Nora (1993) calls these “places of memory”, since in them the references to the founding myths of the construction of identities stand out. One characteristic is the fact that it is material, functional and symbolic; that is, in museums, in photographic and written documents, it can be observed materially what the curators of the public or private sphere intend to leave to be remembered, with the symbolic function of emphasizing the elements necessary for the construction of differences among groups and nations.

Nowadays, museums comprise a society that presents, in its plurality and contradiction, diverse representations and conflicting identities, breaking from their perspective of “holders of relics from the past and guardians of the truth”, which prevailed in the 19th century. In this way, the museum is a place that

selects the vestiges of the past, organizing discourses to promote and convey its representations about the past, the present and what should remain to become (...). It is a producer and disseminator of meanings in society, constituting itself as a political institution that can become a vehicle for citizenship. A museum is not a static structure. Rather, it is a dynamic process, a discursive interpretive space in a permanent relationship with social actors. (Andreoni, 2011, p. 168)

Regarding the changes brought about in the making of museums in the 20th century, the studies by Azevedo, and Alfonsi (2010) revealed that, from the 1970s onwards, there were changes in the conceptions about what heritage should be, and the role of a museum. Thus, according to the authors, “the almost exclusive emphasis on conservation and documentation actions is being replaced, opening space for discussions about the social functions of a museum and broader ways of thinking, preserving and

¹ Benedict Anderson (1983), according to Woodward (2000), developed the concept of “imagined community”. National identity is not entirely dependent on our idea of it. Therefore, and since it would not be possible to meet all those people who share the same national identity, we must have a shared idea about what constitutes it: “the difference among the different national identities lies, therefore, in the different forms by which they are imagined” (Woodward, 2000, p. 24).

communicating a certain heritage” (Azevedo & Alfonsi, 2010, p. 279). The widening of this understanding of heritage was substantial for this context, since it now incorporates the representations, practices, and expressions that characterize the culture of each people. Their parties, rituals, dances, rhythms, and ways of doing things rooted in the communities’ daily life enter museum interests (Arantes, 2004).

Supported by cutting-edge technologies, through photographs and informative texts, these exhibitions constitute a new communication model for museums, promoting new meanings in the construction of identity and discourses, and the enhancement of memory. They are biographical narratives that allow interpretation of different concepts. In this scenario, soccer and its idols gain space as a broad social phenomenon, which mobilizes, crosses, and weaves diverse social dimensions, triggering ideals, identifications and feelings of belonging. In the case of Brazil, soccer is an element that condenses issues precious in the constitution of Brazilianness.

The first decades of the 20th century were the investment of several meanings of what Brazil was and what it should be. Taken as a new form of national differentiation, miscegenation has become a symbol of Brazilianness, based on the syncretism of cultural elements. Soccer, *samba*, *capoeira*, and Afro-Brazilian religions progressively became symbols of Brazil and Brazilianness from the 1920s onwards. The notion of miscegenates framed these national symbols and dramatized one of the distinctive identity marks: the ideological illustration of the so-called peaceful coexistence between the different people and cultures that formed the Brazilian people, and who, despite social and cultural differences, lived in “balanced antagonisms”, to use a concept by Gilberto Freyre about Brazilian society (Soares, 2003, p. 155).

Freyre (1933/1992) took the pessimistic interpretation of Brazil, plagued by racialist theories of the 19th century, which saw degeneration and the reason for the nation’s backwardness in race miscegenation, and transformed it into hope for the encounter of races and cultures that would have given rise to a unique tropical civilization. He became the “most widely read non-fiction author in Brazil because he was able to take one of the issues that most concerned the Brazilian elite (...) and turn it upside down” (Skidmore, 1994, p. 42).

Thus, in the structure of Freyrean thought, several native cultural expressions, as well as the appropriation of foreign elements, were transformed into marks of national uniqueness. Analysis of the discursive production about “being Brazilian” involves understanding the symbolic and political content of miscegenation, which takes soccer as a place of expression and construction of national identity (Freyre, 1938). Soccer being one of the elements that expressed the permissibility of relations among Brazilians, it soon assumed, throughout the 20th century, the symbolic function of the mindset construction of the nation that comes to life, among other spaces, in museums.

In these places of the memory of Brazilian soccer, one character draws our attention: Arthur Friedenreich, who occupies a separate chapter in the history of national soccer. Due to his prestige acquired through his high performance in soccer matches at the beginning of the 20th century, he can be taken as the main player in Brazilian soccer

of that period. In places of memory, the writings and images about him highlight the achievements of his soccer career, and his exceptionality as a player. However, in conjunction with such notes, museums also mark the ambiguity of the racial identity experienced by Friedenreich, which, in theory, expresses one of the faces of “Brazilian racism”.

