

Sports in the colonial Portuguese politics: Boletim Geral do Ultramar

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Abstract

The article aimed at discussing the treatment of the theme sport in the *Boletim Geral do Ultramar* (Overseas General Bulletin), an official publication launched by the Portuguese government. From an overview of the relations between Portugal and its colonies in the context of sports, in the post World War II, we analyzed the representations on the sport mobilized by such metropolis, launching a new look at its colonial policy.

Keywords: sport; Africa; Portugal.

O esporte na política colonial portuguesa: o Boletim Geral do Ultramar

Resumo

O artigo tem por objetivo discutir como o tema esporte foi tratado no Boletim Geral do Ultramar, uma publicação oficial do governo português. A partir de um panorama das relações estabelecidas entre Portugal e suas colônias no âmbito da prática esportiva, após a Segunda Guerra Mundial, foram analisadas as representações acerca do esporte mobilizadas pela metrópole, lançando um novo olhar sobre sua política colonial.

Palavras-chave: esporte; África; Portugal.

El deporte en la política colonial portuguesa: Boletim Geral do Ultramar

Resumen

El artículo tubo como objetivo discutir el tratamiento del tema del deporte en el *Boletim Geral do Ultramar* (Boletín General de Ultramar), una publicación oficial del gobierno portugués. Desde una visión general de las relaciones entre Portugal y sus colonias en el contexto del deporte, en el pos Segunda Guerra Mundial, se analizaron las representaciones sobre el deporte movilizadas por la metrópoli, lanzando una nueva mirada a su política colonial.

Palabras clave: deporte; África; Portugal.

Le sport dans la politique coloniale portugaise: Boletim Geral do Ultramar

Résumé

Le but de cette article est de discuter comme le thème of sport a été traité dans le *Boletim Geral do Ultramar* (Bulletin Général d'outre-mer), une publication officielle du gouvernement Portugais. À partir de un aperçu des relations entre Portugal e ses colonies em ce que concerne les pratiques sportives après la seconde guerre mondiale, les representations du sport dans la métropole ont été analysés, et ainsi un nouveau regard a été lancé sur la politique coloniale.

Mots-clés: sport; Afrique; Portugal.

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The dialectics of the relations among globalization, national identity, and xenophobia is emphatically demonstrated by the public activity that combines these three elements: soccer.¹

After the Second World War, sport occupied a prominent space in the sociocultural global panorama, and was constantly mobilized around local issues (notably in clubs), national topics (especially in relation to the construction of identity discourses), and international projections. In the latter, the leading role of competitions and global organizations, such as the International Olympics Committee (IOC) and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), is noteworthy.

A combination of factors assists in the understanding of this presence and importance of sport: its political instrumentation in the Cold War scenario, emulating and dramatizing the bipolarity of the post-war world; its definitive insertion in the growing entertainment industry, progressively becoming one of the main television products; and the perception that its capacity of mobilization could be used for purposes other than sporting practices *per se*, something that became more explicit through its use by the authoritarian regimes of the 1930s and the 1940s.²

Even though Portugal had not initially established more intensive relations with sport,³ it was aware of its recent presence in the international scenario. For Drumond,⁴ in the period of 1930 to 1945, the practice was mobilized by the New State, pronouncedly with the purpose of promoting the eugenic and civic improvement of youth, as well as of controlling workers' schedules.

Starting in the 1950s, the mobilization of sport with the purpose of constructing discourses about the Portuguese national identity became more evident. Some internal factors that help to explain the intensification of the association between the regime and the practice must be highlighted, especially the assessment of the validity of the experiences implemented in the decades of 1930 and 1940, and the good results obtained by some sports teams that represented the country. One can highlight the victories of the national roller hockey team,⁵ and of the Sport Lisboa e Benfica⁶ (Lisbon and Benfica Sport), whose captain was one of the major idols in the history of Portuguese soccer, the Mozambican Eusébio, considered one of the responsible for the team's best result in a World Cup championship (third place in 1966, in England). For some authors, it is undeniable that, at that moment, this modality integrated

¹Eric Hobsbawm, *Globalização, democracia e terrorismo*, São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 1997, p. 92.

