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Mediatized soccer, cultural identity and recognition in digital communicative flows

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Abstract

Soccer is one of the Brazilian most important cultural traits, widely disseminated and capable of mobilizing different affections in its mediatized condition. This article aims to explore the constitution of a cultural identity guided by the mediatization of Brazilian soccer and its resulting communicative expressions of recognition. Therefore, this paper explores an introductory journey of analysis based on multiple cases involving racism, sexism and homophobia. The corpus' examination is carried out through content and discourse analysis. As a result, independent initiatives on political causes are the most prominent ones, in addition to the categories of degradation or offense and historical resumption of messages mentioning personal profiles. Discourse analysis shows how identities are constructed through mediated and mediatized interdiscourses about soccer in the digital environment.

Keywords

Cultural Identity; Recognition; Mediatized Soccer.

Introduction

The media coverage of soccer is something that makes this sport go beyond its usual meaning as a resource for human sociability - like the childish playing - to an activity in transformation because of its symbiosis with the media. The changes caused by the mediatization of soccer - although it may happen in relation to organizational performance issues, as pointed out by Lopes (2005) when talking about *scouters* - is more significant because of the way the sport is structured based on the media's functioning, in particular the financial resources derived from it and its consequent institutionalized logic. The relationship of the fans with the sport is modified through this process (Satuf, 2014) and soccer becomes dependent on the structure created by the media coverage, as pointed out by Moni et al. (2016) and later by Christofolletti (2017).

Helal (2011) highlights the growth of studies on sports in the field of Communication, including its importance for the constitution of a national identity. The author also brings to the forefront provocations regarding the space that this discussion would occupy in a postmodern identity approach. Therefore, this paper seeks to stress the relevance that sport still bears for the construction of a national multiplicity through its current media logic, revealing one of the several methodological perspectives that can be used to analyze a cultural and financially expressive environment. In 2019 alone, the segment moved about R\$6.8 billion, an amount concentrated in the largest national soccer teams whose two main sources of revenue are TV rights and player transfers (Sports Value, 2020). Add to this the relevance of soccer in the national culture (Damatta, 2006), enabling or denying a subject's recognition by the gaze of the other. The younger generations are the most prominent group among the fans of soccer in Brazil. This group, however, is constituted mostly by male and by the ones who use the internet as a source of information (IPSOS, 2017).

The perspective supported in this article understands that the cultural identity wrought by soccer also enables variations in the subject's recognition depending on time and space, elements that can influence them in their day-to-day interactions. The term recognition is understood as the intersubjective result of ways to perform social interactions whose main objective is to receive moral respect, considering the participants of such interaction in their environment (Honneth, 2017). As recognition is shaped in an intersubjective way, in a dialogical relationship of exchange between the social Self and the internalized Self, there is also the important influence of identity. As the expression chosen by the author explains, the recognition is not established horizontally, but through a dynamic of struggles and negotiations between both subjects and social groups.

Considering the maintenance of social challenges in Latin America (ECLAC, 2019), to understand the influence of communication on identity and recognition can also be a way to help those countries with better living conditions. Although the demands addressed in this article can be found in other locations and include global issues discussed by the International Football Federation, such as racism; the present work focuses on the national level, considering the participation of soccer as a trait of the Brazilian cultural identity and its intersections with the income distribution of the country, as well as the questions about time and space that are brought by these discussions. The hegemony of the media and its effects is not the goal of this proposal: what is sought here is a logic of interaction involved by the moderation of media culture.

From what was discussed above, to consider soccer as a symbolic system of representations that articulates various identities and modes of recognition it is to acknowledge the contributions of these issues both in its theoretical and empirical dimensions. This paper, therefore, aims to answer critically the following questions: how is the formation of Brazilian cultural identity evidenced by soccer and how it reflects the social negotiations wrought by the subjects? And how do these communicative expressions act in convergence with the subject's recognition in agendas made possible by the mediatization of

soccer? Thus, this article aims to explore the construction of a cultural identity guided by the mediatization of Brazilian soccer and the resulting communicative expressions of recognition made by the subjects immersed in this context.

Mediatized soccer and Brazilian cultural identity

Although there is a convergence between the English origins of soccer and the consequent influence and breath that this sport conquered around the world (Oliveira, 2012), there are also older points of origin dated from 1400 to 1250 BC, linked to religious practices (Haro, 2009) such as the *pelota* game of the Mayan people. In Brazil, a similar practice is verified in indigenous peoples, although without sacrifices or aggressive rituals. This tradition is compared to the current way of playing soccer:

However, there is an even more positive contribution of the Amerindian boy to children's games and European sports: that of the rubber ball he used in a header game. This activity was played by the natives with a ball probably coated with caucho¹, which to the first Europeans seemed to be composed of a very light wood; they hit it with their backs, sometimes lying down to do it (Freyre, 2019, p. 21)

Although it is not possible to see as synonymous the various types of games highlighted above and the current way of playing soccer, the analogy with the ways of engaging with this sport and its classification in older societies can help us in the reflection about the development of these practices through time. Caillois (1958) proposes different principles of the game among which the most important are competition (*agôn*) and imitation (*mimicry*), in addition to two ways of playing it: one characterized by the taste of difficulty, in which the main goal is to conquer moral values; and the other by the spontaneous joy this entertainment provide, which children's games appear as the first model for this way of playing. Professional and amateur soccer, fans in imitation practices, rituals involved in the sport as a competition and other games later directed to religious practices seem interesting ways of thinking about the socio-historical development of soccer.