An indication of this ambiguity can be seen from Friedenreich’s participation in the games “Preto vs. Branco” (Black vs. White) that took place every May 13, from 1927 until 1939 in Sao Paulo (SP) to commemorate the day of the abolition of slavery (Abrahão & Soares, 2009). In the 1927 and 1928 editions, Friedenreich participated in these commemorative games and played in the whites’ team, a fact that perhaps indicates that he, in that society, was identified and was accepted as such. In another direction, Friedenreich appears in the memory of much of the academic production on the history of Brazilian soccer, including museums in Sao Paulo city, as a *mulatto* or even a black. Wisnik (2008) added the fact that he was also the captain of the whites’ team in the “Preto vs. Branco” matches, which did not prevent him from participating as a player in the blacks’ team, in 1929, in a combination of teams from Sao Paulo against Rio de Janeiro. Regarding this episode, Mário Rodrigues Filho (2003) elevated him to the status of hero, and suggested that he could choose in which team he wanted to play.

Friedenreich, subjectively and with his peers, recognized himself as white and, probably because of his accumulated prestige, he was treated as such in that society too. Whitening was a way for *mestiços* (mixed black and white) to become integrated into good society (Nogueira, 1998). His black ancestry, on his mother’s side, allowed him to also be identified as *mestiço*, which allowed him to participate in a game between black Paulistas against Cariocas² (Rio de Janeiro citizens). According to Wisnik (2008), supported by an interpretation by Ugo Giorgetti, it seems that this character could always have taken an ambivalent position on the racial issue, a very plausible interpretation in a society in which the chromatic criterion had a positive or negative impact on relationships and possibilities (Nogueira, 1998). In addition, the former player identified himself by his German surname.

Here, the question is not to trivialize the discussion and simply say whether he was white, *mulatto* or black, but to take it as a case to think about how the line of color, race and class, associated with other cultural and economic indicators, dramatizes the ambiguity about what it is to be white and black in Brazil. To some extent, the debate on the racial issue of Brazil helps us to understand the discrepancy between self-identification as white and hetero-identification as *mestiço* or black by much of the historiography that was concerned with understanding race relations in the universe of Brazilian soccer. Regarding the writing of this story, dealing with the mechanisms of national identity, what reading can we have of soccer and its main character in the first decades of the 20th century? In order to answer this, the purpose of this article is to analyze the writings and images about the former player in museums in Sao Paulo city.

² However, we must observe that, in our efforts to search for sources, and in the literature itself, we did not find links between Friedenreich and the black movement of the time.

For this purpose, our concern lies with the content of three exhibitions of museums in the city. Two are permanent: at the Museu do Futebol (Soccer Museum) and the Museu na Federação Paulista de Futebol (Museum at the Sao Paulo Soccer Federation), and a temporary one at the Museu Afro-Brasil (Afro-Brazil Museum), which deals with the trajectory of blacks in soccer, and was called “From Arthur Friedenreich to Edson Arantes do Nascimento: the black in Brazilian soccer”. The analysis of such writings and images, in photographic formats in the exhibitions, part of the understanding of photography as an instrument that captures and eternalizes a certain moment, that carries in itself a message produced by someone. According to Kossoy (2001), it is testimony to the truth of the fact or facts, gaining credibility status. Sônego (2010), in turn, addressing the topic of imagery documents in historical research, relies on Pierre Bourdieu (1965) to affirm that, in the modern-contemporary world, photographs visually reflect ideological values, aesthetic and ethical systems of social groups. Therefore, the analysis of the images about Arthur Friedenreich took into account the two meanings that are part of both photography and its content.

Rodrigues (2007) presents these meanings, calling them denotative and connotative. In the first, there is no room for interpretation, the image being just a copy of the content it aimed to present. The connotative sense, on the other hand, allows the image to be interpreted in different ways, as its polysemic characteristic, ambiguous in nature, is recognized. Therefore, the denotative and connotative meanings of Friedenreich’s images were explored from the perspective of a historical analysis, considering that, according to Rodrigues (2007), that, in addition to the objective aspect, that of photography itself, there is a subjective component that depends on the experience, the perception, and sensitivity of their authors.

FRIEDENREICH IN THE SAO PAULO MUSEUMS

Our sources are the images³ and texts displayed in the museums visited. The first is at the Museu do Futebol, with a permanent exhibition on soccer in Brazil, located at the Pacaembu stadium, Sao Paulo. In the museum, the caption of Figure 1 reads:

with his hair straightened, one of his marks, Arthur Friedenreich, son of a black mother and German father, is honored in a game of the Rio de Janeiro soccer team, along with Fausto, Maravilha Negra – a nickname earned during the 1930 World Cup in Uruguay. (Figure 1 caption, Museu do Futebol, Sao Paulo)

Although the Museu do Futebol does not indicate the date of the photo, it probably refers to the friendly game between the Rio-Sao Paulo combined team against the French team, which would have just participated in the 1930 World Cup. The game took place at night, at Fluminense stadium, in Rio de Janeiro, on August 1, 1930. The Brazilian team won the competition.

