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Chapter 11

British Football with a Brazilian Beat: The Early History of a National Pastime (1894-1933)

Darién J. Davis

Great Britain's historical importance to the commercial development of most Latin American economies is undisputed. As early as the middle of the eighteenth century, Great Britain had become a major market for Latin American exports, particularly raw materials vital to its industrialisation process. After the various countries gained independence from Portugal and Spain, Latin America became a major focus of British economic expansion and investment. The newly created Latin American republics did not consider Great Britain a new European conqueror, but an ally with which they could cooperate to achieve economic growth. British investment in Brazil was particularly strong, and the British role in the modernisation of major transportation and commercial industries has been well documented. Less known, however, is the historical influence of Great Britain on Latin American popular culture in general and on Brazil's in particular.

Brazilians associated nineteenth-century Great Britain with 'progress', 'growth', 'modernity', and 'civility' – all characteristics to which the independent Latin American nations desperately aspired. Nineteenth-century Britain had produced a number of distinguished writers including Sir Walter Scott and Lord Byron who were widely read and revered by Latin American intellectuals.¹ The Brazilian upper class adopted British fashion, foods, 'teatime' and a wide array of practices, including outdoor sports. At the beginning of the twentieth century, upper-class Brazilians began to practise British sports within the confines of exclusive sports clubs, despite one British commentator's observation that sports would not

1. Graham, *Britain and the Onset of Modernization in Brazil, 1850-1914* (1968), pp. 258-66. In his classic work, *Civilización y barbarie*, the Argentine intellectual and anglophile Juan Domingo Sarmiento created a paradigm in which Europe, personified by England, represented 'civilisation'.

develop in Brazil because of the 'tropical conditions which are not conducive to a substantial expenditure of physical energy ...'²

The introduction of modern football into Brazil came after that of other British sports such as tennis, rugby and cricket.³ Celebrated today as the popular Brazilian pastime *par excellence*, modern Brazilian football has its roots in the British bourgeoisie. An examination of the early years of football in Brazil, from 1894 until 1933, provides us with a window on British-Brazilian social and cultural relations outside the realm of business and commerce. While the British origin of the sport was crucial to attracting the Brazilian upper classes, the passion and dedication of its British promoters ensured its general acceptance, and the eventual establishment of teams and leagues. That this process occurred at a time when the population of the southern urban centres began to explode meant that the sport's audience and players would eventually grow beyond the upper classes.

In search of group entertainment, by the second decade of the twentieth century men from the middle and popular classes would begin to turn their attention to football when other possibilities, such as *capoiera*, the Afro-Brazilian martial arts form, were in decline. Despite its aspect of modernity, however, 'sport' remained a privilege of the upper classes until the late 1920s, and therefore a pastime for whites. Moreover, in its quest for modernity the Brazilian middle class gravitated towards football as one of the few forms of male sports or entertainment that could replace *capoiera*, which was associated with the black population. Indeed,

2. Lloyd, *Twentieth-Century Impressions of Brazil* (1913), p. 151. It is important to emphasise that the Brazilian perception of the British did not reflect the experience and diversity of the British expatriate experience in Brazil. Although the British dominated key transportation, commerce and utility sectors, Brazilian efforts to encourage British workers to migrate to Brazil *en masse* failed. Indeed testimonies of would-be immigrants to Brazil reveal that many of them starved or were poorly treated in Brazil before returning home. In the 1890s many articles appeared in *The Times* of London detailing the appalling conditions experienced in São Paulo by Yorkshire workers. In response, the British government issued warnings to prospective Brazil-bound emigrants.
3. Tennis, the first ball game introduced into Brazil, was considered the most exclusive of sports. Rugby and cricket were also introduced earlier than football, but never developed a popular following, although Emperor Dom Pedro II often attended cricket matches.

capoiera was severely restricted by police authorities, and in some regions it was banned.⁴

The development of Brazilian football can be divided into four major periods: introduction (1890-1910); propagation (1910-20); popularisation (1920-33), the period in which amateur football prevailed, but where interest grew and the quality of the sport improved partly due to small subsidies given to players; and professionalism (1933-50), the first phase of Brazilian professionalism and government involvement.⁵ By 1933 football had reached its apogee, when it ceased to be an amateur sport and became a source of social ascendancy for hundreds of Brazilians.

This chapter assesses the impact of the British influence on the development of Brazilian football up to 1933. To what extent was the British aspect of the sport crucial to its original appeal? What element of British culture remained essential to the game even as British players were replaced by Brazilians? Did British players leave an impression on the Brazilians who followed? The answers to these questions will provide a re-evaluation of the British cultural influence in the modern era. These questions can only be answered, however, if they are placed in the context of the existing literature of football in Great Britain and Brazil.