Given the existence of different antecedents of soccer that had contributed to its anthropological construction, the contemporary form of the sport, although considered popular, had its origin in the English elites and was later spread in Brazil by sailors. As pointed out by Becker (2011), soccer needed a lot of equipment and many rules to be practiced, restricting it to those who could buy expensive objects and attend social clubs. But over time, the British influenced the railwaymen, who in turn would have excited the railway builders.

It was only after a while that soccer became a recreation for blacks and poor people (Rodrigues, 2003), who were soon prohibited from joining teams in the early 1900s (Becker, 2011). Thus, what is seen in this brief discussion on racial and socioeconomic exclusion is that, through soccer, it is possible to question social and identity issues:

The games are popular arts, collective and social constructs that relate themselves to the main trends and actions of any culture. Like institutions, games are extensions of the social man and the political body, as technologies are extensions of the biological organism. [...] As extensions of the popular response to work pressure, games are faithful models of a culture. Incorporate both the action and the reaction of entire populations into a single dynamic image (McLuhan, 2000, p. 264)

It is still possible to extract from the author a discussion about the potential of representation that sports enable, both in a social and an individual level. Damatta (2006) supports this argument by exposing the relief of the pressures of work and the amplification of rituals through the cult of the symbolic. Sports

¹ Caucho is a native tree of the Amazon rainforest, from which a latex used to make rubber is extracted.

symbols, as well as religious ones, carry a lot of concepts that were built over time. However, it must be stressed out that as time goes by soccer has gained autonomy and idiosyncrasies capable of producing ruptures with the ball games that preceded it. As already anticipated by Bourdieu (1983), modern sport is part of a field with agents and institutions that build their own rules and ways of functioning. This field is a structure made possible through the previously constituted limits of this sport, but that no longer operate from the popular bias of the traditional games and their rituals linked to other social practices, but from the schools of elites that contemplate soccer as a physical activity with a proper calendar. Thus, the media influences that we will be described later add another layer to the autonomy of soccer in relation to older traditional games, modifying the conditions envisioned by genetic structuralism.

Regarding identity issues, as pointed out by Damo (2001), cheering for a club brings important notions of belonging and anonymity, since it is virtually possible for anyone to be part of a group that has songs and colors in common, regardless of creed, race, age, gender or economic position. On the other hand, not only the subject belongs to the group, but this group is inserted in broader dynamics of identification. By considering the proposition of Stuart Hall about the concept of cultural identity (2006) and his subsequent understanding of the late modernity's subject as a historically defined, mobile, fragmented, and multiple individual, the identity's dependence on culture provides cohesiveness to a multiplicity that feeds itself in a symbolic system, generating representations that are crucial to the individuals.

It is also worth remembering, from the point of view of cultural identity, the proposition of Martín-Barbero (2008) and its related notion of hybrid cultures (Canclini, 2001, 2006). Crossbreeding and hybridization discuss the plural characteristic of Latin American societies, moving away from the duality between the dominant and the dominated and recognizing the multiple actors that participate in this scenario: popular culture, mass culture and cultural industry in synergy with the social influences that endure in the outermost territorialities. Contradictorily, it is the evidence of this mixture that echoes socioeconomic differences. Media consumption, but also the mediatized consumption (Trindade and Perez, 2016) help us to understand the positioning of subjects in society. Thus, both English and Latin American cultural studies encourage us to reflect about soccer; specifically in the so-called third circuit (Canclini, 2001). This circuit is the digital environment where a weakening of national identity by globally monetized technology and entertainment takes place. As the author summarizes, "one must take into account the diversity of artistic and media repertoires that contribute to the re-elaboration of identities. [...] Identity is theater and politics, representation and action" (Canclini, 2001, p. 172-176).

Together with the development of soccer in Brazil, we also need to highlight the mediatization of culture and society, which show us visible transformations in everyday life. Hjarvard (2012) reminds us that the institutionalization of the media and its influence on the changes of other social institutions such as politics, family and religion determine the process of mediatization.

Mediatization emerged as a new theoretical framework to reconsider old issues fundamental to the role and influence of the media in culture and society. In particular, the concept of mediatization has proved to be productive in understanding how the media disseminates itself to, confuses with, and influences other fields or social institutions (Hjarvard, 2012, p. 54).