³ All photographs presented in in the article were captured by researcher Bruno Abrahão in museums.



Figure 1: Combined friendly Rio-São Paulo against French team

Source: Museu do Futebol

The text provides an indication that Friedenreich's aesthetics are interpreted by the museum and soccer historiography as a form of whitening (Nogueira, 1998). Mário Rodrigues Filho, known as Mário Filho (1947/2003), when publishing the first edition of the book *O negro no foot-ball brasileiro* (*The negro in Brazilian soccer*) in 1947, takes Friedenreich, among other blacks and *mulattos*, as not only the first hero of Brazilian soccer, but, above all, as the one who inaugurated the black saga in this sport and opened doors for its racial democratization in the country. For Mário Filho, the Brazilian victory in the 1919 South American championship was an inflection of the role of blacks in soccer, because "Friedenreich's kick opened the way for the democratization of Brazilian soccer, democratization that would come slowly, but that would never stop again, despite everything" (Filho, 1947/2003, p. 69). Despite Mário Filho's reading of the role of Friedenreich in the history of Brazilian soccer, he does not fail to point out that this first hero was yet another *mulatto* who wanted to pass for a white⁴ (Filho, 1947/2003).

Mário Filho (1947/2003) interpreted the aesthetics produced by Friedenreich as a form of whitening to hide the association between miscegenation and social position, but decided in his narrative to make the point that he was a *mulatto* to build the positive trajectory of the democratic role of Brazilian culture mirrored in his mixed-race soccer. This would signal the presence of blacks and *mulattos* incorporated into the sport previously intended for white elites. It is observed that the caption in Figure 1 marks elements of Friedenreich's corporal aesthetics and biological origin: straightened hair, as an indicator of whitening, and his *mestiço* origin. This evidence demonstrates how the body, its appearance and racial origins compose a narrative about Friedenreich and the history of Brazilian soccer. Profoundly influenced by Gilberto Freyre⁵, Mário Filho's narrative indicated the space of soccer as another example of national integration of the different people that Brazil received (Soares, 2003).

⁴ Regarding whitening in Brazilian society, see Nogueira (1998).

⁵ Gilberto Freyre wrote the preface of the first edition of *O negro no foot-ball brasileiro*, in 1947.

In contrast to this position, one of the complaints made by the black movement is that of the forms of oppression, shame, and embarrassment that the ideal of whiteness was imposing on black men and women. Thus, the Museu do Futebol, by highlighting Friedenreich's hair manipulation in the subtitles, leaves the observer with a clue about the dilemma of this heroic character: straightening his hair was a way to get away from one of the stigmas that associated the color of *mestiço* or black skin to the lower social positions. Straight hair was certainly one of the markers of whiteness, and, therefore, of social position and beauty. The recurrence of this value expresses the dilemmas experienced by men and women of African descent in a society whose social status passed (and still passes) through people's color lines (Almeida, 2019; Kowarick, 2003; Nascimento, 2016).

In research in the Rio de Janeiro National Library microfilms, we found advertisements in periodicals that, leaning towards the black cause in different contexts, commercialized products intended for hair manipulation, a technique that should be thought of as bleaching resources. Among the many found, we chose, for example, the black press newspaper, *O Clarim* (Informe, 1935, p. 5), which published: "straight hair?... Have you straightened and curled your hair, Amaral? Well look out for Pequita. With application of Pequita, your hair will become lovely". The Imprensa Negra, a collective of journalists working in Sao Paulo in the early decades of the 20th century, aimed not only to denounce the oppression and social exclusion suffered by black men and women, but also to value the achievements and distinctions of its reference group in Brazilian society. In addition, it advertised products and services aimed at the ideals of beauty pursued by blacks at the time, even if some of the beautification technologies were associated, directly or indirectly, with whiteness aesthetic values. Such a question, in theory, might not have been on the agenda of the black movement at the time.

At the Museu da Federação Paulista de Futebol (Paulista Soccer Federation Museum), the player's centenary was remembered in a text by Rubens Ribeiro, a retired journalist, who, at the time of his visit, was still working at the institution as shown in Figure 2 (Annex 1).



