

**FACTORS AND SOCIAL PRESSURES INHERENT TO THE
CONSTITUTION OF A CROWD FIGURATION DURING THE “MATCH OF
THE CENTURY” IN 1972 – SOME NOTES AND SOCIOLOGICAL TOURS**

**FATORES E PRESSÕES SOCIAIS INERENTES À CONSTITUIÇÃO DE UMA
FIGURAÇÃO DE TORCEDORES DURANTE O “MATCH DO SÉCULO” EM 1972 –
ALGUMAS NOTAS E DIGRESSÕES SOCIOLÓGICAS**

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ABSTRACT

What factors and social pressures pervade the construction of a picture of fans at a sporting event? This is the central concern that motivates us to develop this text, and also urges us to go through the historical and sociological lines that defined the course of chess on the sports field. In an attempt to make this problem intelligible, as delimited universe empirical analysis of the final meeting of the world chess championship 1972 held in the context of the Cold War and what became known as "match of the century." In order to support the discussion fostered here, we sought, first, to rescue images of viewers during the "match of the century" and then carry out a sociological reading of the social scene depicted therein, in light of the theoretical contributions by renowned authors of sociology and have reserved a space for meaningful discussion of the phenomenon of sports in their works.

Keywords: Chess. Match of the century. Supporters' figuration. Sociology.

INTRODUCTION

From July 11 to September 1, 1972, in Reykjavik - capital of Iceland-- took place one of the most touching final of world championship of chess. On the stage of a situation marked by the tense political-ideological atmosphere of the Cold War, two chess players were put in front of the chess board, to perform in a smaller universe, the collision of interests among Soviets and North American in the field of the international relationships (KASPAROV, 2006). On one side, representing the Soviet Union, there was Boris Vasilievich Spassky, detainer of the previous world title, disputed in 1969, and of the other, defending the United States, there was Robert James Fischer, defiant of the match.

After defeating, respectively, the candidates of 1971 tournament, the Soviet pianist Mark Taimanov by 6 - 0, the Danish Bent Larsen by 6 - 0 and Tigran Petrosian - who was also Soviet -, by 6.5 – 2.5, Fischer won the right of disputing the great final against Spassky (BJELICA, 1992, p. 70-71). To maintain the world title and add a second title Spassky needed to obtain at least a tie in the match, while Fischer, to become the champion, needed to win the match.

The confrontation ended with the victory of the North American by 12.5 to 8.5 (seven victories, three defeats and eleven ties), placing end to a 24 years Soviet hegemony (GONZÁLEZ, 1972). The series of 21 sets accomplished between the two players in 1972 for the dispute of the world title was published and it was known as the "match of the century ". It is interesting to remind that the referred confrontation obtained a singular repercussion in the chess community as well as in the society, thanks to the special attention given to the match by the press and, also, to the mimetic character of the war between the United States and the Soviet Union before the chess board.

In this structural scenario briefly exposed, we identified the possibility to study the 1972 “match of the century” in the condition of what the German sociologist Norbert Elias called “figuration”, or better, “configuration”. That theoretical-methodological option, for its time, had the intention of overcoming fragmentary analyses that approach individual and society as not connected polarities. It is worth to notice that it was exactly to overcome that dichotomy that Elias developed his own concept of configuration. To the author:

The net of interdependences among the human beings is what ties them. They form the connection of what it is here called configuration, that is, a structure of people mutually guided and dependent. Once people are more or less dependent of each other, initially by the nature's action and later through the social learning, of the education, socialization and reciprocate needs which are socially generated, they exist we could take a risk to say, just as pluralities, just as configurations (ELIAS, 1994a, p. 249).

To move forward in the understanding of the empiric universe delimited without facing the individual and the society as antagonistic spheres, but, on the contrary, as equal interlinked, processual and in constant development and transformation, it was why we opted to adopt that theoretical-methodological referencial to contextualize the identified and structured relationships starting from the social sphere of action of the respective agents and structures: the players, the Soviet, North American and Icelandic federations of chess, the International Federation of Chess (FIDE), the arbitration, the fans, the sponsors and the media.

Given the short space of discussion reserved for an article, we accomplished a methodological cutting in that entangled field of possible relationships established among referred agents and the structures, in way to concentrate our efforts, at least in this opportunity, in the figuration composed by the fans or, in case it is preferred, spectators or consumers of the show involved, *in loco*, in the finals of the 1972 Chess world championship. Thus, in that matter, our objective consists of to identify and sociologically problematize some of the possible factors and social pressures inherent to the constitution of a social figuration of fans in the city of Reykjavik, to objectively follow the referred final of chess world championship, played by the Soviet chess player and by the North American chess player.