Bearing in mind these discussions, it is not only the technological increase of the media and its application in soccer that is analyzed here - although the technicality influences the possible ways of interaction with the sport -, but also the understanding of how soccer has been thought by the logic of the media. The independence of the media and the growth of sport as a spectacle, a mass entertainment, set up a relationship of complementarity that has changed processes of mediation, but, on the other hand, has enhanced the reach of audiences. The vigilance of the VAR (Video Assistant Referee), the sponsorship of brands, the causes supported by players and fans, the means of interaction performed by different

groups and the need for visibility highlight the changes on the mediatized logic of this sport.

Soccer today is one of the few entertainment productions that, after the establishment of streaming and video on demand services (see Griwodz et al., 1997), is still dependent on a synchronicity, i.e., the tangibility of the moment when the game takes place. For the popularization of the sport, it was not enough to accommodate those interested in stadiums: the game would have to be developed from the media, to expand interactions with the public (Hjarvard, 2012). Therefore, it is added to face-to-face confrontation the expanded interaction afforded by the digital.

This change, which adds the term mediatized to sport (Moni et al., 2016 and Christofolletti, 2017) also evokes a new business logic, which takes up the historical past of soccer just for the elite and its consequent socioeconomic segregation. Thus, digital interfaces at the same time that increase the reach beyond the physical limits of the stadium, can also segregate through new consumer logics, such as subscription plans or high ticket prices to access entertainment events. Hence, the segmentation of consumers regarding access to information and entertainment, as well as the differentiated interactions between regular and specific audiences, should be considered. Mediatized consumption creates new perspectives of interaction, with increasingly active participation of the public in the relationship with brands (which includes soccer clubs). Along with the sport's financial return comes the possibility to produce content previously limited to vehicles of mass communication (Han, 2014). From this analysis between mediatized soccer and cultural identity we open up the possibility of dialogue with the authors of cultural studies.

Mediatized soccer as a matrix for recognition

As Martín-Barbero (2008) anticipates, communication tells us more about recognition than about knowledge. In addition to the political-epistemological reinforcement made by the author, we can observe in this context that there is a sense of respect for diversity and the other, the opportunity to understand popular culture in its communicational mediations and, consequently, the recognition of what consumption, appropriation, new uses or assignments of unscheduled functions can speak about the plurality and the conflicts in Latin American. Thus, the Cultural Matrix refers to the presence of sport and soccer in the Brazilian daily life; and the Industrial Format is mediatized soccer in convergence with its related products (televised games, stadium entertainment, physical goods, media content, among others). Here the consumption takes place from the production logic of the teams; a logic which is institutionalized by various brands and that generates new industrial formats.

In a more analytical view on recognition, rescuing George Mead's Hegelian morality and pragmatism, there is a counterpoint to earlier critical theories of the sociological deficit of moral and power duality, which have hampered applicability in the current social contexts. Therefore, Axel Honneth's studies approach a structure focused on empiric analyzes:

(...) interest him those conflicts that arise from an experience of social disrespect, an attack on personal or collective identity, capable of triggering an action that seeks to restore relations of mutual recognition or precisely to develop them on a higher evolutionary level (Nobre, 2017, p. 18).

The researcher breaks the recognition down into three dimensions: love, understood as the primary relationships between subjects with affective closeness (emotional dedication); law, understood as the moral imputability promoted legally between subjects (cognitive respect); and solidarity, which covers the values of the individual in society by means of his abilities and qualities (social esteem) (Honneth, 2017). Thus, it considers that social conflicts emerge from complex struggles and not from a lethargy promoted coercively. This dynamic environment challenges different dimensions of recognition,

improving the conditions of respect through the understanding of the other and of oneself (Table 1). However, the disrespect is also present in Honneth's proposal.

The digital ambience, in particular, is constructed as a result of different conflicts triggered by the subjects in situations that cross the boundaries of respect. Through the reading of the philosopher Byung-Chun Han (2014), the storms of indignation unleashed by some individuals - despite treating controversial topics of social groups with furor - do not have the paramount force to manage changes over them. When thinking about the current scenario of mediatization and its connection to the post-modern ways of life, it becomes clear the overflow of human interaction exchanged through this language. In this direction, Campanella (2019) proposes the term media recognition as a new model of prestige in which the historical struggles of underprivileged portions of the population give space to a popularity much more individualized in digital communication platforms. The author's work, albeit without empirical discussion, reinforces the importance of communication for recognition and understands the possibility of its coexistence with traditional recognition by stating that "in some moments, when it is possible to note specific media practices of activist or minority groups, one can even affirm that both recognition structures are mixed" (Campanella, 2019, p. 2).

Table 1 – Structure of the Recognition's Social Relations

Modes of recognition	Emotional dedication	Cognitive respect	Societal esteem
Personality dimensions	Deprived and affective nature	Moral imputability	Capacity and faculty
Forms of recognition	Primary relationships (love, friendship)	Legal relationships (rights)	Community of values (solidarity)
Evolutionary potential		Generalization, materialization	Individualization (equalization)
Practical self-reliance	Self-confidence	Self-respect	Self-esteem
Modes of disrespect	Abuse and violation	Deprivation of rights and exclusion	Degradation and offense
Threatened components of personality	Physical integrity	Social integrity	"Honor", dignity

Source: Honneth (2017, p. 211).