²Pierre Arnaud, Jim Riordan (org.), *Sport and international politics: the impact of fascism and communism on sport*, London, Taylor & Francis, 1998; Teresa Aja (org.), *Sport y autoritarismo: la utilización del deporte por el comunismo y el fascismo*, Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 2002.

³Victor Andrade de Melo, "Esporte e artes plásticas em Portugal: Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso", *Revista Portuguesa de Ciências do Desporto*, vol. 10, n. 1, Porto, 2010, p. 191-199.

⁴Maurício Drumond, *Ao bem do desporto e ao bem da nação: relações entre desporto e política no Estado Novo (1933-1945)*, Rio de Janeiro, 2012, mimeo.

⁵The Portuguese team was the world champion from 1947 to 1950, 1952, from 1956 to 1962, and 1968, among others. The hegemony in Europe is even greater: Portugal won the championships between 1959 and 1977, with the exception of 1969, won by Spain.

⁶The team won the European Champion Teams Cup in 1961 and 1962. In addition, in the same decade, it was twice the vice-champion at the Intercontinental Cup championship, disputed with the team that won the Libertadores da América Cup, which gathered teams from South America: in 1961, it was defeated by Uruguay's Peñarol, and in 1962 by Brazil's Santos. It was also a finalist, but not the winner, of the European Champion Teams Cup in 1963, 1965, and 1968.

the propaganda strategies of Salazar's regime, named the 3Fs by these scholars: futebol (soccer), fado, and Fátima.⁷

This more pronounced relation with sport was also linked to the bad moment faced by the country in the international diplomatic scenario. The strategy of defending that Portugal had possession of multi-continental territories, and not colonies, could not find support beyond the traditional allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and two important South Atlantic countries (Brazil, a former colony, and South Africa, a neighbor of its colonies in Austral Africa undergoing increasing international isolation due to the apartheid implementation).

On the other hand, the political struggles fought by the United States and the Soviet Union at the United Nations Organization (UNO), and the conservative image of the Portuguese authoritarian regime increased the obstacles to international pretensions. Considering this, it is easy to understand why Portugal was only accepted as a member of the UNO in 1955, ten years after the organization's creation.

In addition, since the beginning of the 1960s, especially after the guerrilla outbreak in northern Angola in 1961, some members of the international community pressured the government for the opening of negotiations with the liberation movements, and for the creation of an independence process negotiated from the colonies in Africa, a proposal deemed inadmissible by the New State, which would contribute greatly for its isolation.⁸

The approximation to international sports organizations allowed the regime to confect an image of a nation that desired to participate, along with others, in the global fraternity that marked post-war discourses. Besides, this tactic could be an efficient mechanism in giving visibility to the supposed benefits provided to its territories spread across the world.

The mobilization of sport by the Portuguese regime was also related to their strategies to keep possessions in Africa and Asia. As Bittencourt⁹ and Melo¹⁰ argue, the regime started using this practice with the purpose of exalting a supposed imperial identity, as a sign that it had constructed a "civilized" nation that was the product of interracial encounters. It was a vision constructed and completely countersigned by Freyre's luso-tropicalism, which was in vogue on the occasion. As Castelo reminds us, this reference:

'invented' based on historical presuppositions and on an essentialist image of the Portuguese people's personality, besides having served political and ideological interests specific to the New State's conjunctures, also helped to perpetuate a mythical image of a Portuguese cultural identity, investing it with the 'scientific' authority that it lacked until then.¹¹

⁷João Nuno Coelho, Francisco Pinheiro, *A paixão do povo: história do futebol em Portugal*, Porto, Afrontamento, 2002; Ricardo Serrado, *O jogo de Salazar: a política e o futebol no Estado Novo*, Alfragide, Casa das Letras, 2009.