To subsidize the description and discussion here fomented we decided to start from an iconographic approach, in a first moment, we rescue spectators' images involved directly in the “match of the century” and, soon after, we identify, in the social scenario portrayed in those pictures, the element of the distinction and of the differentiation among the agents in the space of the positions taken, as suggested by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in the introduction of the book *“Un art medio: ensayos on los uses sociales de la fotografía ”* (2003a). Besides that, we also considered the singularity of the social roles invested in the illustration of each one of the photographed agents, which, in a certain way, outlined some tracks about the potential distribution of power in that configuration.

On the accomplished empiric work, we should alert that, in fact, we worried in gathering the largest possible number of historical materials; however, for that specific discussion we concentrated more precisely on the treatment of some images referring to the fans involvement during the “match of the century”. Those images were taken from the special edition of the Spanish magazine of chess named *Jaque*, edited by the chess player and Spanish journalist José Maria González. This is one of the main magazines about chess of world circulation. It released that specific number on the “match of the century” one month

after the end of the confrontation. We should also point out that, during the accomplishment of that empiric work, what orientated all our argument was exactly the verification that the materials produced by the most different cultural producers on the “*match of the century*” were not just a subjective registration of what they had the opportunity to live or to assist, but, instead of that, they constituted important and indispensable part for the establishment of one moment differentiated in the offer and in the chess consumption throughout the world.

To aid us in the sociological treatment and in the reading of the constituent empiric reality of the problem on which we decided to study, we looked for support and theoretical foundation in the contributions of Veblen, Adorno and Horkheimer, Bourdieu and, notably, in Elias and Dunning. In Veblen we foresaw an explanation ruled in the theory of the idle class, more specifically, in its theoretical constructos on the conspicuous consumption. In Adorno and Horkheimer we sought to contextualize the fans as involved by the cultural industry. In Bourdieu we tried to understand those relationships under the light of the economy of the tastes and of the social distinction. Finally in Elias and Dunning we sought to understand that conjuncture starting from the theory of emotions, considering themimetic representations and the individuals' psychosocial needs

VEBLEN AND THE CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION

In the year of 1899, Thorstein Veblen published the first edition of his book "The theory of the idle class", which, later, became a classic of the human and social sciences. Although Veblen was an economist and in the referred work he sought, specifically, to accomplish an economical study of the institutions, he contributed with many discussions to be though regardin the emergent consumption rules with the financial standard of living and, in more decisive way, the leisure time.

In Veblen's understanding, the financial standard of living results, at the same time, from the appearance of the idle class and of the consolidation of the private property. Consequently, the emergence of the idle class cannot be studied separately of the appearance of a working class. To Veblen, the origin of those two institutions is captive of the same social process. Besides, the fulcrum of that division between the idle institution and the hard-working institution goes back to the first apprenticeships of the barbarism, when there was distinction between the female and male work - distinction that, in the course of time and the coming of more advanced societies, began to give up place to a social division of the work and to an unproportional fixation of the property.

According to Veblen (1965), the working class finds in the work its principal emulation source, while the idle class supplies that need with the involvement in leisure activities and through the conspicuous consumption. We can mention, in that sense, the sporting practices, the participation in festivities and chic events, the frequency to prestigious places, the obtaining of rare and different objects, investment in fashion, in furniture, in the good manners, in the decency, in the domain of the languages, etc., factors that confers status and ostentation to the idle class.

That retaking we suggest, in a more specific way, that, much more than to accumulate wealth to be recognized, the idle class needs to mark, to reaffirm and to justify its position through signs and influential activities, in other words, through the materialization of one a suitable lifestyle with its ownerships and possibilities. About that condition, Veblen (1965, p. 48) emphasizes: *"To obtain and to preserve others consideration it is not enough that the man simply had wealth or power. It is necessary that he had such wealth or power to the eyes of all, because without patent proof they do not give him such consideration"*.

However, it is important to remind that the strategy of "registering the wealth to the eyes of the others" has more symbolic effectiveness when it has its perspective within one's own idle class. Perhaps that is due to the fact that wealth in itself is already enough to distinguish the idle class of the working class, to the point that, in a fight among fractions of the idle class, the visual materialization of the wealth, besides being pleasant, is characterized as the principal mechanism of emulation and social demarcation inside the class.