The hypothesis raised here is divergent from the one raised by the authors mentioned above, although it shares some aspects related to our daily projection. Thus, without disregarding the search for individualistic and momentary media recognition, nor the faceless ferocity of digital attacks, it is observed that weak institutionalized dynamics arise from new bodies filled with media potentialities, such as brands. Thus, the analysis of the digital environment becomes relevant to understand who are the executors of this process and how the interactions occur between them. Celebrities and mediatized soccer, in this case, are also seen as branded products: agents that generate high involvement and become mediatized bodies, that is, devices capable of bearing and transmitting meanings from a culture to another. These mediated materialities, in the articulation with other subjects, constitute identities. Therefore, not only specific or minority groups of activism mediate the possibilities of recognition, but also mediated brands are able to do so.

The proposal for recognition has been questioned in the environments that suffer from multiple

social demands and income differences. The researcher Nancy Fraser reports that group identity supplants class interest in a scenario that culture overlaps socioeconomic redistribution (Fraser, 2001). For the author, an effective recognition is only possible by combining cultural policies of difference with social policies of equality. It cannot be forgotten, however, that affirmative and transformative remedies give different outputs to this attempt. Here, the recognition is considered not as an isolated means of emancipation for the subject, but as a valid concept to understand an important previous step of this occurrence, which is the circulation of themes in the digital ambience and the consequent contact between subjects of different backgrounds. Using other words: there is in the Axel Honneth's recognition theory methodological potentialities for the field of Communication only if we bear in mind the various texts put into circulation both in the digital and analogical spheres.

The materiality of redistribution hinders the analysis made exclusively through the field of Communication, since it does not have in the discourse its sufficiently derived projection. This element, however, does not neutralize the evaluation possibilities related to the affirmative and transformative dimensions of recognition and identity. The cases of Yony González in the game Grêmio x Fluminense (racism) on May 5, 2019, the match temporarily interrupted by the screams of the crowd (homophobia) in the game Vasco x São Paulo on 25 August 2019 and gender inequality observed in the Women's World Cup matches are examples of episodes triggering a broad discursive circulation that can generate different levels of recognition.

In this sense, cultural identity is understood only by a part of the total national potentiality, which is soccer and its presence in the different regions of the country. Thus, by promoting discussions about groups and issues that challenge subjects, identity as metamorphosis (Ciampa, 1984) arises here in the sense of exploring a represented self, an idealized self and a fixed self in time. Moreover, the public dimension, through regulation, can trigger institutional and individual reactions. As examples we have the new FIFA Disciplinary Code, which allows the ending of a game in case of racism, and the recommendation of the Superior Court of Sports Justice that the arbitration committees register in summary the cases of homophobia and transphobia (Globo, 2019).

Methodology

An exploratory research was developed with the study of multiple cases. According to Yin (2001), this high number of cases has the potential to outline future objects and their analysis strategies when understanding complex social phenomena, including those related to subjects. The purpose here is to expose the analytical potential of these cases, although from an initial perspective of methodological construction. That is, our goal is only to come up with a feasible methodological path.

The corpus' selection was made looking at cases that represented different identity issues. We have selected Twitter for data collection because of its environment constituted by a network of different agents who participate in active discussions (Yang, 2016). In addition, Twitter has the expanded possibilities to collect and to post content with a certain degree of freedom (Morstatter, 2013). The relationship of the social network with sport to articulate other discussions is already highlighted by D'Andrea (2016), even if she uses a distinct methodological path when utilizing network analysis. Nonetheless, this approach is used in our discussion by means of valuing the relationship between actors, which occurs here through a qualitative method. We used the software ATLAS.ti 8™ to perform the data collection and the analysis, respecting the following sequence: definition of the search and collection chains, descriptive analysis, excerpts from interactions between users, analysis of the content and discourse of these excerpts. The search was limited to a period of one week and the targeting occurred for three cases of disrespect: racism, homophobia and sexism.

The search chains used were "racism soccer (racist OR ape OR black OR nigger OR prejudice OR