A great deal of information exists on football in Brazil, although most of it has focused on contemporary developments or on heroes and masters of the game. Indeed, the number of manuscripts and, to a lesser extent, scholarly articles dedicated to football greats (such as Pelé, Garrincha and others) range from biographical explorations to detailed analyses on the role

4. Dos Santos, *Historia política do futebol brasileiro* (1981), pp. 21-2, makes a connection between the growth of the popular classes in 1904-17, workers' strikes and growth of football as entertainment. In the nineteenth century many believed *capoiera* to be an uncivilised activity that had to be restricted. The penal code of 1890 severely restricted *capoiera* as one of the many offences against public order. See Lyra Filho, *Introdução a sociologia dos desportos* (1974), p. 332 and Halloway, *Policing Rio de Janeiro: Repression and Resistance in a 19th Century City* (1993).
5. Robert Levine's periodisation differs slightly in 'Esporte e sociedade: O caso do futebol brasileiro' (1982). Using Charles Miller as a focal point, Levine's first era covers 1894-1904, the second era, from 1905 until 1933, begins with the foundation of the Metropolitan Football League and ends with the institutionalisation of football as a professional sport, and the final period, of national expansion, lasts from 1933 until the completion of the Maracanã Stadium in 1950.

of clubs and teams in Brazilian patriotism. In this regard, the number of Brazilian Portuguese-language sources far outstrips the sources in English. Two examples are Alceu Méndes de Oliveira Castro and José Carneiro Felipe Filho's *Seleções brasileiros através dos tempos, 1914-1960*, and Marcos de Castro and João Máximo's *Gigantes do futebol brasileiro*, both published in 1965.

Comparatively few works have explored the historical underpinnings of Brazilian soccer and its British connection, the changing developments in Brazilian soccer at the turn of the century, or its impact on social and race relations. Some works have looked into this important era and provide an insight into the British role in the development of football without making the British-Brazilian connection the focus: Mario Filho's *O negro no futebol brasileiro* (1964) is now a classic example. Writing in a journalistic style with no footnotes, Filho provides information about the transformation of Brazilian football in the 1920s from amateurism to professionalism, paying close attention to the role of race in that transformation. Although Lincoln Allison's (1978) essay 'Association Football and the Urban Ethos', is a comparative analysis of the growth of football in São Paulo and Manchester, it nonetheless proposes an interesting thesis which has national implications. Allison focuses on the role of urban development in the transforming of football in the late 1920s and 1930s rather than on the manipulation of the sport by class or social dynamics. Moreover, this essay argues that football became more popular (and in the case of Brazil, more democratic) as it filled a psychological and social need among the growing urban populations.

Joel Rufino dos Santos's *História política do futebol brasileiro* has been an important source for this chapter as it traces the development of Brazilian football through four stages, the first of which related directly to the role of the British in Brazilian society in 1894-1920. *A verdadeira história do futebol brasileiro* by Lois Baena Cunha, *O pontapé inicial: memória do futebol brasileiro (1894-1933)* by Waldenyr Caldas, and *História do futebol no Brasil, 1894-1933* by Tomás Mazzoni are also helpful sources on football in Brazil during its developmental stage.

Several sources in English may assist students of football in general and football in Brazil in particular to understand the development of sports and leisure in Great Britain in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Dennis Brailsford provides a detailed, if often humorous, look at the evolution of sports in Great Britain in *Sports, Time and Society: The British at Play*. Chapter eight is particularly insightful in understanding what the author calls the 'leisure age' at the turn of the century. Also offering insights are Brian Dobbs, *Edwardians at Play: Sport 1890-1914*, and *The People's*

Game: A Social History of British Football by James Walvin More. Explicitly related to the rise of British football are Percy M. Young's classic, *A History of British Football*, Nicolas Fishwick's *English Football and Society, 1910-1950* and Tony Mason's important work, *Association Football and English Society, 1863-1915*.

Scholars have not paid enough attention to British-Brazilian relations, 'transculturation'⁶ and the adaptation of British customs to Brazilian reality, although Brazilian patriots such as Gilberto Freyre, Mário de Andrade and Afonso Enrique Lima Barreto and others have made numerous commentaries on this aspect of football history in many of their works. Recently scholars such as Robert Levine and Matthew Shirts have examined the evolution of football and have provided information on its early development.⁷ In order to understand the importance of football to Brazilian history at the turn of the century and to provide responses to the aforementioned issues, it is first necessary to examine football's development in Great Britain.

The Roots

Historians are unclear as to the precise origins of the game that is now called football. Men in ancient Europe, Asia, and in pre-Columbian America, including the area now occupied by Brazil, practised various rudimentary games in which the ball was put into play by the hands or the feet. However, modern football became an important component of the educational curriculum for boys (mostly in public schools) in nineteenth-century Great Britain; 26 October 1863 marked the official foundation of the Football Association (F.A.) in the Freemason's Tavern on Great Queen Street in London by a group of football *aficionados* mostly from the upper and middle classes who joined together to establish the sport's official rules.⁸

6. Coined in the 1930s by the Cuban Fernando Ortiz, 'transculturation' was originally used to refer to the transfer of African culture to the Americas by slaves. The term is often used to refer to the transportation of customs or cultural traits of a group of people from one community to another.
7. Levine (1982), pp. 233-52, and Shirts, 'Futebol no Brasil ou Football in Brazil?' (1982), p. 119.
8. Different football clubs played with independent and sometimes opposing rules. In some cases, games became violent and degenerated

The Football Association made it possible to promote a single style of football with uniform rules throughout the British Isles, where, in less than ten years, the first inter-island competition took place. Football had become so popular that British travellers and emigrants eagerly took the sport with them to foreign lands in a process that is often known as transculturation. Already in 1865, British immigrants in Argentina had founded the Buenos Aires Football Club, and by 1882 the game was taken to Uruguay. During the 1870s, the sport appeared in various European countries including France (1872), Denmark (1876), and the Netherlands (1879), although it is unclear whether the game was carried by British immigrants or visitors.

