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# Within the Dialog between Anthropology and Museums

The Reference Center for Brazilian Football

*Clara de Assunção Azevedo – Football Museum*

*Daniela do Amaral Alfonsi – Football Museum; PPGAS – USP*

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## **Abstract**

This article presents the work conducted at the Reference Center for Brazilian Football (São Paulo), focusing on methodological aspects of information gathering and the transfer of data to a computerized database. By using an ethnographic method to discover archives and register memories and references related to football practices, the project allows reflecting on the limits and potential of ethnography for the museological work of preservation and promotion of archives.

**Key words:** Ethnography; Museums; Cultural References; Football Museum.

# Within the Dialog between Anthropology and Museums

The Reference Center for Brazilian Football

*Clara de Assunção Azevedo – Football Museum*

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*The setting is a small bar, of about 430 ft<sup>2</sup>. On the walls, in addition to a rack of pool cues, a public telephone and a message on a blackboard warning costumers that the owner doesn't sell on credit; there are shelves with trophies of all kinds, sizes and materials. They are spread across three sides of the space, on a central column and on the back wall behind the bar. A plastic cover protects the trophies in places most vulnerable to grease and dirt, such as the center of the bar and the kitchen. Alongside the trophies are dozens of photographs of a football team posing for the picture or playing on dirt fields around the city. The pictures, hung in wood and glass frames, are under the shelves. Close to the bar there is a large potted plant called a dieffenbachia which is poisonous if ingested but considered to have protective powers against the "evil eye." The Poulestra Bar, located in the Zona Sul or southern region of São Paulo close to the municipality of Santo Amaro, belongs to Ramiro dos Santos, who was born in Pernambuco. He lives on the second floor and the address is also the clubhouse of the Poulestra Football Club, a várzea or amateur team.<sup>1</sup> Team mementos occupy not only the walls of the bar but also part of the basement. There are photos, trophies, medals and countless documents, such as the official founding papers for the team, articles about its history, and charts with schedules, lineups and the boards of directors. "It must be kept because it's memory" explains Ramiro, who through his own initiative keeps organized in plastic folders team papers and a chronological catalog of the trophies won by the team, which has only ever worn the colors black and yellow. Once a year, Ramiro changes the protective plastic for the trophies, carefully choosing the material: it can't be too thin or too thick, and has to be big enough to wrap up trophies of all sizes.*

*The series of objects and images reminds the owner and customers of the bar of the trajectory of this amateur team, established in 1987 by migrants from Brazil's northeast like Ramiro, the club's first president. The founder's house and bar became Poulestra's clubhouse, and until today athletes and supporters come by regularly in the early evening. (...)*

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<sup>1</sup> Amateurs teams in São Paulo are historically called "várzea teams." A "várzea" is a field along a stream or river and the name arose because the first football fields in the city were near the riverbanks.

*In São Paulo's amateur football circuit, Poulestra F. C. stands out and has become renowned over time, winning championships and representing the neighborhood in important matches against teams from other regions. In the beginning, besides contributions from board members, to cover team expenses they held traditional St. John winter festivals and other fundraisers that attracted neighbors to the bar and the square in front. (...) Although players are still unpaid, there are costs of registration in the leagues, new balls, transportation, purchase and cleaning of uniforms, and the rental of training fields (which Ramiro says is increasingly less common and more expensive). The managers must find creative ways to raise funds, a challenge that is making the team enter fewer competitions.*

*(...) the Poulestra Bar is next to the Interlagos Shopping, the largest Shopping Center in the Zona Sul and which was built just after the team was founded. Ramiro never played for the team, but remembers that a few years before the shopping center was built, in its place were several dirt fields in the then distant and peripheral region, where pickup games, games between rival teams and community leagues were held. He recalls that it was from this profusion of football that the desire to create his own team was born.*

(From the field report for the Poulestra Football Team, October 20, 2011).

The preceding text could be part of a work inspired by classical anthropological monographs, in which the author writes about a given group after living with its members for a few months or years. In the classical model established by the publication of *The Argonauts of the Western Pacific* by Bronislaw Malinowski in 1922, the anthropologist depicts the flesh, blood and spirit of the natives, describing the ways and motives by which men and women act, think and reflect about themselves and others.

For many decades, this model was a central element of anthropology, or at least it was one of the works produced by an anthropologist. It was part of the education of this professional and until today, is part of a study (whether for a dissertation, thesis or other phases of academic research) whose work methodology is concentrated on continuous and prolonged observation, made possible by close and continual contact with a certain group. This effort would allow the anthropologist to produce knowledge about the issue chosen that would emphasize the *native point of view*.

The paragraphs that began this article, however, were taken from the data base of a museum, and were produced in the context of research that is not strictly academic and for this reason, had other standards of evaluation, timeframes and methodological efforts. Even so, the classic production

model for an ethnography and the interest in recognizing, by means of the work methodology, the perspective of those who are observed, remains an epistemological support for the research experience.