game OR cheerleader OR scream OR #BlackLivesMatter)" for the cases of racism; "soccer homophobia (homophobic OR faggot OR gay OR prejudice OR LGBT OR prejudice OR homosexual OR game OR cheerleader OR #GayInSport)" in the cases of homophobia; and "soccer misogyny (sexist OR equality OR female OR woman OR gender OR prejudice OR game OR cheerleader OR scream OR #CheerLikeAGirl OR #EqualPlay)" for the cases of sexism. Therefore, the logical operators "AND" and "OR" are used together, with extraction carried out on October 26, 2019. These keywords were validated by specialists, masters or doctorates in the field of Communication, who channel their studies to racial diversity, gender and sexual orientation. The researchers made indications of tags and other possibilities of keywords understood as positive or negative. As pointed out by Bauer (2015), the potential of content analysis (CA) figures in the predominance of the written text, which, depending on a specific historical-cultural perspective, has the transparency of procedures that help in the replication of this kind of research. The CA developed in this paper deployed both the categories previously defined by the literature - a deductive-objective approach (modes of recognition and disrespect; affirmative or transformative remedies; crossbreeding and hybridization), and the categories defined subsequently on the basis of the data - an inductive-constructive approach (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Discourse analysis (AD), in turn, allows us to expand our gaze to the interdiscourse, since "every discursive formation is associated with a discursive memory, consisting of formulations that repeat, refuse and transform other formulations" (Maingueneau, 1989, p. 115). It is through the interdiscourses that we understand the subjects' discursive manifestations in relation to the cases of racism, homophobia and sexism.

Results and discussion

All the cases (racism, homophobia and sexism) have had the request of 250 tweets, however, only racism data have reached such saturation; homophobia and sexism had 55 and 129 returns respectively. Table 1 summarizes the descriptive data of the research and mainly exposes the messages from other sources (retweets). Thus, the circulation of racism allied to soccer was more present in the digital scope of this circuit than homophobia and sexism. The latter, however, had more messages of different profiles and, along with the case of racism, had more capillarity than homophobia, which was restricted to a few profiles and interactions on the same messages.

The analysis of the most retweeted profiles shows high engagement coming from a communication vehicle (@Globoesportecom), a club (@SantosFC) and the Brazilian confederation (@CBF_Futebol), but also from the fan initiatives of two different teams: Vasco and Grêmio. The @CRVG_SemAssedio is a group of Vasco fans who describe themselves in the profile as an "independent movement against harassment in the stands" and the @Tribuna77_GFBPA brings together fans by means of a counterculture media format described as a "digital fanzine for content dissemination produced by the 77, a group of supporters of Grêmio who meets in the north upper tribune of the Arena". Thus, the mediatized initiatives that give voice to the subjects - without institutional mediation - and that affect the daily life of these consumers are observed in the discursive organization of the fans around this theme, which is close to the discussion of the digital environment conducted by Han (2014). The same was discussed by Teixeira Filho and Azevedo Junior (2020) in the mediatization of religion, which may generate future research on the nesting of other cultural manifestations with soccer (Damatta, 2006; Haro, 2009), such as the symbolic rituals of carnival and the Brazilian religion of African influence.

It should be noted that, differently from what was shown by Han (2014), there is an activity that goes beyond the digital environment and consolidates its materiality through meetings and effective practices in an analogue setting. While institutional profiles are driven to the racial theme and its recognition violation by racism, profiles of civil society are organized around sexism in the case of the

Vasco female supporters; and diversity, that embraces the racial question together with homophobia and sexism in the case of the Grêmio supporters. Both teams are recent cases in which the struggles for recognition are ever present.

Table 2 – Case Study Descriptive Data

Cases	Tweets	Retweets	Percentage
Racism	250	141	56,4%
Homophobia	55	35	63,6%
Sexism	129	61	47,3%
Total	434	237	54,6%
Main Institutional Profiles (Retweets)			Scale
@CRVGSemAssedio			31
@Tribuna77_GFBPA			30
@Globoesportecom			30
@ObRacialFutebol			29
@CBF_Futebol			19
@SantosFC			15
Main Tags			Scale
#AmaOGremioCombateORacismo			31
#Racismo			6
#Futebol			5

Source: prepared by the authors

Another thing that stands out in the corpus is the recurrent presence of a personal user profile, which was not exposed in the table to preserve anonymity, but which has the ability to articulate repetitions of a message superior to @CBF_Futebol. This profile has a journalistic hallmark and integrates in a single message the three cases addressed here through the disclosure of a newspaper story.

The four institutional profiles were analyzed to understand the characteristic of the discursive circulations ignited by them. In the case of @Globoesportecom, the focus is the interview in which Roger Machado talks about racism and the analysis made by Humberto Person about it, broadening our discussion to encompass prejudices and misogyny. The @ObRacialFutebol highlights the case of racism against Néelson Semedo from Barcelona and questions the normalization of bigotry, employing in its messages the tag #EnoughOfPrejudice.

Both @CBF_Futebol and @SantosFC are the focus of this and other teams' fans on the case of racism against the player Fábio Gonçalves from the Ceará team, generating a note from the club inviting intolerant supporters not to cheer for the team. Therefore, what is observed in the institutional circulation of these comments is the presence of racism in different cases - mostly committed by the fans - but also by the spokespersons involved in experiences and discourses about this theme. The most recurrent words again highlight racism as the theme of greater circulation among the three topics, making Grêmio reappear on the surface. In this case, the tag with greater magnitude was started by @Tribuna77_GFBPA and

highlights an interview with Roger Machado, one of the only black coaches of the Brazilian Championship. A closed hand symbol followed by BW is placed next to the tag. The tag relates the love of the team to the fight against racism and brings in the format of the messages related to this tag the narrative mode of discourse, reinforcing the study of Yang (2016) who evidenced in digital activism the recurrence of this type of syntax.