References to the practice of football in Brazil between 1870 and 1890 abound. As early as 1872, students at the Colégio São Luís in Itu, São Paulo, played the game under the supervision of Catholic priests who ran the school. British sailors docking in ports such as Recife and Porto Alegre often played during their leisure time. Various sources report British sailors playing on Glória beach in Rio de Janeiro in 1874, British workers organising impromptu games in São Paulo in the early 1880s, and sailors playing in front of the Guanabara Palace in Rio. Lois Baena Cunha adds that English workers practised the sport in Belém do Pará at the site which is now Praça Batista Campos.⁹

The official introduction of football into Brazil, however, can be attributed to three main figures, all with direct ties to Great Britain: Oscar Cox, Arthur Lawson, and Charles Miller; the last being a *paulista* born of a Scottish father and a Brazilian mother of English descent, and the most important of the three. All three were enthusiastic sports buffs who constituted a part of the British expatriate community in Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo respectively. They all had close connections with the exclusive sports clubs which allowed for the leisurely development of physical exercise and entertainment. British transculturation notwithstanding, men such as Miller developed an unprecedented passion for football at the end of the nineteenth century, leading to the creation of teams outside the confines of British sports clubs, and mushrooming into a national obsession by the late 1940s.

into brawls. For further reading on the foundation of football see Trevor and William, *Rugby Union Football* (1923); Young (1968). The establishment of the Football Association in 1863 succeeded in separating rugby football from association football which generally prohibited the use of the hands. The term 'soccer' is reportedly an abbreviation for 'association football'.

9. Cunha, *A verdadeira história do futebol brasileiro* (1994), pp. 1-2.

When Charles Miller first took football to São Paulo in 1894, in England it was a bourgeois university sport, which had only recently distinguished itself from rugby. The first decade of football in Brazil reproduced this bourgeois taste with strict rules of behaviour for both players and spectators. Oscar Cox's influence in Rio and that of Arthur Lawson in Rio Grande do Sul meant that Brazilians understood the sport as an absolutely British phenomenon, with its decisively English nomenclature and rules that had to be mastered. British economic imperialism in the nineteenth century was accompanied by a more surreptitious cultural imperialism, not precisely espoused by the British, but which made British practices as diverse as drinking tea or playing soccer desirable in undeveloped countries in search of modernity.¹⁰

Football in Brazil: The British are Coming – Long Live Brazil!

The turn of the century was a period of extraordinary optimism for Brazilians. They were entering a new century with a new attitude, and indeed a new *weltanschauung*, partly due to the momentous changes of the 1880s. In 1888, slavery had been abolished, thrusting Brazil into the assembly of modern countries eager to pursue capitalist free-labour development. One year later, the backward-looking monarchy fell, and General Deodoro de Fonseca, with the support of the army, announced the creation of the Republic. The new positivist slogan, 'Order and Progress' (*Ordem e Progresso*), signalled a new era, replacing the anachronistic imperial arms that adorned the national flag. These events quickened Brazil's economic and population growth, the former through increased investment and productivity, and the latter through immigration.

The upper classes were able to avoid any serious examination of the widespread social problems that plagued the country, largely because of the euphoria which engulfed them. Brazil was in the midst of economic growth and change, and intense European immigration contributed to a sense of optimism. Brazil encouraged European immigration to attract free labourers with no connections with slavery, hoping to improve its image of a 'slave state', and to infuse fresh European blood into the gene pool. According to the Fundação Instituto Brasileira de Geografia e Economia (IBGE), between 1891 and 1910 a total of 1,769,892 immigrants arrived in Brazil from Europe, the majority of them Portuguese, Italian and Spanish. British immigration was slight in comparison. According to official records

10. dos Santos (1981), p. 14.

1,087 came from Great Britain, the majority destined for the southern and south-eastern states.¹¹ *Impressions of Brazil in the Twentieth Century* reported that:

If the ethnic influence of the British is non-existent, their social influence is considerable even though they are few in number. Thus while the elegant Brazilian lady dresses in accordance with Parisian fashion, the elegant gentlemen of Rio make a show of their English clothes and customs. The colony has had an even more direct influence in spreading enthusiasm for sports among Brazilians, first of all for rowing, and more recently for football.¹²

Brazil's political, economic and cultural identity remained in the hands of the few, however, and it was those few who decided the fate of Brazil during the Belle Epoque. Culturally, the Brazilian upper and middle classes imitated the French, drinking champagne and crowding newly created cafés in the urban centres. Rio de Janeiro writer Luiz Edmundo remarked, for example, that anyone who was anyone was sure to be seen in the Café Paris in Rio which exuded a life of pure chic. Art and architecture inspired by the French art nouveau flourished in Brazil, as imports, artists and fine pieces from Paris reached into remote parts of the country.¹³ However, France's cultural importance was rivalled by British ideas of social and economic progress. Brazilian men, in particular, revered British customs and ideas. In addition to the ideas of social and economic development which came from thinkers such as Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin, the British introduced to the Brazilian milieu the importance of physical exercise for health and hygiene.¹⁴

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11. Hugon, *Demografia brasileira* (1973), pp. 98-9; Lloyd (1913), pp. 102, 183, 184. This figure of 1,087 is, however, certainly an under-representation, including only registered immigrants and not first-class passengers or many of those arriving on temporary contracts.
 12. From Lloyds Bank, *The British Presence in Brazil, 1808-1914* (1987), p. 142
 13. See da Costa, *O Rio de Janeiro do meu tempo* (1938).
 14. Brazilian men also imitated British fashion, particularly the British gentleman's attire. Women from the upper classes learned music, the arts and French. Many were often sent to European Catholic schools or convents in Belgium or France. See da Costa (1938), vol. 1, p. 82.