⁸Fernando Tavares Pimenta, *Portugal e o século XX: Estado-Império e descolonização (1890-1975)*, Lisboa, Edições Afrontamento, 2010.

⁹Marcelo Bittencourt, "Jogando no campo do inimigo: futebol e política em Angola", In: Victor Andrade de Melo; Marcelo Bittencourt; Augusto Nascimento (orgs.), *Mais do que um jogo: o esporte no continente africano*, Rio de Janeiro, Apicuri, 2010, p. 101-132.

¹⁰Victor Andrade de Melo, *Pequenas grandes representações do Império Português: a série postal "modalidades desportivas"*, Rio de Janeiro, 2012, mimeo.

¹¹Cláudia Castelo, *"O modo português de estar no mundo": o luso-tropicalismo e a ideologia colonial portuguesa*, Porto, Afrontamento, 1998, p. 14.

How would this new relationship have manifested itself in the Portuguese government's official bulletins dedicated to the colonies? This study aims at discussing the treatment of sport in the *Boletim Geral do Ultramar*.¹² Through the analysis of this periodical, we hope to outline a panorama of the relations established between Portugal and its colonies in the sphere of sport practices. The main purpose is to deepen the understanding about the representations of sport mobilized by the metropolis, casting a new look over its colonial politics.

The bulletin started being published in June 1925, under the name *Boletim da Agência Geral das Colônias* (Bulletin of the General Agency of the Colonies). This denomination was altered in 1935 to *Boletim Geral das Colônias* (General Bulletin of the Colonies), and again, definitively, in 1951, when it became *Boletim Geral do Ultramar* (Overseas General Bulletin). The last alteration was motivated by a change in colonial legislation, which affected the colonies in overseas provinces, supposedly indicating that these were indivisible parts of the Portuguese Empire.

The periodical's objective was always the same, to establish a more explicit relation with the colonies, modifying, however, the emphases and focus that the idea would acquire as time went by. In any case, the publication was always composed of studies/essays regarding the peculiarities of the overseas territories, official positionings, and news. As Marroni summarized well:

The publication was a monthly vehicle of propaganda and information on the colonies and for the colonies, for its informative content, for the technical, official and private works, for the archival and statistical data in areas or services such as agriculture, railways, weather forecast, public construction, ports, health, veterinary services, and others that were not specified.¹³

This is the material, an official look over the overseas territories, that we will look into. We are, therefore, admittedly probing the metropolitan positioning on this topic.

New legislation, new attitude

The novel government's interest in investing in sports and physical education is clearly manifested in the aforementioned change of legislation. In 1945, Sports Councils were created; these were organs that supposedly guided sports practice, but functioned unequally in different places.¹⁴

Law 2,083, from June 15, 1956, which "promulgates the norms relative to gym/sports activities in the overseas provinces", establishes new and more complete instructions to be followed by the Ministry of Overseas, designated as the

¹²Due to length restrictions, we will not approach the presence of sports in similar periodicals published in the colonies, such as the *Boletim Cultural da Guiné Portuguesa* (Guinea's Cultural Bulletin), the *Boletim Cultural da Câmara Municipal de Luanda* (Cultural Bulletin of the Municipal Chamber of Luanda), and *Cabo Verde Boletim de Informação e Propaganda* (Cape Verde - Information and Propaganda Bulletin). These are useful material in amplifying the look over the presence of the practice in question in the sphere of colonial politics.

¹³Maria Luísa de Castro Marroni, *Os outros e a construção da Escola Colonial Portuguesa no Boletim Geral das Colônias - 1925-1951*, Dissertação de Mestrado em História e Educação, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, Porto, 2008, p. 40.

¹⁴An example of active performance could be found in Guinea-Bissau, at the time Portuguese Guinea, in the period when Sarmento Rodrigues was general governor, from 1945 to 1949.

responsible for its execution.¹⁵ Among other decisions, the Provincial Councils for Physical Education were instituted as organs responsible for stimulating the practice, using a series of tools created by the legislation for this purpose.