In the attempt of approximating those concepts for us to think a first capable factor, perhaps, of explaining the construction of a net of social interdependence (read figuration) among fans during the "*match of the century*", we felt the need to appeal, immediately, to the following images, in an exercise of intelligibility ruled in the articulation among the social figuration evidenced in the photographic composition and the referred theoretical contributions of Veblen here introduced. Let us see:

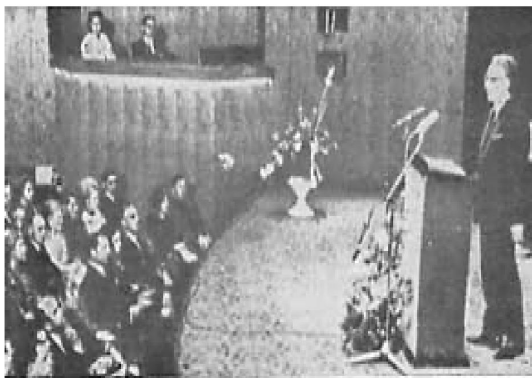


Image 1 - (GONZÁLEZ, 1972, p. 79)



Image 2 - (GONZÁLEZ, 1972, p. 80).

Both images refer to the opening ceremonial of the "*match of the century*", accomplished on July 1, at 8 pm, in the National Theater of Reykjavík. Picture 1 portrays the moment of the speech of the Minister of Education of Iceland. Very close to the stage there is a potential public made of spectators/fans, dressed strictly for that occasion. In the lateral inside the theater, in a type of skybox (distinctive place), they made comfortable Mr. Kristján Eldjárn, president of Iceland, and the first lady. Picture 2 offers a delimited vision of the audience. In the first row we have the Soviet chess player Boris Spassky (first from bottom to top) and of the Soviet ambassador Rergeri T. Astavin (beside Spassky).

According to José María González (1972), such images elucidate in a clear way the presence of the Icelandic high society in the opening ceremonial of the "*match of the century*". Before that conjuncture inferred by the author, some questions are made: Which are the interests of the classes economically more privileged of the Icelandic society in being present in that event and, especially, in the opening ceremonial? Would the fact that the Icelanders are fond of chess? Or, would those individuals have been motivated by the pleasure in participating of an event of such singularity and repercussion in the sporting world?

Obviously, it would be risky to answer such inquiries in an only and specific direction. On the contrary, we believe that several factors and social pressures were decisive to establish a net of interdependence among fans during the "*match of the century*" of 1972. One of those factors – that maintains coherence with the social reality that could verify in those pictures – it would be the need of the groups or individuals belonging to the most privileged strata of the Icelandic society recruit prestige for themselves, since each member of the idle class, when he comes across those sporting or festival situations, he seeks, according to Veblen (1965), to mark his position constantly in the social scenerio according objective criteria of demarcation

always more visible and well-known. This is what Veblen, in his way of facing the society, conceives as meanness of the social life - a faking life highly regulated by the financial patterns of taste, of consumption and of involvement in leisure activities.

ADORNO AND THE CULTURAL INDUSTRY

Theodor Adorno was a meticulous reader of Veblen, who sought not only to affirm the critic of this author to the pecuniary standard of living and the conspicuous consumption of the society, but to complement and to widen those concepts. That project was accomplished by Adorno in partnership with Horkheimer in 1947, when they systematized the concept of cultural industry, what, in a certain way, assisted those critical dimensions initially pointed by Veblen in "the theory of the idle class".

To Adorno and Horkheimer, the cultural industry is not a physical entity, but a notion that allows contextualizing critically and ironically the circulation of the cultural profits and the conversion of the culture in merchandise. Another central aspect is that the cultural industry has potentiality to produce the product as well as to create the need to consume it, what suggests that the culture, in the authors' view, would be reproduced according to the beginnings of commercialization of goods and products in the capitalist market.

In what refers to the sport and leisure, the concept of cultural industry allows thinking those practices as constituent elements of the process that the industry itself engenders in the society. The main criticism from those authors called first generation of the School of Frankfurt, in relation to sport consists of what they understand for massification and merchandizing of the sporting practices - processes that seek firstly to homogenize for, soon after, to level and alienate intellectually the individuals being them apprentices or spectators. In a more incisive way, in the historian's Ademir Gebara words, this means that "[...] *the cultural industry that, preliminary, is defined as an uniform system in the whole and in the parts, it is an universal system, especially controlling the sport and the leisure when these are commercialized, and inducing to the mass obedience in a non critic way*" (GEBARA, 2002, p. 4).