In the first half of the nineteenth century educators in Britain had played a significant role in propagating the importance of physical activity in relation to intellectual development. Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), the headmaster of Rugby School from 1828 to 1842, helped to reform the English 'public' education system to emphasise the role of sports in a young boy's development. Arnold, Thomas Hughes, and other contemporaries such as Edward Thring, the headmaster of Uppingham School, were instrumental in encouraging the organisation and playing of sports to combat idleness and build character. Hughes's *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, which became a best-seller in 1857, met with approval from Britons interested in the education of youth because of its emphasis on the role of team games in promoting good citizens. By the middle of the century football had become commonplace with *ad hoc* rules established by individual institutions.¹⁵

At the beginning of the twentieth century British and US schools in Brazil stimulated interest in physical activity as an important component of the students' wellbeing. Upper-class Brazilian families concerned with both their physical and moral development sought out schools that claimed a British orientation, such as the Anglo-Brazilian School in São Paulo.¹⁶ Influenced by theories of geographical determinism, many British, nonetheless, believed that football would not prosper in Brazil. In 1913, one observer reported that 'Association football is not a brand of sport one would expect to find flourishing in a sub-tropical climate. Still it exists in Brazil, although active and vigorous prosecution of it is confined almost wholly to the southern states of the Republic.'¹⁷ At the same time, British clubs originally barred many Brazilians from playing the sport.

In his research on the relationship between sports events and audiences, Michael Roberts has already indicated that the principal element of most spectator sports is the link of the players' destiny to that of the fans. In the early decades of this century the links between Brazilian spectators and

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15. McIntosh, *Physical Education in England Since 1800* (1968), pp. 38-43. For information related specifically to football in Great Britain, see Young (1968). Despite the efforts of headmasters, the boys themselves were enthusiastic about the role of physical activity within an otherwise intellectually rigid programme. (English public schools should not be confused with American public schools. Public schools in Great Britain are actually private fee-paying schools.)
 16. Bruno, *História e tradições da cidade de São Paulo* (1954), vol. 3, p. 126.
 17. Lloyd (1913), p. 155.

British players were more imaginary than real. For Brazilians, British spectator sports had become a voyeuristic opportunity to gaze upon a people for whom they harboured a fascination, and a window on a world which they perceived as utterly modern, and to which they aspired.¹⁸

An analysis of football's success as a major pastime provides another window on the hegemonic relationship of class and race which dominated national thinking for decades. Indeed, British football was unofficially heralded as a modern sport because it was British, and thus coded with innately modern characteristics. Football was not only the sport of the *gran finos*, but it was fashionable for fans to be associated with the teams and be invited to the matches. The list of spectators at the early football matches reads like a guest list at a party of one of the wealthiest families of the urban centres. Spectators included diplomats, senators, congressmen, and high-society women.

During its introductory phase, numerous sports clubs were established around the country, although Rio and São Paulo would dominate the event for most of the twentieth century. The São Paulo Athletic Club and the Mackenzie Athletic Club of São Paulo were created in 1888 and 1898 respectively. The Sports Club Rio Grande and the Ponte Preta Athletic Association in Campinas emerged in 1900. In 1902 Rio saw the birth of the Fluminense Football Club, today the oldest existing football club in the country, followed immediately by the Football Athletic Club in 1903, the Bangú Athletic Club, the Botafogo Athletic Club, and the América Football Club in 1904. In the north-east, Bahia saw the creation of its first club in 1903, the Bahiano Sports Club. By 1905, there were enough clubs in Rio alone to create the Metropolitan Football League (Liga Metropolitana de Futebol).¹⁹

The Britishness of Brazilian football remained prevalent in the first stage (1890-1910), owing to the close ties among the British in Rio and São Paulo. Brazil's first (unofficial) national team to play in an international match was an all-British squad. In 1906 a *paulista* team comprising British players competed against a team representing Cape Colony and Natal,

18. Roberts, 'The Vicarious Heroism of the Sports Spectator' (1974), p. 17.

19. Henshaw, *Encyclopedia of World Soccer* (1979), pp. 90-105; 'Botafogo: A História do Clube' and 'Nasce rico e hoje é do povo', *Placar edição especial: As maiores torcidas do Brasil* (1991), pp. 24; 25. The Flamengo Sailing Club formed a team in 1895, but Fluminense is considered the first football club in Rio which took its name from the sport.

South Africa.²⁰ The connection with Britain was so great that in 1910 the Rio de Janeiro sports club Fluminense sponsored a visit of one of the great London teams, the Corinthians. The event sparked an overwhelming burst of attention from journalists, and resulted in the creation of a more 'middle sector' football club, the Paulista Corinthians, in São Paulo. University students and other members of the upper class took a keen interest in the sport, and sports clubs continued to proliferate throughout the national territory.²¹

Football teams and leagues developed throughout São Paulo and Rio quite rapidly, accompanied by a limited degree of diversity. The São Paulo Athletic Club, where Miller had originally established the first team, constituted a part of the group known as the *gran finos*. In 1902-4 they reigned as the state's all-English football champions under Miller's direction.²² Other clubs were known as the *clubes de esquina* or corner clubs, more middle-class in character, with a diverse membership of immigrants and Brazilians. These two groups never mixed, thanks to the organisation of leagues, the Association of Athletic Sports (Associação de Esportes Atléticos) being the league for gentlemen, compared with the middle-class Paulistino Football League (Liga Paulistino de Football). In Rio a similar system came into operation.