The novel governmental interest transpires on the periodical pages, perceptible even through the fact that information on sport practices began to be published more frequently from then on.

It was 1929 when the topic appeared on the *Boletim Geral do Ultramar* for the first time, still denominated *Boletim da Agência Geral das Colônias*, with the publication of excerpts of a book by T. Alexander Barns that exalted Angola's conditions to receive people interested in hunting: "Transportation is easy and reasonably cheap, and the author can even say, from this point of view, that it is indeed the best colony he knows for a *sportman*".¹⁶ The same topic returned to the periodical's pages the following year,¹⁷ reinforcing and presenting more information on how the Angolan territory was conducive to "sporting" hunters.¹⁸

We can see that the concept of sport departs from the one usually recognized, as well as its relation to an economic alternative that will constantly be featured on the periodical's pages as a profitable output for the colonies: tourism. In the future, in regards to sport practices, this expectation would be observable in relation to golf in Cape Verde by means of exploring this modality which existed there since the 19th century.¹⁹

In 1934, the topic was already approached in its modern sense. There is information that the organization and execution of the First Portuguese Imperial Games was suggested on the course of the important Sports Congress that occurred in Lisbon,²⁰ based on what the British were devising. The decisions from a session dedicated to discussing the sport-related contact between the metropolis and the colonies were presented there by Salazar Carreira, a former athlete, sports official, and one of the New State's strongmen. For him, such investment was a "very important factor of 'Portugueseism', investing this term with a sense of creation of a national spirit identical in all Portuguese citizens spread over the diverse territories of Lusitanian dominion".²¹

It was still early for the idea to be effectively implemented, and the same can be affirmed for the adoption of luso-tropicalism by the New State. At that moment, the regime still seemed to be tuning its colonial politics guided by the example of the other European nations.

An evident sign of such precocity is the fact that the topic was only mentioned again on the General Bulletin in 1960, through news of the participation of Angolan athletes in the Luso-Brazilian Physical Education Games, in Lisbon. Upon welcoming these competitors, the Overseas Minister Vasco

¹⁵*Diário do Governo*, número 122, série I, Lisboa, sexta-feira, 15 de junho de 1956

¹⁶*Boletim da Agência Geral das Colônias*, vol. 5, n. 47, Lisboa, 1929, p. 320.

¹⁷*Boletim da Agência Geral das Colônias*, vol. 6, n. 56, Lisboa, 1930, p. 220.

¹⁸Silvio Correa discussed the interesting relation between supporters of sport hunting and the first actions in favor of preservation in the African continent in "Caça e preservação da vida selvagem na África colonial", *Esboços* (UFSC), vol. 18, Florianópolis, 2011, p. 164-183.

¹⁹Victor Andrade de Melo, *Jogos de identidade: o esporte em Cabo Verde*, Rio de Janeiro, Apicuri, 2011.

²⁰For more information on the Congress, see Maurício Drumond, *Ao bem do desporto e ao bem da nação: relações entre desporto e política no Estado Novo (1933-1945)*, Rio de Janeiro, 2012, mimeo.

²¹*Boletim da Agência Geral das Colônias*, vol. 10, n. 103, Lisboa, 1934, p. 112-117. Salazar Carreira emphasized the necessity of expanding the sport-related interchange between the metropolis and the colonies, as well as of investing in the improvement of the colonies' organization and technical personnel.

Lopes Alves exclaimed: "Sport is an important foundation in serving the country well".²² The reception was marked by praising discourses on the value of physical activities to Portugal. There was no doubt that a new perspective and a new mobilization of sporting practices were taking place.