From this reading it is understood that the cultural industry, as an organizational system of the time and of the consumption in the capitalist society, makes use of the supposed predisposition of the sport to integrate the masses in a same group of signs, rules and schemes which, in the view of Adorno and Horkheimer, they reflect the immediatist values of the capitalism and they are distinguished by the low intellectual effort that is built in the agents.

Another point of extreme importance to be recovered from the analyses of Adorno and Horkheimer is that those authors, in a preliminary way, already denounce a division between sports practice and sporting consumption, being this latter category, in the authors' view, prone to alienate the individuals. Let us see that in their words:

The spectator should not have need of any personal thought, the product suggests all reactions: not for its thematic structure – which collapses as it demands the thought - but through signs. Every logical connection that presupposes an intellectual effort is conscientiously avoided. The developments should result, as much as possible, from the previous situation, and not from the idea of the whole (ADORNO; HORKHEIMER, 1985, p. 128-129).

That critical and pessimistic tone evidenced in the referred authors' speech can be reverted for us to think about the public's behavior in Reykjavík at the end of the world chess

championship played by Spassky and Fischer in 1972. Let us observe some images in that sense:



Image 3 - (GONZÁLEZ, 1972, p. 94)



Image 4 - (GONZÁLEZ, 1972, p. 125).

Image 3 portrays a group of spectators following, live, before a board (a mural that was projected in video and that does not appear in the image) the opening match carried out on July 11, 1972. Image 4, shows the gathering of fans and spectators surrounding the car that would take Fischer (in prominence in the picture) to his hotel on July 20, 1972, soon after having defeated Spassky in the fifth round and, as such, equaled the match in 2.5 - 2.5.

By the content of those images, it is noticed that it is, at least, interesting, to consider them according to the critical view sustained by Adorno and Horkheimer. To better understand, for instance, the social situation in which the public's conglomeration is portrayed near Bobby Fischer is pertinent to recover the alienation concept worked by the authors. In that way, being loyal to that critical perspective, it is possible to suppose that the enthusiastic fans' figuration identified in referred images was instituted as a process imbricated to the cultural industry, more and more present in the capitalist society.

On the other hand, although that influenced consumption is an indication of alienation, we cannot forget that the spectators of chess tournaments and championships is a public that is intellectually privileged and it has access to the difficult interpretation codes and readings of the game, which, ahead of time, perhaps justify their interest for the game, for the “match of the century”, for Bobby Fischer as a person. In another way, a person that does not know how to play chess hardly will be interested in chess, although in the historical-social context of the “match of the century” there is the imperative of the confrontation between United States and Union Soviet symbolically transported for that microcosm.

Having made those considerations, let us go now to sociological interpretations which do not disregard the agents' dynamization before the social structures.

BOURDIEU AND THE PROFITS OF DISTINCTIONS

One of the main contributions offered by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in his group of texts destined to the understanding of sporting phenomena (BOURDIEU, 1983b; BOURDIEU, 1990; BOURDIEU, 2007b) is the structuring of an analysis that allows one to properly understand the distribution and orientation of the consumptions and of the sporting practices in the society. For that the sociologist presents us basically a cultural economy of the sporting profits ruled in the relationship among, on one side, the offer (sporting profits offered to the agents under the form of practices and consumptions), and on the other, the demand - guided by the taste and by the changes in the lifestyles.

When thinking how the forms the consumptions and the sporting practices are presented, Bourdieu tries to establish an immediate parallel with the social positions. According to the author (1983b, p. 143), as we go down in the social hierarchy, the probability of an agent practice sport after the adolescence, that is, when adult or senior, it decreases sharply; already with relationship to the possibility to attend the more popular sporting shows, that decreases as the agents ascend in the social hierarchy.

According to Bourdieu (1983b, 1990), it was from those structuring criteria, ruled in the rupture between practice and consumption of cultural profits, that some of the social conditions necessary to form a sporting field nourished by the dichotomy between sports-practice and sports show, between sport of elite and mass sport were reunited. In spite of, other oppositions are also linked to this field, such as: amateurism against the professionalism, sport of leisure versus competition sport, sports of direct contact against sports at the distance, sports that require great intellectual activity and small physical strength *versus* sports that require greater use of force and smaller capacity of reflection.