Regardless of the teams' class status, leagues attempted to reproduce the atmosphere of the British clubs. In Rio, the more integrated clubs still had only few Brazilians, and no blacks. The Bangú Athletic Club, with a total of nine players, boasted seven English, one Italian and one Brazilian. Other clubs such as Rio Cricket were exclusively for the British and children of British, creating what Mario Filho describes as two British communities; one more tolerant and open to Brazilians, the other jealously holding on to their British exclusivity.²³

British bourgeois community life revolved primarily around business, industry and the railways, and football, like all other sports, was very frequently connected with work, allowing for the reinforcement of a British identity. Given the small British population, almost every Englishman who landed in Brazil was guaranteed a place in a prestigious Brazilian football

20. Henshaw (1979), pp. 91-2.

21. Lloyd (1913), p. 56.

22. Members included William Fox Rule, J.T. Sadler, Percy W. Crew, J. Robottom, W. Jeffrey, G.H. Ford, W. Holland, R. Duff, H.J. Boyes, F.H. Robinson, F.H. Hodgkiss, N. Biddell, F.M. Ewan, H.W. Wright, P. Mantandon, C. Holland, C.P. Tomkins.

23. Filho (1964), p. 6.

team.²⁴ Football games were yet another activity that brought together British men associated with British companies as diverse as the São Paulo Railway, the Gas Company and the London Bank, among a myriad others. But the popularity of the sport would produce a demand for players that the small British community would not be able to meet. German and Italian immigrants could often be found among the British players as well as white Brazilians, but very few mestizos or mulattos. Although racial exceptionalism²⁵ in Brazilian society did not come from the British, the British in Brazil maintained their own sense of exceptionalism based on national and racial considerations. Still, the passion of founders such as Miller and Cox which helped the propagation of the sport in national territory indicated a visionary outlook that would necessitate integration.

Transculturation and Popularisation

Charles Miller did not see himself as a founder. Typical of members of many immigrant families the world over, however, he became an active participant in the process of transculturation. On a return trip to Brazil from England in 1894, he carried with him two rubber balls, crucial instruments for a sport which was gaining much more popularity in Great Britain.²⁶ In Rio, Oscar Cox with his brother Edwin reportedly brought balls over from Switzerland to Rio where he cultivated the sport, although at a much slower pace than his *paulista* counterpart. Although Cox had balls sent over in 1897, not until 1901 did he succeed in organising a game of football between the Paysandú Cricket Club and the Rio Cricket Club and Athletic Association.

An examination of the transfer of cultural practices from one country to another carried out exclusively on the macro-political level only reinforces the metropolis-periphery dichotomy in which the cultures of the metropolis are privileged above national customs. The movement of communities

24. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

25. I borrow the term racial exceptionalism from Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power: The Movimento Negro of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, Brazil, 1945-1988* (1994). I use it to refer to a certain brand of racial discrimination which allows for certain exceptions to the otherwise steadfast rule which excluded blacks from many areas of national life.

26. Dos Santos (1981), pp. 11-13. For a brief introduction to the history of football in Brazil see Cunha (1994); Netto, *História do Fluminense* (1952), p. 15. See also Mazzoni (1950).

across national boundaries does not necessarily mean that given cultural practices will automatically be brought along. In some cases, lone individuals bear the responsibility of carrying and promoting cultural practices across boundaries. This is the case of football, and for that reason it is important to examine the personal background of immigrants such as Charles Miller. Miller was indeed one of the most passionate promoters of football throughout São Paulo, as was Oscar Cox in Rio.²⁷

British nationalism and racism in Brazil prohibited British football players from inter-mingling with non-white players (with few exceptions) prior to the 1930s. On the other hand, an exclusive focus on the political and cultural hegemony of the British in Brazil overlooks the personal contribution of individuals to the development of football during this period. Writers such as Matthew G. Shirts, who criticise Brazilian journalists and writers for exaggerating the importance of the English, do not adequately account for the charisma and passion of founders and players such as Miller in São Paulo and Cox in Rio, together with other European trainers such as the German soccer star Herman Friese who emigrated to Brazil at the turn of the century. It is necessary to examine the impact of these individuals without overlooking the social relationship between the British and Brazilians, and between whites and non-whites.²⁸

Charles Miller, a player and later a referee, attests to the necessity of examining personal motivations within the political dimension of the transfer of culture. A talented player who developed a splendid rapport with the spectators, Miller was an avid sports fan who played tennis, rugby and cricket, although his real passion was football.²⁹ The *Times of Brazil* praised Miller who had led the São Paulo team which represented Brazil in the 1902 South American Championship, thus:

27. Shirts (1982), pp. 92-3. Shirts writes that Miller was far from being the person responsible for the appearance of the national sport, but he was a symbol, a model of penetration of European customs. Miller was not interested, at least initially, in propagating an 'English sport', but rather in promoting a sport about which he was passionate. This initiative must be recognised despite the fact that it occurred within a broader context of British cultural imperialism.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

29. Miller, who worked for the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company in São Paulo also went on to hold the position of British vice-consul. See Lloyd (1913), p. 700.

For three consecutive years, he captained the valiant side maintained by the São Paulo Athletic Club, which was champion of the city throughout this period. Juvenile enthusiasm, cordial amateurishness and a healthy sporting spirit prevailed at the time. ... And when the cream of the cream in São Paulo society attended the 'Velódromo,' on Sundays without fail, there to watch the memorable matches waged on the greensward by our valiant football players, Charles Miller was rewarded with the unanimous support of the spectators and ... was showered with hearty applause as he dribbled his opponents and played with brilliant skill.³⁰

Despite the commentator's romantic longing for an age of amateur sport, Miller's talents were undisputed.