Figure 2: The Friedenreich player

Source: Museu da Federação Paulista de Futebol

This rich extensive article signed by the journalist responsible at the Museu da Federação Paulista de Futebol provides important details from the biography of Friedenreich and the clubs he defended. The achievements of his victorious career and his ambiguous racial position in Brazilian society, neither white nor black, son of a German white with a black Brazilian, set the tone for Rubens Ribeiro's text. Regarding Friedenreich's mother, the article indicates, for the first time in the sources consulted, that her name was Matilde. We emphasize that, in the player's trajectory, passages that recall the name of his father, Oscar are not uncommon, especially due to the fact that he accompanies the surname Friedenreich. The mother described by Ribeiro (1996) as "a poor, *mestiço*, almost black girl⁶, but possessing a beauty that immediately captivated him", let us note that the "but" in the sentence indicates that, despite the social and racial origins, she had corporal attributes that allowed his marriage and mobility with a white man. The *mulatto* is one of the symbols of the national identity that associates miscegenation with the unique sensual beauty of *mestiço* women, such identity marks can be seen in the classic works of Gilberto Freyre⁷ and in Brazilian⁸ music, cartoons, art, and poetry. The silence and the almost anonymity of Friedenreich's mother in memory reflect the patriarchal values of Brazilian society, which made the role of women secondary, locating and value them only in specific spaces of private life. Another dimension of the secondary role of women is due to the fact that soccer is seen as a space for private male intercourse, as stated by Elias and Dunning (1992), despite the current advances and the breaking of barriers by women in this sport.

The article goes on to list other important points in his biography, such as the family's socio-economic condition, his initial taste more inclined to the "street" than the aristocratic world of the Sao Paulo elite, access to which would be facilitated by his European surname, a symbol of distinction in that society. This enabled him to move between these two worlds, enough to raise doubts, according to the words of the journalist: "which of Friedenreich's two personalities is more authentic: that of the young man who attended family parties, or the '*mulatto* with green eyes' seeking the company of humble people" (Ribeiro, 1996). Rubens Ribeiro (1996) retrospectively constructs Friedenreich as a mediator of two worlds, that of society and that of soccer: "with him the elitist sport brought from the English pitches had to bow to the magic of the improvised game by blacks and *mulattos*". We have here in the cultural miscegenation, in the encounter between classes

⁶ We note that Rubens Ribeiro's text (1996) reveals, despite being laudatory, a series of stigmas associated with blacks and *mestiços* in Brazil. Regarding the process of labeling and creation of stigmas, see Elias, and Scotson (2000) and Erving Goffman (1963).

⁷ In his classic books, Freyre discussed *Casa grande & senzala* (1933/1992) and *Sobrados e mucambos* (1936), the role of black women and *mulatto* women in Brazilian social formation.

⁸ We could mention several, but only three are enough to exemplify: Lanfranco Aldo Ricardo Vaselli Cortellini Rossi Rossini, called Lan (1925), is an Italian cartoonist based in Brazil who dedicated his cartoons to the figure of the *mulatto*; Di Cavalcanti (1897-1976), Brazilian painter, immortalized *mulattos* on his canvases; Dorival Caymmi, Brazilian singer and songwriter, also sang about *mulattos* in her songs; Moraes Moreira (1947-2020), musician and composer, in the song "Meninas do Brasil" (Moreira, 1980, track 04), he wrote four verses that explain the symbolism of the *mulatto*: "three girls from Brazil, three democratic hearts/ There is modern construction of friendliness *mulatto*/ (...) God made me Brazilian, creator and creature/ A race document by the grace of mixing / From my body in motion, the three graces of Brazil/ They have the color of beauty".

and races, the trail left by Gilberto Freyre that became a popular interpretation “inside and outside Brazil” (Skidmore, 1994, p. 32).

In his laudatory text, Rubens Ribeiro (1996) referred to Friedenreich’s contribution to the aesthetics of Brazilian soccer, the clubs he defended, details of his nickname, his presence in the record book as the greatest scorer in world soccer with 1.329 goals, until his death, poor, forgotten and seen as not very consistent with the condition of first national hero in soccer. He achieved the unprecedented victory in the South American championship in 1919, when he scored the winning goal three minutes into the second period of extra time, after a zero zero draw in both the normal time and the first half of extra time.

The following photos were on display at the Museu Afro-Brasil, in July 2010, in an exhibition named “De Arthur Friedenreich a Edson Arantes do Nascimento: o Negro no futebol brasileiro”. It highlighted the presence of black players in the history of soccer in Brazil as a central element in the formation of national identity, and was inspired by the book “*O negro no futebol brasileiro*”, which had its first edition in 1947 and the second, extended, in 1964 (Filho, 1947/2003). As the book highlights the process of conquest of this social space by the *black*, Friedenreich represents the first hero of Brazilian soccer and Pelé, the definitive hero, the one who would prove the definitive process of democratization of soccer in Brazil (Soares, 1999).