When analyzing each of the three cases separately, homophobia presents in its set of words the resumption of issues about sexism and racism. It is also observed that there are no markings, and that the journalist mentioned above and the entrepreneur Felipe Neto (the latter in lesser magnitude) appear as spokesmen. Flamengo and Fluminense also appear in the word network, as well as the dissemination of a book about homophobia in soccer. For misogyny, several personal profiles are mentioned, without team specifications, as well as the program *Profissão Reporter* (Rede Globo), which exhibited images on the hardships of players in the country. In the case of racism, there is a mention of Globo Esporte, profile again connected to Rede Globo, and greater recurrence of teams such as Barcelona, Ceará, Grêmio and Fluminense. In these cases, the word naturalization is also repeated several times. For both homophobia and sexism, there is a dichotomy between terms such as structural and rooted, and the term *modinha*².

The fact that these words ("structural", "rooted") are recurrent in the tweets is in line with what Nancy Fraser postulated (2001): before the struggle for recognition, subjects perceive historical and social issues as fundamental. It is also verified that the subjects speak through their groups, identified with their teams and with their brands even in independent initiatives.

After the descriptive analysis, the interpretation was sought through the messages that mention some personal profile, exploring the contact between people in the process of recovering their recognition or in the process of suffering its violation. To have the panorama of mediations between subjects, the mention of institutional profiles, - even those created by popular initiative - were not taken into account. Table 3 shows that the results totalizes twenty-nine messages. In all the cases, we have utterances for both recognition and its violation.

The predefined categorizations explore three axes of the literature: struggles to conquer recognition or suffering caused by its violation in the fields of law and solidarity (cognitive respect/deprivation of rights or exclusion and social esteem/degradation or offense); affirmative or transformative remedies; and mixing or hybridization. But still, each of these messages was coded and categorized to echo manifestations empirically perceived.

The category of greatest magnitude is the violation of social recognition exposed by Honneth (2017) as Degradation or Offense, which highlights the insults exchanged through the messages. There is also a sense of reactive response to these perceived violations often followed by generalizations, as will be evidenced later in the discussions of these cases. The second category is the Historical Resumption, which emerges from the data and puts into circulation examples of perceived violation, as well as expressions that take up the historical importance of the theme in the country. Finally, the category with the third highest incidence is the Mention of Teams, which did not obtain expressive repetition in the case of misogyny; the category was also followed by generalizations through which both the identification with the group and its consequent differentiation before the other are reinforced (Damo, 2001; Hall, 2006). Examples of these cases and the categorization of its messages can be seen in Image 1.

² This Portuguese word was used in this context to delegitimize the importance of criticizing the structural prejudices of our society. People that use this word are actually despising these discussions by saying that the attention drawn to sexism and homophobia are just a little tendency that will pass over time.

Table 3 – Recurring Categories in Messages with Mentions

Soccer and Racism		8 messages
Categories	Scale	
Team	6	
Historical Resumption	6	
Generalization	5	
Degradation or Offense	5	
Soccer and Homophobia		6 messages
Categories	Scale	
Degradation or Offense	5	
Historical Resumption	3	
Team	3	
Soccer and Misogyny		15 messages
Categories	Scale	
Degradation or Offense	6	
Structural Feature	5	
Historical Resumption	5	
Affirmative Remedy	3	
Naturalizarion	3	
Mockery and Irony	3	

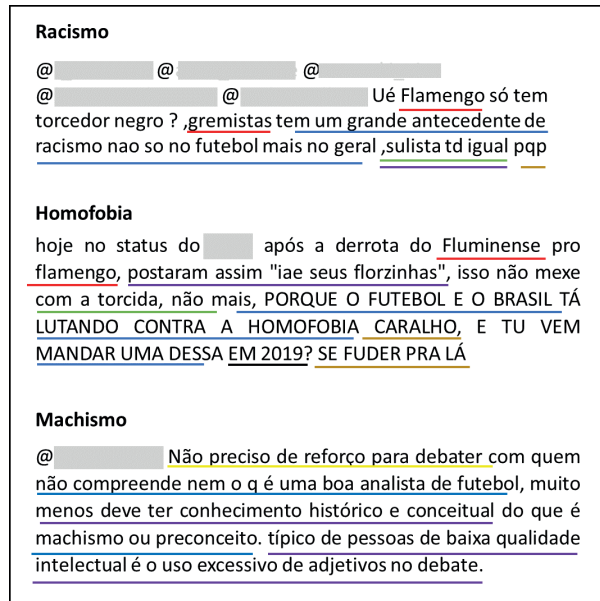
Source: prepared by the authors

In the case of racism, the messages show us the already mentioned teams (Grêmio and Flamengo), the categories of Degradation or Offense manifested through numerous insults and the Resumption of Recent or Historical facts that support the arguments raised by the subjects. It is also recurrent the generalizations, either of teams (social groups of representation - mainly Grêmio) or of places (south of Brazil) as representatives of racism. Thus, in these digital conflicts there is a reference to specific people at the same time that there is a generalization related to behaviors of violation, tracing conflicts not only about racial prejudice, but also about the tension between different regions of the country. Another specific feature of this case is the category of Historical Resumption, tagging prejudice as a national characteristic. Together with the category of Structural Features, it highlights a permanence of the cultural policies of difference stressed by Fraser (2001).