According to Mario Filho, Miller was one of the few Englishman who liked the noise, the applause and the interaction with spectators.³¹ After 1902, spectators were charged an entrance fee to see games, and players often aimed to create moves and to draw cheers from the crowds with prettier and fancier footwork.³² Indeed, Miller's tactics on the field were legendary. He invented a move originally known as 'o charles' which endeared him to Brazilians who already were changing the style of the game, although not the form and structure. On miscalculating the direction of the ball, he had to curl his leg and shoot with his heel, and this move would later bear his name. Eventually 'the charles' lost its 's', and became known as 'charle', which is more Brazilian.

As more and more Brazilians became involved in football, the number of English footballers declined, and one could hardly call it an English sport, although the name remained 'football', against the wishes of many enthusiastic patriots. Still, after 1910, many of the old guard who longed for the old British game felt insulted and refused to attend matches. Despite this attitude among the British and upper-class Brazilians, Brazilian football historiography continues to emphasise the importance of the English as the founding fathers.³³

30. Excerpts from the *Times of Brazil* are reprinted in Lloyds Bank (1987), pp. 120-21.

31. Filho (1964), p. 49.

32. Castro, *O futebol brasileiro bicampeado mundo* (1962), p. 15.

33. Shirts (1982), pp. 90-3. Shirts's research has shown that this 'official version' has overlooked the existence of a type of football known among the indigenous populations in Brazil before the arrival of

Although football remained officially a white sport, members of the popular classes learned on the field, in practice with clubs like the Bangú, or as workers in one of the English companies such as the Progresso Industrial Company (Companhia Progresso Industrial). Many more spied on the game over the fences that guarded the sports clubs. When the British did open up their ranks to Brazilians, as with exceptionalism the world over, Brazilians would have to prove that they were 'exceptionally' good players. Blacks were still not welcome, and even mulattos such as Carlos Alberto had to endure a physical *embranqueamento*, or whitening, which gained him the nickname *Pó de arroz* ('rice powder').³⁴

In the 1920s one of the few non-white heroes that the sport had gained was Artur Freidrickson, a mulatto with a German father and a mulatta mother, with green eyes and very light skin. He had become a part of the first national team in 1914, and was apparently accepted by both the British and the Brazilian elite because of his family ties. By the late 1920s, football had become quite competitive, and the amateur nature of the sport was put in jeopardy. Teams from around the country began to provide stipends and other perks to entice 'non-traditional' athletes to play for them. Still, mulattos and light-skinned *morenos* were preferred, as few teams accepted blacks outright.³⁵

At the onset of the Revolution of 1930, football was well on its way to becoming a national pastime, although not yet an obsession. The broader economic and political changes shattered the traditional oligarchic rule and ushered in Gétúlio Vargas on the wings of both middle-class and popular support. Football, previously relegated to the upper classes, became a more popular, accessible sport. All that was required was an empty field and two makeshift markers to serve as goal posts. With this leap into the popular, Brazilian slang slowly began to cannibalise English terminology, and with

Europeans, and illustrates the eurocentric orientation of Brazilian academics and journalists. He correctly indicated that football did not spread in a vacuum, but along with a host of other so-called 'English customs', including 'afternoon tea', fashion, house furniture, the practice of sending roses to women.

34. Dos Santos (1981), pp. 18-19. Before football matches, Carlos Alberto, a mulatto, reportedly took baths in white rice to lighten his complexion.

35. Rio's Américas and Vasco de Gama were two of the first middle-class teams to sign on black players. In 1923, Vasco's racially mixed squad won the city's championship. Although many criticised the squad because it was racially mixed, the team gained a huge popular following.

professionalism in 1933, football entered its first nationalist phase. Five years later Brazil was well on its way to becoming a football power, in the same year that the country saw its first major black football star, Leônidas da Silva. Still only exceptional black 'stars' were able to make the national teams. Vargas, however, was clear about his attitude towards sports in general and football in particular as a popular phenomenon. Far from seeing it as an idle form of recreation, he saw the potential of bringing Brazilians together around what was still considered a prestigious phenomenon.

By the mid-1930s, football had become a Brazilian sport in manner that the *antropófagos* of modernism (writers who celebrated the devouring of foreign influences in the creation of new Brazilian forms) must have enjoyed. Football played to a Brazilian beat, but Brazilians continued to recognise its British origin. Indeed it was the pride in transforming a British symbol that pleased intellectuals and nationalists, not the denial of that influence. In *Novo mundo nos trópicos*, Gilberto Freyre would explain with pride that the national pastime had developed into a Brazilian dance, largely because of the African influence 'that reduces everything to dance'.³⁶ Although this was a sweeping generalisation typical of Freyre, the opening of the sport to the popular classes had a dramatic influence on the game. Brazilians continued to revere football's British beginnings while utilising English terms on the field.

Language and the British Cultural Mark: The Remaining Legacy

In 1916 the creation of the South American Championship, O Campeonato Sul Americano, meant that football had taken on a national tone. Brazil won the championship in 1919, securing a mass following. The 1920s saw a slow democratisation of the sport as social barriers began to break down and blacks, mulattos and workers were permitted to join teams, although a separate league for the upper classes still existed. The development and success of Brazilian football as a British invention must not be underestimated. Given the unequal political and economic relations between the country of origin (Great Britain) and the receptor country

36. Freyre, *Novo mundo nos trópicos* (1971), p. 97. J.O. Meira Penna, like Freyre, attributed this to the abilities that many Brazilian youths learned from dances such as *capoeira* which had long been usurped by *futebol*. Penna, *Em berço esplêndido, ensaio de psicologia coletiva brasileira* (1974), pp. 138-9.