The figure of Friedenreich in the winning goal of the 1919 South American championship, more than the goal itself, produced symbolic effectiveness, demonstrating that soccer at that time had become a space for expression of racial democracy in Brazil. Friedenreich’s popularity showed that white exclusivity in soccer was coming to an end. Mário Filho also wanted to point out that the democratization of soccer started at the moment when this sport had become a place of expression of merit beyond social and ethnic origins. What mattered was victory, the ball in the goal, at the back of the net: “scored by a white, a *mulatto*, a black. It mattered little” (Filho, 1947/2003, p. 112). It should be noted that this book marked and indicated the path of much of the sociological and historical literature on soccer in Brazil (Soares, 1999), and also the course of museums that deal with this theme. However, at the Museu Afro-Brasil, the intention is to clearly demonstrate the fundamental role blacks had in the glories achieved by Brazilian soccer in the world.



Figure 3: The black in brazilian football

Source: Emanuel Araújo's archive, Museu Afro-Brasil

The following photograph was enlarged, occupying the whole area of a large wall as a panel in the Museu Afro-Brasil exhibition.



Figure 4: Fried! Fried!

Source: Emanuel Araújo's Archive, Museu Afro-Brasil

The image to the right of Figure 4 shows the page from *A Gazeta*, August 9 1931, and the headline exclaims Fried's name. We can observe the player placed as a figure that "hovers in the air" against a background of spectators. The text below the newspaper page bears the following caption:

Fried, after twenty years of official soccer, is still at the forefront of national soccer. Today, as in 22, 23 and 25, Fried will deal with the Gauchos, who have now returned stronger, more famous. And he will not only be the consecrated master, the leader of the attack, but also the captain of the team. This is one of the few times that Fried will be the captain, since he never had sympathizers. This time, however, "El Tigre" cannot fail to accept the mission of leading his companions and we are certain he will know how to be the same master, the same idol as always. (Fried! Fried!, 1931, p. 1)

In the image on the left in Figure 4, from *A Gazeta* of September 3 1934, the headline highlights that "o Palestra is no longer undefeated". The goal that would have broken Palmeiras's unbeaten record was scored by Friedenreich. Below the photo, it reads:

with a magnificent effort, Fried took the title of undefeated champion of the Palestra, yesterday. The victory was displayed in his painting in the classic collage - We see in the picture above a final action of the tricolor. Araken, when falling, passes the ball to Fried. Junqueira opposes "El Tigre" and prepares to perform the clever manoeuver. (O Palestra deixou de ser invicto, 1934, p. 1)

Friedenreich became "El Tigre" for his impeccable performance in the 1919 South American championship, currently named Copa America, and the epithet was given to

him by the Uruguayan press, impressed by the player's technical quality. At the museum, the banner displayed in Figure 5 indicated this epithet that the press started to use to refer to Friedenreich's prowess on the field.



Figure 5: The feats of Friedenreich

Source: Emanuel Araújo's Archive, Museu Afro-Brasil (credits: Bruno Abrahão)

Both the photographs of the newspapers mounted in the form of a panel, and this banner, which reproduced a cartoon from the time of “El Tigre”, had the function of recalling the deeds of a Brazilian soccer hero who should be a source of pride for Afro-descendants and for Brazilians in general. It is noteworthy that this type of exhibition, in the referred museum, has the objective intention of heroizing Afro-descendant characters, a legitimate position in a society whose racism is structural and still has difficulties recognizing the permanence of the slave culture in social relations (Souza, 2019).

The exhibition's curator, Emanuel Araújo, appropriated the work of Mário Filho in the same sense of hetero-identification of black players, albeit in a social period and in an institution in which the desired effect of meaning necessarily passes through the demands of visibility and recognition of Afro-descendants in Brazilian society. With his work, Mário Filho (2003) marked the incorporation of blacks and the democratization of soccer, in the sense of racial democracy by Gilberto Freyre (Soares, 1999, 2003). The exhibition at the Museu Afro-Brasil, when reviewing the theme and the work of Mário Filho, made appropriations and readings to highlight the role of blacks in soccer in the construction of national identity and to raise contemporary issues and demands of the black movement, such as the denunciation of racism and the valorization of blackness with its history of national heroes. At the end of the exhibition, there was a message signed by Emanuel Araújo, who, in addition to being the curator of the exhibition, was also the museum director (Annex 2).

Contextualizing the exhibition, the text of Emanuel Araújo referred to the origins of the sport in China, in 19th century Europe and its arrival in Brazil courtesy of Charles

Miller. It also reproduced an official and essentialist discourse that makes soccer almost a natural dimension of human existence when referring to Asia of antiquity. Charles Miller was the introducer and representative of soccer of and for the economic and cultural elites in Brazil. However, this sport was not restricted to this status group, as it was appropriated by the lower classes, including blacks in the urban centers of the early 20th century. The origins of soccer that Emanuel Araújo describes in a few lines is the story popularly disseminated, which contradicts much of the current historiography on the spread of soccer in Brazil (Jesus, 1998).