Indeed, in the wake of metropolitan decisions, federations, associations, and clubs were better organized in the Portuguese colonies from the 1950s on. Previously, it was up to the government of each colony to stimulate practices or not, and to be more or less permissive in relation to them. The new legislation established firmer bases both for the stimulation and for the control over sports organizations.²³

In addition, one of the metropolitan actions that most contributed to the development of sports in the colonies was the implementation of the Mutual Sports Bets, commonly known as Totobola, in 1961. The arrival of this lottery was celebrated in a Mozambican newspaper: "It is neither a secret nor news to anyone that the money from such a popular contest came to benefit, greatly, the expansion of sports, and to contribute fantastically to the resolution of many problems. Sport really deserved such help."²⁴

In 1965, a new initiative contributed even more to the organization of sports in the colonies: the creation of the Fund for Sport Promotion;²⁵ it relied on the principle that:

There is no doubt about the interest that the Government has manifested, for a long time, in the development of physical education and sport, factors of utmost importance in young people's formation, and in everyone's reinvigoration and healthy distraction.

In this context, one of the Portuguese organizations that related to sports politics began to act more markedly in the colonies: the Mocidade Portuguesa (Portuguese Youth).²⁶ It was created in 1936, and it showed clear fascist inspiration with the purpose of "providing the national youth with a political and military foundation, forming them in the values of the regime, and putting them at Salazar's service."²⁷

In its line of action, it was understood that sports and physical activities were important tools to catechize youth, convincing them of their responsibilities in maintaining "the grand nation of Portugal". The group was one of the metropolis' messengers in the colonies: "a giant that unites, in an unbreakable solidarity, in an absolute fraternity, the Portuguese youth of the continent, the islands, and overseas."²⁸

²²*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 36, n. 422-423, Lisboa, ago./set. 1960, p. 350-352.

²³On the topic of repression of African clubs, see Victor Andrade de Melo; Marcelo Bittencourt, "Sob suspeita: o controle dos clubes esportivos no contexto colonial português", *Tempo*, n. 33, Niterói, 2012, p. 191-215.

²⁴*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 41, n. 479, Lisboa, maio de 1965, p. 253.

²⁵"Decreto-lei n. 46449", *Diário do Governo*, n. 163, série I, Lisboa, 23 de julho de 1965, p. 1031.

²⁶About the Portuguese Youth, see Irene Flunser Pimentel, *Mocidade Portuguesa Feminina*, Lisboa, A Esfera dos Livros, 2007; Joaquim Vieira, *Mocidade Portuguesa*, Lisboa, A Esfera dos Livros, 2008. Fernando Tavares Pimenta, *Portugal e o século XX: Estado-Império e descolonização (1890-1975)*, Lisboa, Edições Afrontamento, 2010, p. 72.

²⁷Fernando Tavares Pimenta, *Portugal e o século XX: Estado-Império e descolonização (1890-1975)*, Lisboa, Edições Afrontamento, 2010, p. 72.

²⁸*A Mocidade*, ano 1, n. 2, 18 de dezembro de 1955, p. 3.

Through the Bulletin's pages, it was possible to keep track of the actions of both the Portuguese Youth and the Provincial Councils while they followed/supervised the clubs/associations, managed resources, and invested in several aspects related to the development of sport. See below, for instance, one of these actions:

Mozambique's Provincial Council of Physical Education and Sports distributed a statement in which it acknowledges the sports organizations that will be subsidized by this organism.

In this statement, it is also referred that the priority given was based on a policy of structuration and development of the modalities of gymnastics, athletics, and swimming on national level; and, in some modalities, on provincial level.²⁹

Another relevant initiative was the incentive to the formation of qualified labor by offering soccer coaches courses that take place in the colonies with teachers from the metropolis or from abroad, for instance. Grants were also given so that coaches attended courses in Lisbon, and referees obtained qualification. In Angola, the creation of a Physical Education Institute destined to the formation of teachers, similar to its counterpart in Lisbon, was suggested.³⁰

This investment became necessary due to a significant increase in the number of competitions organized in the provinces. In order to exemplify this expansion, information was found on the following modalities: soccer, volleyball, basketball, gymnastics, cycling, sailing, rowing, judo, swimming, athletics, hockey (field and roller), table tennis, handball, motorsport, tennis, golf, shooting, flying, wrestling, horse riding, skating, and sport fishing.