(Brazil) in the beginning, there was little incentive to translate or nationalise any of the foreign customs – although this would eventually happen.

Henriques de Lima Barreto, who believed that football was a sign of British imperialism, misunderstood the dynamics between modernisation and cultural imperialism. Still, he wished to nationalise the game, not discard it. To this end, Barreto suggested changing the name to the Portuguese neologism 'bolapé', an idea which received very little popular support. Paulo de Magalhães opted for 'pébol', while Alcides D'Arcanhy wanted to change the name to 'balípedo'.³⁷ Most commentators who criticised British exclusivity nonetheless shared the vision of Henrique Coelho Netto who promoted a more British view of the sport, no matter who played on the field.³⁸ British influence may have been the key to maintaining interest from all classes. 'Conquering' or adapting a British custom to Brazilian reality, making it a veritable Brazilian practice, would have been a national achievement. Knowledge of the English language (then as now) was an important middle-class skill. Brazilian players of all walks of life who had mastered English terms, not to mention the English rules, would use their language skills with pride.

The first national match, between São Paulo and Rio on 19 October 1902, attests to the desire to maintain football culture within an English realm. Invitations were written in English only.³⁹ Football's official language remained English for the following few decades, and represents even today the only traces of the game's origins. In 1902, the renowned *cronista* and *carioca* observer João do Rio reported that the introduction of football into Rio de Janeiro had spawned a new vocabulary in the Brazilian vernacular, among them words such as 'match', 'goals', and 'shoots', used by Brazilians not altogether without a certain sense of pride. Ever since the inception of sports clubs, both the English and Brazilians had chosen English names, or Portuguese ones written with English syntax, 'Football Club' and 'Jockey Club', for example. Still, men such as Cox chose Brazilian adjectives such as 'Fluminense,' referring to individuals from the

37. Some of these new terms emerged as early as the 1910s. D'Arcanhy coined the term 'pébol' in 1917.

38. It is helpful to indicate that the class dynamics surrounding football in Great Britain were indeed of a different nature. Many shared Herbert Spencer's opinion that football was a regression to barbarism. See *Journal do Comércio*, 12 January 1901.

39. The invitation read: 'Association Football – Match to be played at the Paysandú ground on Sunday the 19th October 1902. Fluffiness F.C. v Rio F.C.'

state of Rio de Janeiro (in the Fluminense Football Club), suggesting a linguistic hybrid.

While Gilberto Freyre criticised the 'ridiculous imitation' of the English and other Europeans by Brazilians, much of this imitation was a logical consequence of an optimistic middle sector in search of new models, and uncomfortable with their own national forms, thanks to the racist theories of degradation and racial inferiority which Freyre himself would help refute.⁴⁰ On the other hand, it is important to emphasise the fact that the Brazilian desire to imitate was as responsible for the continued British influence in the first generation of Brazilian players as was the British desire to maintain English customs.

Football was distinct from other British customs for three reasons. While one had to come from a 'good family' (*boa família*) to be admitted into clubs, many men from the lower classes, factory workers and those who had come into contact with British companies soon practised the sport, as the case of the Bangú Club illustrates. Second, the nature of the sport, including its physical activity, its aspects of spectacle, and its requirement of outdoor space, meant that its elitist quality would be short-lived. The minimal capital investment needed to create a football field meant that imitation was not costly. In addition, the all-male camaraderie and 'informal' sports attire distinguished it from the formal atmosphere of the tea room or even the races.

Flávio Costa, a player from Flamengo in the 1920s, divided the transformation of football into three stages, related to the manner in which the athletes played: assimilation, the era which saw the adaptation of British practices, rules and language to its new Brazilian reality; art and intuition, the period after the establishment of the basic rules which saw much innovation on the part of players; and finally 'the systematic phase' which established a unique 'Brazilian way' of playing football. For Costa the introduction of the sport by the English was necessarily a first step in a process of assimilation, and despite the barriers that prohibited many Brazilians from playing, the very transfer of the British sport necessitated an assimilation that would slowly change how the game would be played in Brazil.⁴¹

Costa's characterisation illustrates that, as with any process of assimilation, both parties (the English and the Brazilians) were transformed.

40. Freyre, *New World in the Tropics: The Culture of Modern Brazil* (1959), p. 98.

41. Costa, 'Considerações sobre a evolução do futebol brasileiro' (1968), pp. 87-8.

As Brazilians learned the English system, the game slowly adapted its own rhythm and pace. English players such as Miller and others who played to the crowd were also transformed. Strict rules were applied to avoid violence and 'uncivil' behaviour, which journalists often associated with the opening in the 1920s that allowed blacks and mulattos limited entrance into the amateur clubs. But in Great Britain the game had already become somewhat violent and the fans unruly.⁴²

The influence of the English language within the football game, not to mention in other key industries where the British left their mark, naturally spilled over into informal use. In addition to the nomenclature that Brazilian players employed on the field (goalkeeper, full-back, centre-half, referee, hands, foul, carrying, penalty, outside), and a host of other terms that athletes such as Costa recall, Brazilian players used English words in common conversation as well: 'sorry', instead of 'disculpa', for example, when a player had unintentionally distracted, pushed or kicked another player. What Costa calls a 'period of assimilation' soon gave way to a period at the end of the 1920s in which the English words were slowly Brazilianised. This process had no systematic pattern, and in many cases, the players themselves created terms for the English ones.⁴³ 'Goal' became 'gol', 'referee' 'refere', and a series of Portuguese neologisms such as 'goleiro' (goalkeeper), 'medios' (halfbacks), 'atacantes' (strikers), and 'toques' (touching/contact), became common.