Emanuel Araújo reproduces Mário Filho's equation: soccer, when white, was English and for the elite, but, when black and mixed, it belonged to the people and became Brazilian (Soares, 1999). He draws attention to the social transformation process of soccer in Brazil, as it involves large portions of the population (blacks, *mestiço* and the poor in general), for its ludic dimension in the overflow of emotions and for its potential to promote social inclusion through personal merit. Although he recognizes academic studies that have focused on soccer, Emanuel's text highlights an academic gap, identified by the museum's curator-director, with regard to the admission of blacks and *mestiços* to elite Brazilian soccer clubs. He resorts to the preface by Gilberto Freyre in *O negro do futebol brasileiro* (Filho, 1947/2003), to find, in the negro and in the *mestiço* soul of Brazilian culture, the element that made soccer unique in the country and conferred identity upon it.

Mário Filho's work dates from the period when, for example, Gilberto Freyre elaborated, as already mentioned, an optimistic reinterpretation of the national character, overcoming pessimism by giving a positive meaning to the miscegenation debate in Brazil (Skidmore, 1976, 1994). The ideology of miscegenation valued the fusion of races and cultures that gave rise to the Brazilian people. With the idea of synthesis, mixture and cultural encounter, the definition of national identity was reached, of what would characterize the "Brazilian being", a definition that would be expressed in different social practices, among them, soccer. Thus, the exhibition conveys the message that when soccer incorporated poor blacks, *mestiços*, and whites, it became a metonym of the national character (Franzini, 2003).

João Lyra Filho (1973), when producing one of the germinal works on the Sociology of Sport in Brazil, followed this tradition. The *negro*, with the quality of his soccer, caused the democratization of this social space, previously destined for young white people and managed by "certain sports leaders who are jealous of their color, their imported fabric apparel and their social position" (Lyra Filho, 1973, p. 81). The competitive soccer market forced, even against the will of the ruling elite, the incorporation of blacks and *mulattos*, selected from the mass of people, into the elite clubs. Lyra Filho (1973) suggests that the democratization and appropriation of this sport occurred because "soccer has taken hold in Brazil and here it has been growing exponentially thanks, in large part, to blacks and *mulattos*. I suppose that this truth cannot be contradicted; the facts stand for themselves" (p. 89). Lyra Filho argues that soccer, when restricted to the circles of the white elite, was just a foreign fashion, but, when it incorporated blacks and *mulattos*, taste for the sport became popular and became Brazilian (Soares, 1999). In fact, Gilberto Freyre

and Mário Filho's readings on the role of soccer in Brazilian social formation became hegemonic until the 1990s, both in journalism and in the Social Sciences (Soares, 1999).

The remembrance of Friedenreich and other great black players in the collection presented in this exhibition, in addition to the virtuosity of the players, aimed at a type of communication that intended to affect the subjectivities of the visitors – subjectivity that must be confronted with the dilemmas of race and racism in our society. One form of racism is the erasure or invisibility of the role of blacks in nation-building; therefore, the exhibition, objectively, gave visibility to the virtue of the black man in the development of the victorious Brazilian soccer. But, Emanuel Araújo, without losing critical dimension, closes the text of the exhibition (Figure 6) highlighting the manifestations of racist injuries still present in today's soccer, and questions whether soccer “could really be” an expression and access to Brazilian culture and a space for “the ascension of the black sportsman”. The curator here reported that black players were called monkeys in different audiences around the world (Abrahão & Soares, 2011). Note that the museum, when exhibiting soccer and the great afrodescendent players, chose to reconcile the vision of struggle, integration and heroization of blacks in soccer, and to provoke criticism of racism still present in soccer and in society.

CONCLUSION

What meanings does Friedenreich assume in museums in Sao Paulo city that have been the subject of his biography? Making a synthesis, he appears in these places of memory as a symbol of the success of mixed-race soccer, of mobility in this social space and as a character that marks racial tensions and whitening processes. His racial identification in the present and his high soccer competence in the past make him an appropriate symbol for the social memory in the exhibitions on Brazilian soccer. For the exhibitions as a whole, Friedenreich symbolizes both the criticism of his supposed whitening strategies and the identification of a black hero who dignified the ethnic group and built the saga of Brazilian soccer.

The ambiguity surrounding his racial identification made him one of the symbols of Brazilian soccer and one of the black heroes who invaded this space for competence and merit, contributing to the democratization of soccer, but also reveals the specificity of discrimination and racism in the country. Friedenreich's biography is related to the characteristics of “Brazilian prejudice” interpreted, among other scholars, by Oracy Nogueira (1998) as “brand prejudice” (p. 170). Unlike irreducible racial prejudice and class prejudice, the specificity of prejudice that developed in Brazil reached even black and brown people from the upper strata, as seems to be the case of the former player.