The transposition of anthropology to domains outside the academy is not a novelty in the history of the discipline. Whether by working in governments and the formulation of public policy, or in museums and cultural institutions, or – more recently, in the field of marketing and market research and public opinion polls, it is possible to utilize the forms of action of the anthropologist and the interfaces between what is produced inside and outside the academic context. Within this field of possibilities for action, one in particular is worth highlighting, one that perhaps is as old as the discipline itself: the relationship between anthropology and museums.<sup>2</sup>

The proposal is to approach this relationship considering the problems and questions raised in the realm of the project to establish the Reference Center for Brazilian Football of the Football Museum, whose research procedures, as well as those of its model for writing reports, and, mainly, the type of knowledge produced based on these procedures, is directly inspired by anthropology.

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This article presents the research paths taken at the Football Museum (MF), by its Reference Center for Brazilian Football (CRFB),<sup>3</sup> focusing mainly on the methodology for data collection and registration of references of memory and practice of football in a computerized and multi-relational system (a data base).

The CRFB is one of the sectors of the MF, and was established five years after the inauguration of the Museum.<sup>4</sup> It is the area responsible for the

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2 The interface between anthropology and museums is the theme of important studies that run through the history of the discipline and which are not addressed in this article. We can highlight those by George Stocking (1985) and James Clifford (1988 and 1997).

3 The Museum of Football is a public facility that belongs to the State Secretariat of Culture of São Paulo and is managed by a civil society organization (known as a social organization for culture – OS). This mixed administrative model for museums in the state of São Paulo has been operating since 2005.

4 The implementation of the CRFB was begun in 2010 and concluded in 2013, although the project was conceived in early 2009, soon after the inauguration of the MF. It receives financial support from FINEP – the Brazilian Innovation Agency, an organ of the Ministry of Science and Technology – and is executed by means of a partnership between the Instituto da Arte do Futebol Brasileiro [The Brazilian Institute of the Art of Football] (a social organization for culture that administers the MF), and POIESIS (Instituto de Apoio à Cultura, à Língua e à Literatura) [the Institute of Support for Culture, Language

institution's research and documentation activities and offers the public a library and media room specialized in football, which can be consulted at the Museum, and an online database that provides access to both the institution's archives and references to archives and collections at other institutions that are related to the theme. This scope seeks to characterize the CRFB as a center that congregates references about football, in their multiple facets and based on different types of objects and expressions: books, collectable artifacts, general impressions, photographs, events and practices related to sport etc. The proposal, therefore, is to develop an inventory of references about football, independent from the nature of that reference (material or immaterial) and its source (whether it belongs to the MF) or not.

This article presents the method used to construct the inventory based on an ethnographic experience and to reflect on how this type of experience requires repositioning the concepts of museological archives, and the procedures for collection and the formation of archives at museums.

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The idea of establishing a reference center, and transforming it into a central hub within a network of public and private archives, has existed since the inauguration of the Football Museum and is the fruit of the initial choice of the institution to not house collections.<sup>5</sup>

The option to approach Brazilian football as a phenomenon that invades various domains of social life, as expressed in the long term exhibit that was inaugurated along with the Museum, and without starting from that which is conventionally called the material dimension of culture – the central element

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and Literature] and USP, through the Nucleus for Urban Anthropology (NAU). For the execution of the project, in addition to professionals from the staff of the MF, there is a team of nine interns from CNPq (under the modality Industrial and Technological Development modality), whose responsibilities are divided between coordination, research, cataloging, library sciences and internship, in addition to outside consultants for the areas of data base development, architecture, monitoring and evaluation of the projects, research methodology and registration of heritage and specialists in contents related to football. The project was periodically accompanied by an Advisory Board, formed by nine specialists in the fields of anthropology, communication, history, heritage and public policy for culture. The complete list of all the professionals who participated in the project is available at [www.museudofutebol.org.br/crfb](http://www.museudofutebol.org.br/crfb).

5 The creation of the Museum of Football is part of and the fruit of a process of changes in conceptions about the role of a museum and the concepts of heritage, which has taken place in recent decades, mainly since the 1970s. The nearly exclusive emphasis on actions of conservation and documentation and on museological procedures aimed above all at collections, has shifted, opening space for discussions about the social functions of a museum, as well as to broader forms of thinking, preserving and communicating about a given heritage. About the recent trajectories in the field of museology see ARAÚJO & BRUNO (1995).

of museological institutions – was well received by public opinion in terms of its expository interface, but questioned, in particular by professionals who work with museums, concerning the continuity of the institution and one of its basic presumptions: the need to establish internal processes to safeguard archives. Identified as a “museum without archives,” what is suitable for this new institution and why should it be classified as a museum? Is the undertaking merely a large exhibition? The creation of the CRFB can be read, in a certain degree, as a response of the MF to these questions.

The concept of football adopted by the MF is a tribute to the interpretations that specialists (cf. Toledo, 2002) give to the sport: football is a multifaceted phenomenon, with a broad range of expressions that go beyond the practice of sport itself. In the vision of the institution, it would be reductionist to condense the representation of the phenomenon to the material dimension alone, which in most cases is limited to industrialized artifacts, produced in series (uniforms, cleats, balls, trading cards and stickers), or to objects that celebrate specific events (trophies, cups, medals, banners from tournaments and championships). After all, football is intertwined with the daily life of Brazilians.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, to ignore these material expressions would also be a mistake, given that they certainly also say something about the way that football is experienced and, moreover, they are, in the final analysis, inseparable from the so-called intangible dimension. Thus, how is it possible to identify these various material forms of expression of the phenomenon without necessarily having to store collections of objects and, on the other, access this intangible universe of the phenomenon, identify it, interpret it and present it to the public in a systematized manner?