Regarding homophobia, the two general categories are concentrated in this case. However, the word Brazil is taken up here by the connotation of a national perception of the cause, a marker to identify that these are Brazilian demands, as stated in the expression "because soccer and Brazil are fighting homophobia", written in upper letter case in the original version, which is an interaction with another person mentioned in the message. In the same message there is the reference of anachronism in thinking inequality through sexual orientation today. The expression itself also mentions the attempt of affirmative remedy when fighting homophobia. Appearing in less quantity there are some citations of the "homophobia's law", with rare correspondence to the Martín-Barbero crossbreeding, claiming that this resumes the elitization of the sport. Moni et al (2016) discussed the question of the sport's elitization

through the lens of monetization and normatization / standardization of behaviors in the stadiums. It is also worth mentioning, from the tweets analyzed, the perception of fans that to avoid certain expressions in soccer, even if they are prejudiced, would also be a form of this spot's elitization, since in popular culture such violations of recognition are accepted. Add to this the expression "mimimi" that makes reference to the criticism of the word "faggot" shouted to the players.

Image 1 – Examples of the Analyzed Cases' Main Categories



What, Flamengo has only black fans? Gremio fans have a great history of racism not only in soccer, but in general. Southerners are all the same.
Today in the status of _____, after the defeat of Fluminense by Flamengo, someone posted this "hey little flowers", it does not mess with the fans anymore BECAUSE SOCCER AND BRAZIL ARE FIGHTING HOMOPHOBIA FUCK, AND YOU COME TO SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS IN 2019? GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE.
I don't need backup to debate with anyone who doesn't even understand how a good soccer analyst should be, much less with someone who has no historical and conceptual knowledge of what sexism or prejudice is. Typical of people with low intellectual quality is the excessive use of adjectives in the debate.

Source: prepared by the authors based on Twitter data

The case with the highest incidence of mentions from other personal profiles was sexism. It is more categorized than the previous cases, reinforcing that the Structural Characteristic exists in conjunction with the Historical Resumption, mainly mentioning events that exemplify misogyny followed by expressions of naturalization. That is, since sexism is something structural, the messages resume the idea that, in some cases, the violations of recognition are naturalized by the victims themselves. Gender comparison, as well as gender identification followed by youth marker, as in "lady" and "girl", are also verified in the comments. However, there is in sexism a greater incidence of attempts to expose solutions to problems, mostly by means of affirmative remedies followed by messages reaffirming social esteem, that is, reinforcing women's strength in society. It also appeared some questioning about the exclusive female wagon law's effectiveness. The word "Brazil" is mentioned in the sense of characterizing sexism as a cultural marker and "northeastern" is uplifted in the sense of having diversity even in the commentator of a female soccer match. Some curses are placed in contestation as "male" and "slutty", and the profiles

read as male used more cursing in the utterances analyzed. In this case, expressions that indicate mockery, such as laughter and irony, are present in the defense against violations of recognition.

The content analysis also exposes some gaps in triangulation with the literature. Thus, the affirmative or transformative solutions appear little on the agenda, except for the case of misogyny. Similarly, expressions that highlight social policies of equality did not feature in these cases. Crossbreeding is still remembered in an incipient way, but in the identification of clubs there is a differentiation between which teams are popular and which teams are unpopular; and about the regulatory measures there is a discussion about the influences of public actions. Hybridization is also diminished in favor of a broader perception about the global and local coexistence, with the exception of the racist case in Barcelona when compared to the national cases. The inquiring that exists between different cultures occurs in the sense of straining the Brazilian differences of its various regions and also in the identification of what the Brazilian culture maintains as its structural elements.

Hjarvard (2012) points out that the media, once in the inseparable condition of existence with culture and society, acts as a catalyst for reactions between spheres such as family, work, religion and politics. Based on this, it is possible to assume that the new mediating interfaces of relations - social networks - end up catalyzing human confrontations, widening the circulation of geographical, cultural and educational differences.

The communicational mediations in the circulation of the mediatized soccer also reveal the multiple discourses that constitute the subjects. Exploring the examples presented in Figure 1, through the discourse analysis we can see how the interdiscourse manifests itself in the discursive formulations around the issues of racism, homophobia and sexism and, yet, how the social media determinations of Twitter interfere with these formulations.