Synthetically speaking, in Bourdieu's sociology the sport is treated as a lifestyle which is distinctive and compliant with the logic of the social positions, that is, as a field where legitimate definitions of the sporting practice and of the differentiated uses that are capable of doing with the body in the sports are at stake. Besides, it is in that same social configured space that the agents' tastes are defined, through an alchemy of classifications immanent to the game, and that, much more than explaining that "the motor of all human conducts would be the search for distinction" – what "would not be any innovation if we think, for instance, in Veblen and in his" "*conspicuous consumption*" (BOURDIEU, 2007b, p. 22-23), it shows that to be in a space is to differ; it is to be different; it is to be classified and, at the same time, a classifier".

That capacity of perception, appreciation, and of choice of practices, it is equal to have the sense of the game (*habitus*) printed, tattooed in the body, that is, incorporated in the forms of certain agent, to act, to face and to locate himself in the social space. The taste, then, as a group of practices and of properties of a person or group works as "[...] practical operator of the transmutation of things into different and distinctive signs [...]" (BOURDIEU, 2007a, p. 166), making possible that the differences of material order turn into differences of symbolic order, and vice-versa.

Sports and sporting events are classified, classifiers and classifying practices. They define distinctive positions to be anticipated by agents endowed with the required sense of perception and appreciation. That is due, essentially, to the fact that the sport (including here the offer of sporting events, as, for instance, the opening ceremonial of the "match of the century" or the corresponding matches) is an objectively classified practice with potentiality to change into classifying practice, that is, of becoming a profit and a symbolic expression of the class condition.

Thus, it would not be mistaken to say that the different busy positions occupied by the agents in the social space correspond to more or less adjusted lifestyles, and, besides that, the tastes of the class are the consequent incorporation of the structure of the social space through the doxological experience of the same agents in a certain area of the referred space (ORTIZ, 2003).

However, it is in the definition of the lifestyles, or better, in the "stylization of the life", that the variations of tastes reside. At same time, taste can be expressed in two complementary ways: contemplating the demands imposed by the need of agents and groups or serving as a strategy whose expectation is to supply the distinctive lifestyle according to the occupied positions. From those impressions successively derives two main concepts

developed by Bourdieu in the book "The distinction": distinctive cultural consumption and vulgar cultural consumption

In the first case, the consumption is understood exactly by the rarity and social distinction that engenders; in the second, the banality and the easy access to the product represent the vulgarity code invested in the game. Thus, the distinct consumption presupposes a reasonable accumulation of economic and cultural capital, while the vulgar consumption, usually, spares those conditions (BOURDIEU, 2003c).

Nevertheless, it would be mistaken to think the operation of those poles in a mechanical and deterministic way, because that would camouflage the existence of an intermediary position. For Bourdieu (2007a, p 167), that project is not valid, since between the distinct and the vulgar consumption there are intermediate zones inhabited by pretentious practices and by the agents' disagreement. Add to that the fact that the construction of taste, for Bourdieu, is not processed in a cold and calculatory way, but, by pre-reflexive and opaque ways, printing in the bodies of the individuals manners of "being", and "behave" in the world. Those ways are extremely compliant and suitable with the class structure. If we say it in another way, the established relationships between the formation of the taste and the class situation correspond to what Bourdieu is pleading with his notion of *habitus*.

For the French author, the *habitus* is revealed as a product of the history, that is, it "produces individual and collective practices, it produces history in conformity with the outlines engendered by history" (BOURDIEU, 2003b, p. 68). Add to that, the *habitus* works as a classification and organization system of the action, as an especie of force that maintains and sustains certain social order. Exactly for this reason is that the *habitus* presents itself and is distinguished as a unifying principle and a generator of all practices. As durable systems of dispositions and incorporated by the agents, the *habitus* tend to reproduce the objective structure from which are produced (BOURDIEU, 2003b).

It is exactly there, in that articulation point with the *habitus*, that the class taste is revealed as a dynamic and decisive category for us to evaluate, for instance, the patterns of behavior uttered in the fans' figurative representation taken in the four pictures previously referred, because the social agents, as well pointed out by Bourdieu (2007a; 2007b), they do not pacifically and in an invariable and repetitive way incorporate the structural references of certain social *locus*. In this sense, its theoretical perspective allows to recover the agents' dynamization dissolved in the approach of Adorno and Horkheimer, who prefer to think in terms of "alienation". As for Veblen, Bourdieu's approach allows to escape of the immoderate rationalism in which that author mentions the individuals and classes starting from the category of conspicuous consumption.