Upon welcoming these competitors, the Overseas Minister Vasco Lopes Alves exclaimed: "Sport is an important foundation in serving the country well"

Among so many competitions, one can highlight Angola's Youth Sporting Games, which involved participants from all the province's districts. This type of event was also a way for the government to show that it had control over the territory, thus dispelling doubts about the success of anticolonial initiatives. As usual, the competition was marked by the presence of authorities, exhibition of national symbols, and discourses exalting national/imperial unity.

Another aspect regularly observed on the Bulletin's pages is the investment in the construction and renovation of sport installations. A growing co-participation between Municipal Chambers and Physical Education Provincial Councils was perceived, with resources provided, not rarely, by other metropolitan government's contacts. As a result, subsidies were granted to associations,

²⁹Boletim Geral do Ultramar, vol. 44, n. 513, Lisboa, mar. 1968, p. 147.

³⁰Boletim Geral do Ultramar, vol. 41, n. 477, Lisboa, mar. 1965, p. 239.

and more public equipment was built. We see an example of this coordinated action in the construction of a sports park in São Tomé and Príncipe.³¹

Ultimately, one notices the sport-related commotion existent in the colonies on the *Boletim Geral do Ultramar*'s pages through initiatives that involved a reasonable number of people and required good organization. One cannot say that such actions reached the entire population. On their majority, they congregated settlers and white people, and, on a smaller scale, blacks and mulattos (mixed race) even though the latter groups had their own clubs and associations. What is undeniable is the government's increased attention to the topic.

It behooves us, then, to discuss the nature of these relationships, and the discourses that surrounded such initiatives.

Celebrating the nation in sport competitions

At the center of the image is the Mozambican black Eusébio, well-dressed and with a photo camera around his neck. Youth and children, blacks, whites, and mulattos, wearing different outfits surround him, all of them displaying an expression of joy, even euphoria, when they see the player. The picture's footnote, expressive of the imperial message, could be 'the multiracial nation fraternizes around the idol that represents it'.

The photograph, published in the July 1962 issue³² of the *Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, a flagrant moment during a visit of the Lisbon's Benfica to Luanda, is a clear expression of how sport practices were mobilized to celebrate representations that attended governmental necessities in the struggle for the Portuguese Empire's maintenance.

This news article explicits the victorious team's commitment to the nation. It was neither an excursion just for fun, nor for financial purposes. Without mentioning colonial conflicts, especially the anticolonial war initiated in 1961 in Angola, it was informed that the objective was to collaborate in order to:



(<http://memoria-africauapj.library/showImage.aspx?>)

³¹*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 38, n. 444, Lisboa, jun. 1962, p. 315.

³²*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 38, n. 445, Lisboa, jul. 1962, p. 201.

Collect net revenue that contributes to the construction of a military center for the recovery of the Army's invalids and of the remaining Armed Forces. On the eve of their departure, the team members were received by the Overseas and the Army ministers.³³

Through the pages of the bulletins, one notices how common the presence of teams of the metropolis in the colonies became, and not only in the capitals. Carriers of a supposedly civilizing message and of the idea of fraternity, the clubs were received with festiveness by the local population during these visits.

Lulled by the context, the main metropolitan sports clubs increased their insertion in the overseas territories, either by means of associating themselves with local clubs or of subsidiaries. At times, the main team visited its colonial counterparts in order to celebrate a special occasion, thus reinforcing the fraternity bonds.³⁴