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6 This article will analyze why the Museum of Football elected this approach to football in its main expository narrative, but it is worth noting that this perspective, in Brazil, is the fruit of analyses constructed about this sport since the late 1930s, with specific texts by Gilberto Freyre about blacks and sports (Freyre, 1936; 1940 and 1947), as well as those by journalists and writers of chronicles, and which culminated, in the 1980s with anthropological studies on the theme, beginning mainly with Roberto DaMatta. The main contribution of DaMatta to the anthropological interpretation of football was the perspective that this sport could be understood as a “highly complex system of communication of values” (1982: 40). Football, according to the author, would be popular because of its ability to express national problems, redimensioning social representations and ritualizing them. As a rite and as a privileged place for dramatizations, the sport would allow “expressing a series of national problems, alternating perception and intellectual elaboration with emotions and sentiments concretely felt and lived” (1982: 40). This route inaugurated by DaMatta inspired important dissertations and thesis, which are now the main academic references about the issue, such as the works of Simoni Guedes (1977), Fátima Antunes (1992), Luis Henrique de Toledo (1996 and 2002), Édison Gastaldo (2002), Arlei Damo (2007), and others.

The understanding of football as a cultural practice that gives access to the way that people live in and interpret the world is also a route that is little explored by the institutions of memory dedicated to the preservation of this sport.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the inspiration from anthropology was decisive for the interpretation of the object of study and also for the development of research and documentation procedures that used the ethnographic method and applied it with some necessary adjustments. It is not by chance that the main partnership established for the implementation of the CRFB was with the Nucleus for Urban Anthropology of the University of São Paulo (NAU/USP),<sup>8</sup> to be able to benefit from its multidisciplinary work staff and thus to anchor in anthropology part of the theoretical framework used in the research.<sup>9</sup>

If the use of ethnography outside of its original realm is not new, in the field more directly related to museums and patrimony in Brazil, it was highlighted by the experiences undertaken by the National Historic, Artistic and Cultural Heritage Institute (IPHAN), in particular the creation of the National Inventory of Cultural References (INRC) and its research methodology.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, these initiatives are recent. It is sufficient to recall that the broader discussion about immaterial cultural assets in Brazil took shape in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It is in this period that IPHAN, under the administration of Aloísio Magalhães, gradually began to change the then dominant

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7 A recent study by the Brazilian Institute of the Museum (IBRAM), an agency created in 2009 and affiliated to the Ministry of Culture to lead the national policy concerning museums, found that there are more than three thousand museological institutions in Brazil (more than the number of movie houses and theaters). A search for the theme of “sport” on the National Registration of Museums on the Internet, found only nine museums dedicated to preserving the memory of sport in Brazil. The number of institutions dedicated to sports memory expands when we research outside the official registration of IBRAM, but it still does not exceed a few dozen. Most of these are museums linked to football teams and display memorabilia (trophies, banners, medals, shirts, etc). Except for a few cases, these institutions do not conduct research or document their archives and some do not offer service to the public.

8 It should be mentioned that NAU/USP has more than 20 years of activity in academic research and in cultural projects, in particular can be mentioned the undertaking of a set of anthropological studies that gave origin to the publications: *Na Metrópole - textos de antropologia urbana* (1996) and *Jovens na metrópole - etnografias dos circuitos de lazer, encontro e sociabilidade* (2007), in addition to the experience of “Expedição São Paulo 450 anos” in the realm of the project to establish the Museum of the City of São Paulo in 2004-2005. These projects were coordinated by Dr. José Guilherme Magnani and have in common the research of cultural practices in an urban context from an ethnographic and anthropological perspective. The main projects undertaken by NAU in the field of heritage and museums are described in the article by José Guilherme C. Magnani in this journal.

9 It includes professionals in the field of history, sociology, anthropology, geography, museology, visual arts, photography (with emphasis on conservation of photographic archives) and library sciences.

10 For some examples of the application of the method of INRC see Arantes (2008) and Medeiros (2007).



focus about heritage (the emphasis on brick and mortar properties) and began to also consider elements of the so-called intangible sphere, such as cultural practices and expressions, within the agenda of preservation policies (cf. Fonseca, 2009). This change of focus was located especially in federal state and municipal agencies dedicated to the preservation of heritage, but was discussed in various segments of society, including universities. It influenced the Brazilian Constitution of 1988, which recognized as Brazilian cultural heritage both goods of a material nature as well as those of an immaterial nature.<sup>11</sup>

Actions in this area only gained greater visibility in the realm of Brazilian public policy after publication of a federal decree in 2000 that established the registration of cultural goods of an immaterial nature that constitute Brazilian cultural heritage<sup>12</sup> and also after publication by UNESCO in 2003 of the convention that defines guidelines and makes recommendations that transform, in the realm of international public policy, the understanding of so-called cultural heritage.