In Brazil, says Nogueira (1998), individuals are classified and classify themselves as white, brown or light *mulattos*, dark brown and black *mulattos*, taking into account the absence or concentration of negroid traits (pigmentation density, hair texture and color, nose and lip shapes, etc.), that is, the appearance resulting from the combination or fusion of European and African traits. Consequently, the status or success of the *negro* individual

depends, to a large extent, on the compensation and neutralization of his traits – or his aggravation “by association with other conditions, innate or acquired, socially considered as having a positive or negative value - degree of education, occupation, aesthetic aspect, personal treatment, artistic gift, character traits, etc.” (Nogueira, 1998, p. 200).

In this case, if the straightening of hair, the frequenting of clubs in the Sao Paulo aristocracy and the father’s surname seem to have neutralized a supposed mark of black ancestry, represented by curly hair, the mother’s poor origin and her initiation to soccer on pitches on waste land on the outskirts of the capital of Sao Paulo, Friedenreich, for sure, knew how to whiten to have a prominent place in that social space destined for the upper classes of society, be it for its social strategies and, mainly, for its unparalleled sporting merits. Recurrently recalled by the museums that hold the memory of Brazilian soccer, Friedenreich’s biography draws attention to the ethnic and national pride invested in building the first great idol of this sport, while revealing the ambiguities of racial identification in Brazil.

Translation: Brian Hazlehurst

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ANNEX

ANNEX 1: RUBENS RIBEIRO, JULY 1996 (MUSEU DA FEDERAÇÃO PAULISTA DE FUTEBOL)

“Arthur Friedenreich, ‘El Tigre’ [The Tiger]

Son of Oscar Friedenreich, German immigrant and prosperous merchant from Blumenau, Santa Catarina, married to Matilde, a poor young woman, half-breed, almost black, but possessing a beauty that immediately captivated him.

For this reason, ‘El Tigre’ was born a *mulatto*, but with green eyes. With the liberation of slaves in 1888, most of the Southern farm owners underwent a crisis, which resulted in the fall of the Empire and the proclamation of the Republic.

Oscar was one of those affected. So he made the decision to move to Sao Paulo, where there was already a well established German colony, exclusive, but which did not fail to help patricians who came from abroad. Through this colony, Oscar was able to establish himself again in commerce and earn money, enough for he and his family to live in relative comfort.

The family went to live at 8 Rua Victória, an old house with a door and three windows that faced an old kerosene streetlamp, a favorite spot for night owls, who gathered there to the accompaniment of weeping guitars and melancholic serenades.

It was in this house that Arthur Friedenreich was born on July 18, 1892, half light-skinned and half dark, with curly hair.

At the time when Friedenreich started to enjoy chasing after a ball, soccer was an elite sport. A poor boy, Friedenreich grew up among street children, who had no access to the aristocratic sport practiced by Mackenzie College students and club members - the elite of Sao Paulo at the time. At 12, in the midst of important people, he already played for the first team of Sao Paulo, which had nothing to do with the Sao Paulo Athletic Club, much less with the current club, Morumbi. It was a minor team founded by the guys from the Bexiga district.

It was his German origin that allowed the boy Arthur to bridge the gap between soccer played in the elegant clubs frequented by families of English and German immigrants – and the boys’ soccer, organized on waste land on the outskirts.

As a member of Clube Germânia (now E. C. Pinheiros) and a Mackenzie student, he cultivated with the boys in street games, the skill and sense of improvisation that marked Brazilian soccer as one of the most creative in the world.

These antecedents resulted in the appearance of a young man with a double personality. His soccer was so superb that everyone forgot they were watching a *mulatto* player in action that Germania had mistakenly accepted. And, just as the presence of distinguished athletes, such as Rubem Salles, Barthô and others was celebrated, the art

of that skinny young man, who was beginning to draw the admiration of the public with his disconcerting moves, was applauded.

And when he appeared on the poor pitches, the opposite occurred: he looked like a 'daddy's little boy' meddling in poor boys' soccer. But they soon discovered that the boy Arthur 'was one of them', simple, disaffected. A good street kid and a good friend.

The only question that remained was which of Friedenreich's two personalities would be the most authentic: that of the young man who attended family parties, or the 'green-eyed *mulatto*' inclined to seek coexistence with humble people.

With it, the elitist sport brought from the English pitches had to bow to the magic of the game improvised by blacks and *mulattos*. The revolution brought about in this sport by Friedenreich was great, as he introduced the short dribble, the improvised pass, the swing and the flourishes of a disconcerting game. Despite being slight and aged only 17, he faced the violent methods of the soccer teams of the aristocratic clubs fearlessly. He started to defend the newly founded C. A. Ipiranga, to which he had transferred without his father's approval.