On some of these occasions, the political dimension became even more explicit, as it is observed in a comment about a visit of the Lisbon's Sporting with the purpose of celebrating Bissau's Sporting 30th anniversary. Without mentioning the stirring of conflicts in Guinea, the delegation chief, Doctor Pereira da Silva, highlighted "his club's purpose of honoring national sport, and of cooperating with the Government during the country's time of concern" at the farewell ceremony that happened at the Overseas Ministry.³⁵ As usual, there was concern in demonstrating that what was taking place was more than a mere recreational meeting: "Doctor Pereira da Silva, vice-president of the club from Lisbon, handed out about 50 books offered by General França Borges, president of the municipality of Lisbon."³⁶

At times, the visits of the metropolitan teams occurred for more "institutional" reasons, such as participating in national championships, which started being promoted in other colonies as well. The 1962 Female Basketball National Championship, disputed in Luanda with the victory of a local team, the twice-champion Sport Lubango and Benfica,³⁷ is an example of such visits.

It was not uncommon for teams from the colonies to win national competitions, at times even competitions that occurred in Europe. These occasions were celebrated as signs that the overseas territories were integrated, and that Portugal had effectively contributed to their civilizing process. The pronounced relation among the Empire's parts, the lusophone fraternity, and the investment in "the physical and cultural valorization of the Portuguese youth from all latitudes"³⁸ were exalted.

³³*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 38, n. 445, Lisboa, jul. 1962, p. 201.

³⁴These strategies have repercussions up to this day. In the former colonies, the number of people who cheer for Portugal's teams is still larger than those who cheer for local teams. Moreover, the subsidiary teams remain active. Linked to Benfica, for instance, are the Sport Bissau and Benfica (from Guinea-Bissau), and the Sports Club Travadores (from Cape Verde). Sporting has subsidiaries in Angola (5), Mozambique (2), Cape Verde (4), Guinea-Bissau (1), and São Tomé and Príncipe (2). Porto has subsidiaries in Angola (3), Guinea-Bissau (4) and Cape Verde (2).

³⁵*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 42, n. 491, Lisboa, maio de 1966, p. 352.

³⁶*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 42, n. 492, Lisboa, junho de 1966, p. 363.

³⁷*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 38, n. 448, Lisboa, outubro de 1962, p. 299.

³⁸*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 41, n. 481, Lisboa, julho de 1965, p. 238.

The presence of teams from the colonies in the metropolis was the granting of an old request. For instance, starting in 1965, the Portuguese Soccer Federation, “in a commendable gesture of lusitany, [...] extended the competition for Portugal’s Cup to the overseas provinces, which was previously disputed only by soccer teams from the Metropolis”³⁹

In this process, the European clubs, notably those of soccer, started hiring athletes from the colonies. It is not surprising that some of these athletes integrated the Portuguese national team. In the case of the old Briton sport, let us remember that, besides Eusébio, the Angolan José Águas and the Mozambican Mário Coluna were equally renown.

It is also worth highlighting the exchange of athletes among the colonies. The first soccer match, and the athletics tournament disputed by teams from Angola and Mozambique in Luanda, in 1965, and in Lourenço Marques in 1966, respectively, are worthy of mention. Some clubs also began to promote tournaments among the colonies more frequently, at times organized between the subsidiaries of the same sports club from the metropolis.

In the case of the old Briton sport, let us remember that, besides Eusébio, the Angolan José Águas and the Mozambican Mário Coluna were equally renown

Following this trend, colonial teams, including provincial ones, began to participate in tournaments with and in other colonies or independent countries with which they shared borders. Integrating one of these associations allowed the athlete to travel the territories in a way that was quite restricted for other inhabitants, especially when anticolonial conflicts increased. It was a risky situation. On one hand, this attitude demonstrated the broadcasted respect for local things, that is, the conviction that the metropolis did not hamper but encouraged colonial territories. Likewise, inviting local and/or national teams from other countries/colonies, including from European nations (such as Chelsea and Real Madrid, which travelled through Mozambique and Angola), was also an opportunity for Portugal to show the world that it both developed and owned control over its provinces. On the other hand, if Portugal’s intention was “to give the world [...] an example of its civilizing action”⁴⁰ this transit of teams also created conditions for the gestation of an individual identity.