According to Maria do Carmo L. de Oliveira Fernández, the multitude of newspapers and journalists that emerged to cover the new phenomenon had played a key role in providing short Portuguese equivalents to English terms, rather than proper analytical translations, in an effort to provide their readers with a suitable reference to the English term. Captain became 'capitão', carrying 'sobre passo', coach 'técnico', corner 'canto', foul 'falta', and so on. All previous attempts by intellectuals to transform the term 'football' into a proper Portuguese equivalent had failed. Not 'pébol', 'balipodo', 'ludopédia', 'pedibola', nor 'bodapolismo' could replace 'football' which was used well into the 1940s, until it was replaced by its Portuguese(d) equivalent 'futebol'.⁴⁴

42. Interestingly, already in 1911, *O Jornal do Comércio* reported that a championship match had to be interrupted because of noisy hooting and shouting from Fluminense fans!

43. Costa (1968), p. 88.

44. Fernández, *Futebol – Fenômeno linguístico* (1974), pp. 21, 34, 74-6, 79. Maria Lenk in her 1942 publication *Organização de Educação Física e Desportives*, in which she praises the government for requiring

While quick translations or adaptations became commonplace, many anglicisms remain part of the football jargon: 'record', 'toss', 'bye', 'interval-training', to name a few. Nationalists who claimed the sport for Brazil never acquired a purist perspective on their national language. In actuality even modern day Portuguese is sprinkled with anglicisms, a remaining legacy of the power of the English language.

Conclusions

From 1894 until 1933 football in Brazil underwent a dramatic transformation, aided in part by the political and economic changes that were transforming the country. By the mid-1930s, football (still not *futebol*) had emerged from the private clubs and was now practised in sports stadiums around the country. The amateur sportsmen gave way to the professional, thus providing one of the most lucrative professions for members of the popular classes with little or no formal education. Concomitantly, football had ceased to be an all-white sport and even less of a British one.⁴⁵

Not coincidentally, writers such as Orlando Ferreira now criticised football for its violence and vulgarity. According to Ferreira football was 'stupid' and 'savage', and encouraged vice and degeneracy throughout the Brazilian population. Ferreira expressed his concern about the excessive sweat, that, according to biological standards of asepsis was unclean and would be harmful to muscles in septic biological terms. He added that football would have painful consequences for his generation, particularly because the 'Latino is very different from the Anglo-Saxon' – a comment that connects him to the racist and biological determinists of the turn of the

physical education in schools, uses the term 'football', not 'futebol'. José Lins Rego's 1940 novel *Água Mãe*, in which football plays a prominent role, continues to use English terms, including examples such as 'centre-forward' to denote positions on the football squad. One of the first newspapers to report on the game was the *Jornal do Comércio*; see its edition of 11 July 1902. Publications dedicated exclusively to football included *O Football* (first published 17 August 1912), *O Jockey*, *Vida Sportiva* and *Jornal dos Sports*.

45. Levine reports, however, that as late as 1958, Brazilian officials hesitated in giving a place to players such as Pelé and Garrincha during the legendary World Cup match which Brazil eventually won.

century. Ferreira's pessimism was ill-founded, however, and his predictions did not prove to be true.⁴⁶

Through football, British and Brazilian players gained international recognition even before the Vargas federal policies encouraged Brazilians to identify with a national state. During the first two decades of the century, football dominated by the British spread throughout Brazil, reaching Manaus in 1912 and the remote Amazonian state of Acre in 1919. In 1916, the two national sports associations, the Brazilian Federation of Sports (FBS) and the National Olympic Committee (created in 1914) became the Confederation of Brazilian Sports (CBS), the national administrative body which still exists today. After the First World War, the game moved slowly away from the upper classes, although passionate players such as Charles Miller continued to play football with a Brazilian beat.⁴⁷

Today, football (now called *futebol*) is a Brazilian obsession. According to the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Culture, by the beginning of the 1970s there were more than 250,000 practitioners of the sport in Brazil. Rio de Janeiro is also home to the largest football stadium in the world, the Maracanã, which has a seating capacity of more than 200,000. In addition, the country has produced world-renowned idols such as Tomás Soares da Silva (Zizi), and Edson Arantes do Nascimento (Pelé). Not coincidentally, the emergence of Brazil as a top contender in international competition coincided with the opening of the sport to non-whites in the 1930s. Within three decades the Brazilianisation of the game was almost complete. The rules, the remnants of the English language, and the memory of its founders, particularly Charles Miller, nonetheless continue to remind enthusiasts of its modern British connections.⁴⁸

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46. Ferreira, *Forja de anões* (1940), pp. 70-85, 99. Ferreira was one of the few critics who criticised not only the cultivation of professional sports, but of athleticism in general.
47. Dos Santos (1981), p. 14.
48. Ministério da Educação e Cultura, *Diagnóstico da educação física e desportos no Brasil* (1970); Radnedge, *The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Soccer* (1994), pp. 118-9.

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PART V

CARIBBEAN BASIN