All of these redefinitions questioned the traditional division between tangible and intangible heritage, and inevitably gave origin to new forms of identification and registration of heritage, with an emphasis on the use of the idea of cultural reference (cf. Arantes, 2008 and 2010).

Responsible for the development of the Department of Immaterial Heritage and the National Program of Immaterial Heritage of IPHAN, anthropologist Antônio Arantes had a decisive role in the development of the methodology applied by INRC since its establishment. From the defense of the execution of work by multidisciplinary teams to negotiations in the field and the flexibility of research procedures considering social diversity and specific contexts, the methodology for conducting inventories of immaterial heritage prepared by the INRC was born from an approach that was oriented by anthropology, and it can be said, is close in some points with the methodology being used for the CRFB, as will be shown below.

The difference, and what winds up influencing the entire process, perhaps resides in the origin of the initiative. While the INCR is part of a broad and general public policy for heritage preservation, the inventory of cultural references about football undertaken at the MF by means of its Reference

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11 Cf. article 216 of the Constitution.

12 Decree nº 3551, of August 4, 2000.

Center is intended to be the central element in the formation of the archives of a museological institution. If the first undertakes action of broad scope that has the practical effect of assuring the communities involved the right to and basic means for the maintenance of their cultural practices and expressions, the second, on a much smaller and less pretentious scale, perhaps has its first and most immediate effects on the forms of conceiving and operating the safeguarding of heritage within museums.

The notion of cultural heritage is being transformed, and this is visible in the broadest policies undertaken mainly since the 2000s. Nevertheless, in the field of museums, there still seems to be a division between that which would be called material domain and that which can be fit within the immaterial or intangible dimension (practices, knowledge and productions, techniques, ways of seeing and living etc.), mainly in the guidelines and procedures for research and documentation. Perhaps, at the time of presentation of archives, in particular in exhibitions, this artificial division is less apparent, given that there appears to be a growing effort by museums to contextualize objects and locate them in a historic perspective, bringing to the exhibition discourse facets of the social processes that the objects engender. But, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the practices of safeguarding and handling archives and collections within museological institutions still emphasize material artifacts, especially when it comes to defining policies for collecting and acquiring the archives. This is clear, for example, in the classifications found in the data bases used by many of these institutions, in which there is no way to register the social processes or the experiences and contexts that go beyond the objects of a collection.

To develop an inventory of cultural references of football and rearrange this data into a multirelational system, which is the research objective of the Football Museum realized by its Reference Center, implies rethinking the safeguarding procedures that are currently used at museological institutions. It mainly means taking seriously the concept of cultural reference<sup>13</sup> in all the steps of the work, including its transposition to the field of museums.

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13 The concept of cultural reference does not distinguish between material and the immaterial, a product of process, object of production etc. (Arantes, 2008). Cultural references are everything that can allude to, indicate a range of meanings or represent a given social phenomenon. This concept is a construct. Therefore it is not found readymade in the universe of research. It is the researcher who, armed with suitable methodologies, with specific training and based on collective discussions within a broader project of mapping, observes the phenomenon that is the object of the field and defines it, based on the premises of the project, as a cultural reference.

## **Ethnography as a method for registration**

The production of an inventory of references about football, the object of the research conducted by the CRFB, has as its main procedures the mapping, registration and systematization of the items placed in a data base. These three steps must be connected and their meaning can be conferred through ethnographic experience.

Inventories are classic procedures in museums and agencies dedicated to the preservation of tangible or intangible heritage. In general, their primordial form is the listing and classification of items (objects and documents, but also practices and rituals) found in an area (community, group, city) or in an institution. This listing is essential for the organization, control and planning of the actions for conservation in material archives, for example. In the case of goods of an intangible nature, the inventory is the tool used by agencies specialized in heritage preservation to gain knowledge of the socio-cultural context of the practices that are the object of heritage actions. Given this later use, the tool triggers a debate among anthropologists, given that the data presented in it may not reflect or consider the cultural dynamic of the practice to be safeguarded.

Taking as a premise the concept of football as a multifaceted phenomenon, with imbrications in various fields of social life, one of the main methodological challenges of the study is to be able to register, classify and list, following a certain standardization inherent to the museological procedures, items of distinct natures: from banners to chants by fans, from a collection of stickers or photos to the interpretation of the sociability experienced in spaces related to football. This is because the intention is to identify and describe locations of the practice of football, which go beyond the canonical spaces of the sport. This means contemplating, in addition to fields and stadiums, the bars, restaurants or other types of commercial establishments where fans congregate on game days, including the clubhouses of local teams that house the collections of photos, objects and documents; the private collections of a wide variety of items related to football (from beer cans to pins, from albums of stickers to shirts, caps or other clothing items, from banners to books, magazines, newspapers, etc.); the collections of public or private institutions, which also possess, in greater or lesser volume, items from the universe of football (which includes all types of items gathered in clubs and also photographs, books videos, etc. found in various institutions that do not have any

direct relationship with the universe of football); associations of former players who promote sporting and cultural actions; football schools; multifunctional public spaces, but dedicated to sports (as in the case in the city of São Paulo of the Community Sport Clubs – CDCs and the Clubes Escolas [School Clubs]); companies that promote tournaments and competitions; companies that make uniforms that sponsor important events in the city and so on.