Subsequently, the player's disagreements, allied to the decadence of the new club, led him to accept an invitation from C. A. Paulistano, where he remained from 1917 to 1930, only leaving when the soccer team was deactivated. Next, Fried gathered athletes from the former A. A. das Palmeiras and from Paulistano itself to found Sao Paulo F. C., for which he won the 1931 Paulista Championship, scoring 32 goals in 25 games.

In 1932, during the Constitutionalist Revolution, Friedenreich donated all his trophies, medals and prizes to the rebels. He enlisted and took command of 800 men, all sportsmen.

Three years later, when playing for Santos F. C., he ended his career at the age of 43, in a friendly game against River Plate of Argentina, in Rio de Janeiro, wearing the Flamengo shirt, in honor of the Rio fans.

On the occasion of the 1919 South American championship, together with the Uruguayan delegation, came journalists Maurício do Valle d'Amico, Eduardo Arrachavaleta, Lorenzo Sierra, Augusto Borges and Antonio Batista. Upon hearing what Zibecchi had said of Fried (author of the goal that gave Brazil the title) – 'ni la fatiga lo vence', they gave the Brazilian idol the immortal nickname 'El Tigre', first emperor of a dynasty that later included Leônidas da Silva, Garrincha, Pelé and others. Friedenreich also had his name included in the Guinness Book of Records" as top scorer in world soccer, with 46 goals more than Pelé's 1,283.

The 1,329 goals he won since his first game are registered by the CBF and recognized by FIFA. On September 16, 1928, he scored seven goals in a single game (9-0 against União Lapa), a record that would only be broken in November 1964 by Pelé, who scored 8 in the 11-0 defeat of Botafogo de Ribeirão Preto.

Seven times champion of Sao Paulo, four times champion of Brazil, twice champion of South America, seventeen times champion for different regional, national or international tournaments.

This is the summary of the achievements of a phenomenal soccer player who died at the age of 77, poor, sick and forgotten, in a house donated by Sao Paulo FC. He had

even been received by the President of the Republic, Arthur Bernardes as a national hero, after the conquest of the 1919 South American championship”.

ANNEX 2: EMANOEL ARAÚJO, CURATOR DIRECTOR (MUSEU AFRO-BRASIL)

“Having originated in China, soccer crossed the Atlantic in the 19th century and reached us through the English, namely Charles Miller. It was introduced primarily to the upper and middle classes of the society emerging in the last century in the sports clubs of the Paulista elite. I believe the same occurred in Rio de Janeiro and all the other Brazilian states where they had discovered the success of this sporting modality, and how much it moved the Latin soul of the South Americans.

Many works and theses have been written about Brazilian soccer. Analyzed from different aspects, ranging across those of anthropology, sociology, ethnology, chronicles, journalism, poetry, writing, curiosity, those seduced and in love with soccer appreciate the only sport that combines dance, a kind of corporal control and many clever moves, performing balancing acts where the magic is controlling a ball that, at times, has its own caprices as if a live being capable of transforming the magic into moments of success or of the most terrible failure.

The fact is that soccer, already a national passion for some time, will always be a reason for social transformations for those who practice the sport, ascending and transcending according to their talent and athletic qualities.

Thus, soccer, like Carnival and other popular manifestations in Brazil, occupies much space in the media due to its capacity for involvement at the most varied levels in Brazilian society, its great ludic enthusiasm contained in this form of dispelling the frustrations regarding the social conquests of a people that need these means of escape while awaiting social inclusion that adopts them as real citizens.

Academia has, at times, been occupied with this great stage of social inclusion and this frenzy of interminable passions. However, the contributions pale regarding the study of the entry of negroes and *mestiços* into the so-called elite sports, even though such changes have their own rules.

Gilberto Freyre, the author of *Casa grande e senzala*, commented in the preface of the book, *Negro no futebol* by Mário Filho:

Mário Filho puts us face-to-face with the conflict between two immense forces – the rationality and irrationality – in the behavior or lives of men. In this case, the men in Brazil. Men of a hybrid society, *mestiço*, full of Amerindian and African roots, not only Europeans. Sublimating as much what is more primitive, younger, more elementary in our culture, it was natural that soccer in Brazil, in being elevated to the status of national institution, would also elevate the negro, the Afrodescendant, the mulatto, the *cafuzo*, the *mestiço*.

Of course, soccer, as a national manifestation, exposes the true face of the country, with its prejudices now seen even in the manifestations of the spectators, and internally among the players themselves.

Is soccer really a part of Brazilian culture?
Is it a port of entry to Brazilian culture?
Could it be a gateway to social ascension for the black sportsman?”.

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