In the example selected for the racism category, already at the beginning of the text, the choice of the expression "ué" shows the presence of the other, apart from the marking of the other users present in the debate. The choice of this interjection wants to show astonishment and above all anger, positioning the speaker as someone willing to carry the discussion forward. Then, the use of generalization, as already evidenced in the content analysis, manifests the existence of a common sense that is evoked as an argument. We can recognize in the very limitations of the platform (currently Twitter allows the use of 280 characters per post) a kind of discursive device that, in a way, stimulates the use of generalizations by discouraging the deepening of arguments.

In this regard, Hjarvard (2014) characterizes affordances as concrete elements of a medium that can become potentialities (or limitations) in its uses. Such limitations can be understood as constitutive of the discursive formulations that are materialized in the tweets. In the cases analyzed, cultural identity is an interdiscourse that warrants generalizations ironically used as arguments against racial prejudice, transforming the racial issue in a contemporary arena of debates and using the social media platform's own affordances as mediation for this industrial format. As for the example selected to illustrate the posts in the field of homophobia, the choice by the transcription of a quotation mark (intertextuality), followed by the upper box feature in the text to indicate the reinforcement of the argument used against that quote, demarcates the importance of a broadly debate on this issue in the social networks. The insistence on mentioning the year in which the discussion is taking place highlights the contemporary place of the debates about homophobia. The formation of identity takes place when we recognize that we live in a discursive ideal of the contemporary world, a place where certain prejudices such as homophobia no longer fit in.

Here, the fight against homophobia is wrought in the interdiscursivity of a current world, as opposed to an obsolete past, an aspect that was not verified in the discussions around racism, for example. It thus constitutes an identity aligned with contemporary issues of gender and sexual orientation, distancing itself from an old-fashioned world.

The example that illustrates the discussions on sexism, in turn, highlights an individual that affirms himself through the effort to undermine the other. Such efforts are manifested in the lexical choices revealing an intellectual endeavor in the construction of the text, standing out from the typical colloquial pattern of a social media platform that limits posts to 280 characters. Expressions such as "historical and conceptual knowledge" and "excessive use of adjectives in the debate" withdraw themselves from everyday discursive formulations in soccer discussions. In this case, the opulence in the choice of words seeks to constitute a space for debate in which the other has no discursive legitimacy, moving away from the common discursive territory of soccer. It is a typically reactive resource, evoked precisely when one is a discursive minority, to ensure a place in the debate where it is possible to make oneself heard, while also seeking recognition in this other discursive place. Also, the mediatized soccer and its interdiscursivity dynamics in the field of gender issues becomes a place of identity construction of subjects far beyond the sport..

Final remarks

In order to explore the constitution of the cultural identity guided by the mediatized Brazilian soccer and the fight for recognition of the subjects in this context, we were able to see that there are, in the digital communicative expressions analyzed, discursive potentialities both for the evaluation of the subjects recognition, and for the discussion of broader social relations that define the country's culture. Thus, soccer was evidenced as an important device capable of bearing various meanings, especially in its institutional and corporative interface. This is how we propose its qualification as a media, suited for expanding circulations and symbolic representations. From the point of view of the changes in the mediatization of sports, in addition to the digital environment in which social demands are discussed, there is also the coexistence between institutional communication vehicles and popular mobilization initiatives. Another evidence is the amplification of discussions about the actions and functions of public and private spheres that take up Hegelian morality and bring it to the contemporary world.

Different categories are perceived in each of the cases, but the recurrence of struggles for recognition, mainly of violations of sociality (degradation and offense) and historical resumption of cases that aid in argumentation can be widely identified. However, discussions to address the problems of social demands are less recurrent. The redistribution, as analyzed in the literature review, did not present directly and expressive discursive potentialities, which can be also considered data in the sense of a search for other forms of socioeconomic discussion.

Regarding the methodology, this article also outlines possibilities for the evaluation of objects in the shared sense between mediation and mediatization, in which interactions between subjects and structures are perceived in a dynamic way. Due to the volatility (fast changes) and amount of digital data, longitudinal studies are proposed to accompany cultural transformations. The interdependence of the descriptive and interpretative methods can be expanded through API (Application Programming Interface) collection, natural language processing and sentiment analysis, as well as the addition of in-depth interviews.

Discourse analysis shows a favorable path in the direction of a complementarity between this methodology and data analyses, indicating ways for understanding the formation of identities in social media platforms and in the context of soccer's mediatized interdiscourses that express issues of racism, homophobia and sexism.

As for future studies we propose the replication of this theoretical exploration in different contexts, especially in the practices performed by organizations and subjects. In this sense, both initiatives of civil society groups - to guide identity demands; and institutional action of brands - to direct links with their audiences, to monitor social discourses and to manage the brand's digital circulation, as well as to

create strategies related to causes and values; can make a difference in the society through the sport's mediatization. As a recent example, we had the involvement of the Bahia Esporte Clube in environmental issues regarding the contamination of the Brazilian northeast beaches by crude oil. Finally, due to the characteristics pointed out by IPSOS (2017), it is important to evaluate whether there are differences when centralizing the analyses in the young audience.

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