Ethnographic field research, therefore, was the special method used to attempt to grasp the heterogeneity of the object researched. Based on the premise that football attracts other expressions that go beyond that which occurs within the four lines of the field, the field research has been aimed at a set of actions and networks of sociability motivated by football. From there it turns to the locations of the practice of football (fields, clubs, courts, stadiums) the practitioners (amateur and professional teams, male and female, and of all age groups) their fans and organizing agents (from sports managers to companies that organize championships and tournaments). That is, by ethnographing a practice (a festival, a tournament or a championship, a football school, a meeting of fans in the bar, etc.), and its practitioners, the idea is to reach the objects and documents, registering not only the existence of these items, but mainly the meanings people confer to them in their contexts.

The registration process begins in the survey of contacts and locations, conducted on the Internet (on social media, specialized blogs and sites) and mainly, by indications given by people already contacted by the study. Each contact invariably generates other contacts and indications, in what is called the “snowball” strategy (Bienarcki & Waldorf, 1981). At first, this option results in an open field of possibilities of locations to be studied. The risk to be avoided, given the scope of the field, is to fall into a proliferation of contacts without constituting a common meaning. Or, due to the short time of contact with the interlocutors, the danger is that the registration does not come to understand and comprehend possible relationships between the locations studied, falling into a segmentation that can obscure the articulation between the elements. Nevertheless, the advantage of this technique is to allow reaching, through indications made by actors in the field, other spaces, practices and subjects that can be mapped and systematized in order to reveal links of a network, thus following an internal logic of the field studied.

Because they are indications related to a theme – football – even if taken in their multiple dimensions and meanings, in the long run, the survey of

contacts comes to delineate the contours of an active network in each location researched<sup>14</sup> – the main starting point of the study. This is only possible because this survey takes place concomitantly to the visit to the locations and people. Thus, the network of references, a product of mapping, is also fed by information that comes from the researcher's observations, which begin to discover the meanings and links between one point and another of this network.<sup>15</sup>

The researchers go to the field armed with plans indicating what should be observed and asked in each context. However, based on ethnographic experience, they learn to emphasize the observation of behavior, language and other elements that are essential for the understanding of the native universe, and that are not always verbalized in an interview with a representative of a group, for example.

As part of the process of preparing an inventory, the research universe was initially broken down into typologies. They were groupings of locations mapped according to their function: bar, fan club, team clubhouse, club, school, etc., and also groupings of people according to their main activity: collector, player, club administrator, referee, fan, etc.<sup>16</sup> Guidelines specific to

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14 It is worth mentioning that the initial research, which lasted from 2011 to the first semester of 2013, was based in the city of São Paulo. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the MF can later conduct the same methodology in other Brazilian cities.

15 It is important to highlight the concept of circuit, developed by the anthropologist José Guilherme Magnani and which has been important for the realization of this study and for the understanding of the network. Understood as that which “unites establishments, spaces and equipments characterized by the exercise of a certain practice or offer of a given service, although not contiguous in the urban landscape, and is recognized in its totality only by the users” (1996: 45), the circuit can be understood as a physical and or symbolic network that connects spaces, people, objects, knowledge and meanings, which is identified only when the perspective of the practitioner is taken, that is, it is only possible to locate and map the network when the researcher follows those that act within it. The concept of circuit helps understand and organize practices, relations and actors involved in the empiric line chosen, and applied to this research, guides the surveying, mapping and choice of criteria for the cataloging of the indicators of the memory of football.

16 The first challenge faced by the research team was the definition of the empiric angle. The project first called for the survey of any practice related to football, without distinguishing the various existing modalities of the practice of football, such as, football, or association football, futsal and others. After an evaluation made by the research staff, it was found that the time planned for the implementation of the CRFB would not permit broad field research in this first phase and decided to restrict the initial research to football on outdoor fields, which in itself is quite a large universe. As an initial line, therefore, the focus of the project was selected based on a preliminary classification of the spaces of practices and or of the memory of football that would initially be mapped: professional clubs-teams, amateur clubs-teams, school clubs, organized fan groups, collectors. Later, we added to this list the events and festivals. The research plans were prepared considering this first classification and division.

each typology were created and later these instruments were aligned to catalog records in the data system. In addition to the specificities that constitute each typology, they have in common (1) the identification of basic data from the location mapped (the address and description of the activities conducted there); (2) the preparation of a brief history of the place and description of its main characteristics; (3) the identification of items of memory (with the indication of archives, photo collections etc.) realized *pari passu* to the interpretation of the ways that the local group understands and represents the memory of sport and (4) the identification of the network of relationships in which the group is inserted and in which it participates in some manner (championships, institutions, other locations etc.).

These items, common to all the research plans have the common objective of obtaining a minimum set of information that permits glimpsing certain regularities and patterns, making comparisons and relating the different types of locations visited, as well as identifying the connections that exist between them.