This process was strengthened by the fact that some colonies started receiving and sending athletes to tournaments against countries that had recently gained independence, which put them in contact with different ideas. It is not surprising that, in some cases, this exchange had elicited the need to break free from colonial bonds, as it is observed in the testimony given by Bobo Keita, one of the leaders of Guinea’s anticolonial struggle, who affirmed

³⁹*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 41, n. 481, Lisboa, julho de 1965, p. 238.

⁴⁰*Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, vol. 38, n. 443, Lisboa, maio de 1962, p. 204.

that these experiences were determinant in the initial formation of a revolutionary stance.⁴¹

Evidently, this was not the regime's objective. A news article on the visit of the national volleyball and handball teams to Guinea-Bissau, published on the *Boletim Cultural da Guiné* (Guinea's Cultural Bulletin) in 1962, summarizes some of the purports and meanings of the Portuguese investment in sport practices in the African colonies:

In a patriotic and highly commendable sport exchange, the Portuguese people from the continent brought the Portuguese people from the Overseas their fraternal embrace, and with this exchange of feelings, showed the world, once more, the *raison d'être* of the Overseas Provinces, and the unity and cohesion of all the territories that constitute the Lusitanian homeland.⁴²

Inevitably, the expectation imposed on the volleyball and handball teams' ability of "showing the world [...] the *raison d'être* of the Overseas Provinces," and, further yet, "the unity and cohesion of all territories" sounds disproportionate. However, and exactly because of this, such example reflects with precision the use of sport by the state and other colonial actors: the representation of a "Lusitanian Homeland" that satisfied the necessity of keeping the overseas territories under Portugal's aegis.

A few brief concluding lines

Upon analyzing the presence of sports in the *Boletim Geral do Ultramar*, it is possible to verify a clear mobilization of the practice in the sphere of Portuguese colonial politics, notably from the 1950s on, as something eminently related to the delicate moment experienced by Portugal in the internal and international scenarios. The representations are clearly based on the luso-tropicalism in vogue, pointing to a necessity of the construction of an imperial unity, union, and identity. Such political use is explicitly manifested in different ways. Besides those mentioned here, one must remember the homage paid to Portuguese leaders (for instance, stadiums and championships baptized with their names, including several "Salazar Cups").

It is not possible to notice sports mobilization by those involved with movements that opposed the colonial order in the *Bulletin*, a dimension identified by Melo and Bittencourt⁴³, and Melo⁴⁴. However, it is understood that this occurred, given that it was an official periodical. Nevertheless, it is possible to perceive two elements that might have facilitated this

⁴¹For more information, see Norberto Tavares de Carvalho, *De campo a campo: conversas com o comandante Bobo Keita*, Porto, Edição de autor, 2011; Victor Andrade de Melo, "(Des)mobilização para a luta: o esporte como estratégia nos conflitos da Guiné portuguesa (décadas de 50 e 60 do séc. XX)", *In: Métis: história & cultura*, Caxias do Sul, EDUCS, vol. 10, n. 19, jan./jun. 2011, p. 216-222.

⁴²*Boletim Cultural da Guiné Portuguesa*, vol. 17, n. 67, Lisboa, julho de 1962, p. 187.

⁴³Victor Andrade de Melo, Marcelo Bittencourt, "Sob suspeita: o controle dos clubes esportivos no contexto colonial português", *Tempo*, n. 33, Niterói, 2012, p. 191-215.

⁴⁴Victor Andrade de Melo, "(Des)mobilização para a luta: o esporte como estratégia nos conflitos da Guiné portuguesa (décadas de 50 e 60 do séc. XX)", *In: Métis: história & cultura*, Caxias do Sul, EDUCS, vol. 10, n. 19, jan./jun. 2011, p. 216-222.

mobilization: on one hand, the capacity of involving and interesting a large number of people, and, on the other, the promotion of the transit of individuals and ideas that could contribute to implant and develop new perspectives about the world.