The work process that has been conducted includes the concomitant steps of identifying the contacts and scheduling and realizing the visits, which include the production of photographic and video registers, audio interviews and participant observation with recordings in field diaries. The process also includes discussion among the staff of the common points found in the visits realized and the writing of a text, called a “field report,” based on the cataloging of references in the data base and which is one of the final documents to which the public will have access. It is in this set of procedures, therefore, that are delineated the items to be cataloged in the data base. Only after some field visits and the comparison of observations of different researchers, was it possible to define which references would be indexed in the data base. Understanding the concept of cultural reference as a collective construct of the research, references for modalities were chosen for the project presented here: people, institutions, events and archives, which will be described in detail.

One of the differences between this type of research and a classic ethnography concerns the time that the researcher spends with the people researched. With the goal of producing an inventory, and considering that the project encompasses a territory as large as the city of São Paulo – the first geographic scope of the study – and that it depends on resources and

staffs hired for a limited time, it is not possible to remain in each location mapped for more than a few hours per day (morning or afternoon). Except on rare exceptions, the visit is conducted only once. That is, the researcher is always in movement, experiencing isolated events related to the universe studied. Nevertheless, the ethnographic perspective is maintained to the degree that it guides the researcher in what to observe in this rapid passage or how to interpret that which is observed in relation to that which is said by the interlocutors. Thus, the general orientation is on the observation of the behavior, the survey of the strategies of action, the occupation of the spaces, the division of tasks between men, women and children, etc. Even if interviews were conducted, the study is much more the result of participant observation than a simple adhesion to research plans and instruments. Thus, if on one hand the method is far from those used in classic procedures, on the other, it introduces to the field of museological documentation new elements that are capable of expanding the presumptions of the establishment of an archive.

Even if in-depth data is not produced about each location mapped, the study did allow an interesting comparative exercise, because it addressed a single universe – that of football – in a large territorial area. This exercise, another approximation with the anthropological perspective, is essential for the constitution of the final product. It is worth remembering that “it is not an obsession for the accumulation of details that characterizes ethnography, but the attention that is given to them: at some time the fragments can be arranged in a whole that offers a clue to a new understanding” (Magnani, 2009:136). This attention to elements, offered by the visits to the locations and by the consequent construction of this network of connections *in locu*, and the continuous movement of approximation and distancing allowed by this approach, has allowed identifying specificities and regularities. Examples include the survey of recurrences in the organization of games and tournaments, the meeting with the same types of people in a wide variety of events (such as food sellers, politicians, photographers and journalists), and the survey of the types of food and drink consumed at amateur football events in São Paulo, the forms of cheering found in the stands of the amateur games and at stadiums, the forms of commemoration among players in the field, the relations with government in disputes over management of space and other issues. All these recurrences should appear in the

indexation of data in the system, in addition, of course, to being described in the field reports to which the public will have access. It is in this new form of indexation, which will be presented below, that resides the museological experiment itself.

First however, it is worth concluding that the decision to use ethnography in the work process does not imply using only a method, but also conceptual presumptions that directly influence the way of perceiving, approaching and interacting with the other. If the idea to conduct a mapping to prepare an inventory should not be confused with the consecrated notion of ethnography, the mapping can be nurtured and inspired by ethnography and can and should experiment with it, even if superficially, given that a mapping is less focused and broader in scope. This form of approach seeks to guarantee that the data produced are constructed in the relationship with the other and always in context.

The research presented here thus allows producing more than primary information about the references to football, given that it has a supposition the effort to access indications of logics that organize and symbolize this sport in specific contexts. That is, more than just conducting random and disconnected surveys, the recourse to ethnography allows the creation of connections of meaning between the elements mapped, which helps to understand their relevance and pertinence and confers an analytic dimension to the process. As Magnani indicated:

Ethnography is a special form of operating in which the researcher comes into contact with the universe of the researched and shares their horizon, not to remain there or even to attest to the logic of their worldview, but, by following them wherever possible, in a true relationship of exchange, to compare their own theories with theirs and thus try to leave with a new model of understanding, or at least with a new clue that was not previously foreseen. (2009:135).

In this sense, the study undertaken can go beyond the simple survey of existing spaces of practice and memory of football and try to understand them in a minimally contextualized manner. More than to construct large lines of analysis about football, the main objective is to conduct a broad although contextualized inventory of the various cultural references to football raised in the mapping process.



## **For an *antropomuseological* translation of the data**

One of the most difficult tasks in the realm of the CRFB project has been to translate the diversity and wealth of information collected in the field using a “rigid” tool that frames the data in pre-determined boxes, as does a database. While this tool is rarely used in anthropological research, it is the leading element of the documentation procedures at museological institutions.

With the advance in the development of specific software for the organization of data, data bases at museums have fortunately become increasingly attractive: they allow displaying photos, videos and texts in the same database, the information searches are faster, they offer users greater possibilities for research, they can be accessed over the Internet, among other advantages. Thus, in the development of the data base for the Football Museum, the information system technology did not represent an impediment, but offered potential to be explored in favor of a new form of organizing research data.

The development of the data base began with some principles: its records and fields for cataloging should dialog with the systems of other museological institutions at the same time in which they need to be based on concepts native to the universe of football, that is, their classification and the vocabulary used for the cataloging must translate the ideas and values operationalized by the different interlocutors of the research. If not, the entire effort undertaken in the collection of information, in the preparation of observation plans, in the work of writing the field report, would be lost in a static system of organization and control of data.

To manage the research contexts, the data base for the Football Museum has four options for entering information: 1) institutions; 2) people; 3) events and 4) archives. They are four independent but inter-related bases, which organize the information pertinent to each one of these groups. The choice of these four modules is related to the type of cultural reference that the study sought to understand and register.

To better understand the logic of the translation of data, it is helpful to consider the case mentioned at the beginning of this article, the bar which is the clubhouse for the Poulestra Futebol Clube. The data from the field research is thus cataloged as follows: in the base for institutions goes the information about the bar (its location and a description of the physical installations, and the history of the location) and about the Poulestra team (the year it was founded, its emblem, mascot, history, etc); the base for people is used

for information about Senhor Ramiro, the owner of the establishment and one of the directors of the team; in the base for events is entered information related to any championships and tournaments in which Poulestra participated and finally, in the base of archives are cataloged, item by item, the photographs, trophies, medals, documents and other objects stored at the location, in addition to the field report produced by the researcher and the photographs, audio and videos produced in the research context. Each item cataloged (the bar, the team, Senhor Ramiro, a specific championship and a trophy, for example) becomes an “entity” in the data system. An entity is the minimum common unit of information within the system. The relationships considered to compose the network of references occur between entities.

The intent of the strategy of combining this information from the different entities, segregated in four different bases, is to allow establishing relationships between the modules in such a way that recreates in the system the interactions and logics observed in the field. In the case of the Bar do Poulestra, here are the types of possible relationships operated in the data base:

- a) institution-institution: between the clubhouse at the bar and the Poulestra team, or between the bar and another team that uses it or that has some form of interaction with it;
- b) institution-person: between the bar and Senhor Ramiro, between the team and Senhor Ramiro, and between these locations and any other people who are in the data base;
- c) institution-event: between the team and a championship or tournament in which it participated;
- d) institution-archives: between the bar and the complete series of objects stored there that were cataloged in the base of the archive;
- e) person-event: between Senhor Ramiro and a championship at which he conducted an activity;
- f) person-archive: between Senhor Ramiro and all the items of the archive present in his bar that were cataloged;
- g) person-person: between Senhor Ramiro and any other people related to him, whether it is the researcher who interviewed him or a player for the team;
- h) event-archives: between a championship and a trophy or a set of photographs related to this championship;

- i) event-event: between championships that have some type of relationship;
- j) archives-archives: this is what joins all the items of a single original collection, for example, between all of Senhor Ramiro's trophies and photographs. But not only this, the system allows relating Senhor Ramiro's objects to others, like books, textual documents, iconographies, as long as the field research indicates some connection.

All the possible relationships between the data bases are reversible, that is, a relationship institution-person is equally that of person-institution. It is not important through which base the insertion of the relationship is made, it automatically appears in the other related base.

The operation consists, therefore, in fragmenting and reconnecting the field data, in this interplay of combining analyses without establishing an hierarchy for them, or that is, without establishing greater or lesser importance to a type of input. The premise of the horizontality of the data in the system distinguishes the data base from more traditional tools used by museums, whose cataloging is invariably based on the object of the archive to relate other types of information to it, always laterally, belonging to people and locations. Because it is a database established for the purpose of organizing references about football, beyond its archives of a specifically material nature, it has as a principle that an "item from the archives" does not have to be initially registered. To the contrary, in many locations mapped these items are only identified generically, leaving their detailing, and therefore their cataloging, for a later research phase.

To the degree that the research advances, new relationships can be made in the data base, linking a location mapped at one time to a championship or a set of photographs discovered later. In this way, the network of relationships is always expanded and also refined. It must be considered that the network is not a pre-established fact, but a result obtained based on the items listed in the inventory of actions, places, people and objects. And it is not static: for each new insertion creates a possibility to add or re-qualify relationships previously constituted in the database.

Within this logic, another challenge is the naming of the types of relationship. This task calls for the construction of a controlled vocabulary, that is, lists of pre-established terms to standardize the insertion of data. As part

of the methodology inspired by anthropology, an effort was made to use native terms for the construction of this vocabulary. As when writing a paper, each native term carries some links of meaning and is translated for the reader, that is, the data base has an area for management of terms that compose the controlled vocabulary, with the introduction of synonyms and meanings, in order to lead users of the data base to the understanding of the use of that word in the research context.

The native terms comprise the main inputs of keywords (or content descriptors), such as the ability to search for uniform data (shirts, pants, cleats) based on the terms “uniforme” commonly used in the Brazilian press, but also “fardamento,” [another word for uniform in Portuguese] which is commonly used in the amateur universe. Another example is the identification as “teacher” for a person in a type of relationship that is very common in the amateur football universe, which is, that of teaching the football practice in government programs. This name “teacher” is not the official name given to professionals hired by the programs, which calls them “monitors” or “sports agents.” Nevertheless, in practice, these agents refer to themselves as “teachers” as do the children that participate in the activities. Therefore, the option in the database is to also name these people and relate them to the spaces and events in which they act using the term “teacher,” entering the official terms as synonyms. Another example is the connection, via a system of data, between two or more clubs or groups of fans (institution-institution type) based on the terms “alliance” or “rivalry,” which are commonly used in the football universe.

Like the relationships, the fields of the cataloging – while controlled – are not unchangeable. From time to time, reviews are conducted of the lists of vocabulary in order to complete meanings, insert synonyms and new terms. What is important to highlight is the new use conferred to a procedure that is common in the field of museological documentation: the repetition of ideas with different words (as in the classic example of “cat-kitty-feline” to refer to the same animal), in the CRFB project this procedure is used to assist the translation of the research universe into an information management tool.

The investment in this connectivity allows, at first, that the user of the system expand their searches and become surprised with the connections that the database will reveal. At a second moment, and for the specialists in the theme, of which there are many judging by the interest that football stirs

in the daily life of Brazilians, the person consulting the database can write to the Football Museum suggesting corrections and additions to information and it is hoped, make a request to see his private collection referenced in the CRFB and included in the network.

The plan for safeguarding the archives, therefore, comes to be shared between the Football Museum and a community of people interested in the issue. If the option to not collect objects and remove them from their context to store them in a technical reserve with temperature and humidity controls (a longtime practice of museums and still very necessary in many areas) creates the risk of losing material from valuable collections spread throughout the country, the proposal of the MF, on the other hand, is to innovate by constructing an archives of references whose meanings are shared with those who truly collect them, care for them and make them circulate, and for this reason, preserve their meanings and values.

## **Conclusion**

This article presented the research methodology used by the Football Museum at its Reference Center for Brazilian Football and the options chosen for the translation of field data into a data base. Because it is inspired by anthropology, the field research allows much more than a survey of formal or static data related to the universe studied, given that the main product of the researchers is the writing of a text, a “field report,” which seeks to describe the location or event researched as would an ethnography. This text, in turn, is the basis for the cataloging of the cultural references of football that are the base of the inventory produced by the research conducted by CRFB.

By being based on ethnographic research, even if in a novel form, the cataloging undertaken sought to construct relationships between different entities that represent the dynamic of the practices related to football identified in the study. This methodology has allowed rethinking the procedures for safeguarding that are currently used at museological institutions and also the form of presenting them to the public.

The research presented here is a very recent experiment and is still underway (that is, its results are still not totally visualized and have not been open to public consultation so that they can be questioned and validated by the interlocutors of the study); nevertheless, it is possible to see that it points

to new routes for the work of researchers at museums. This is especially pertinent to the so-called “new museums,” which decide not to have their own material collections to adopt more technological exhibitions that are based on sensory experiences. The greater problem raised for this new type of museum has been the risk of not safeguarding the indicators of memory and collections about certain themes. In the case of football, this was carefully questioned, even because of the absence of other institutions in the country that take on this task (it is known that the clubs and federations do not properly store their documentation and their archives nor do they make them available for consultation to researchers).

Upon referencing and relating objects, documents, practices, events and people, without establishing an hierarchy between the material and immaterial or between archives of the museum itself and those of other institutions, the risk of physical loss of documents and objects remains, even when it is possible to create a digital version or copy, which is possible with certain items. However, the local history, the relationships, the terms used and their meanings are preserved, as well as the description made at the time of passage of the researcher at the location through a series of products from the visit: report, photos, videos and audios.

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In 1950, Lévi-Strauss indicated a need for the transformation of anthropology museums and the possibility that they become privileged spaces for experimentation for the anthropologist; “laboratories for the study of social phenomena difficult to analyze” (1989: 423). If Levi-Strauss’ concern at that time was to discuss the place of anthropology in the social sciences and the discipline as a profession, the text recognized the potential to transform cultural dynamics and social representations (our much discussed intangible culture) into “objects” of analysis of museums, and also the distinction and the effort of the anthropological look in this undertaking.

Although Levi-Strauss was referring to anthropology museums, the suggestion not only appears current, but also capable of being transposed to the field of museums in general, and in particular, to the project presented here. The desire is to treat it as a laboratory, a place of experimentations for museums and for anthropology, perhaps this is the route.

Seen from another context, Levi-Strauss’ recommendation continues to gain meaning: “In all these cases the purpose should be, not merely to collect

objects, but to understand men; not so much to classify dried remains— as in herbariums— as to describe and analyze forms of existence with which the observer is closely and actively in touch. (...)But while it is becoming increasingly difficult to collect bows and arrows, drums and necklaces, baskets and statues of divinities, it is becoming easier to make a systematic study of languages, beliefs, attitudes, and personalities” (1989: 421). We may say, that this is crucial.

Translated by Ana Letícia de Fiori and Jeff Hoff, except the excerpts from Lévi-Strauss, which are from the 1963 U.S. edition.

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