In compliance with Bourdieu's analytic proposal, we can say, then, that the agents' position (the form as they were placed due to the situations) in the four pictures were also constituted by the logic of thoughtless formation of taste. In this case, the involvement of those social groups of spectators/fans in the "match of the century", which comprises the opening ceremonial up to the definition of the confrontation in the 21st game, can be interpreted as a practice marked by the taste of the class accepted as distinctive consumption, that is, as a consumption that not necessarily attracts for the agents advantages not necessarily rational or calculist. On the other hand, we cannot discard the possibility of constitution of a taste in the trans-classist sense, that is, a taste more related to the individuals' psychosocial needs than, properly, to the accumulation of social, cultural or symbolic capital.

Another important point to review in continuity to the undertaken analysis it is that the system of social differentiation constituted among and by the agents that followed the "match of the century" was idealized by the optics of the different cultural consumption as well as by the vulgar cultural consumption. It is necessary to make clear that, although both social scenes

brought in each one of the presented pictures are constituent parts of a wider configuration, gathered, during approximately two months, around an chess play event that had a considerable repercussion all over the world, several different social groups with the most different social expectations were added to that universe, configuring it as a *locus* of more or less inflexible and complex disputes.

In that matter, we should stress that the first two images, in fact, send us to the consumption accomplished by agents of a high volume of economical capital, followed by the ownership of a volume of reasonably significant cultural and symbolic capital. The third and fourth images lead us to believe in the effectivity of a more vulgar consumption, since the disordered corporal contact constitutes itself as a comportamental gulp that the most privileged classes tend, invariably, to reject and to avoid.

We should add to those indicatives the facts that the portrayed agents, especially those shown in the photographic composition 3, occupy a position of followers of the most compatible matches with their volume of economical capital, since the tickets to see the matches in the main room where Fischer and Spassky were, for they were extremely expensive, they were reserved only to a certain clientele. That situation lead us to conclude that the agents identified in the Image 3 were being moved by the need to prove their taste for chess as well as to get involved, even though it was considered a more vulgarized condition, in an event of singular importance in the universe of chess.

Explored that economy of the symbolic goods reasonably and of the distinction profits just as retaken in Pierre Bourdieu reflexive sociological approach, it is opportune we move to the economy of passions, affections and of emotions developed in the configurational sociology of Norbert Elias.

ELIAS AND THE SOCIAL MIMESIS

In the first volume of his book "The civilizing process", the German sociologist Norbert Elias composes a rigorous description of the manuals of conducts that were written on the courteous society. We point out mainly the analysis of the dissertation of Erasmus of Rotterdam, entitled "The puerile civility - manual dedicated to a noble boy, a prince's son, which was written by Erasmus thinking strictly about the children's education. For Elias, the referred dissertation worked as an important sociological indicator for the construction of his theses, since "in it practically all the rules of the courteous society reappear. [...] The dissertation is, actually, a collection of observations about life and society" (ELIAS, 1994a, p. 83).

More specifically, Erasmus dissertation was fundamental for Elias's argument, for allowing to map the several patterns of social behavior present in that society, the ones which, according to observations and empiric annotations, they were being modified into a specific direction, marked by the increase of the autocontrol levels, sensibility and repugnance.

In a synthetic form, the dissertation and manuals of conducts used as empiric sources allowed to the sociologist to demonstrate the transition of habits during Renascence, as well as the increase of the pressures exerted on the individuals to make them behave according to the patterns of civilized behavior. According to Elias, such pressures tended to transform, in the individual, "the economy of the passions and affections heading to a continuous, stable and uniform regulation of them, in all the areas of conduct, in all the sections of their life" (ELIAS, 1994b, p. 202).

According to Elias, such changes in the individuals' behavior towards to a more self control progressively molded the course of their lives in a way to differentiate lightly from the old patterns of behavior. Besides, that new "social armor" was loaded of a meaning: to behave

according to the old conducts, that now were assumed as barbaric and primitive it could compromise a better insertion of the individual in the society, as well as his access to the potential distribution of power in that configuration.

It is possible to verify the sustainability of the Elias thesis when he, for instance, approaches, in the second volume of the study, the process of progressive transformation the warriors. As it appears in his writings, the warriors' life before that severe imposition to the emotions was freer, less ruled, more exposed to the passions and to the daily tensions. Their feelings were less controlled and their actions less restricted, especially in what refers to the use of the physical force and violence. They had autonomy to love, to hate, to kill, to defend eagerly their interests.

Later, with the ascension of the rich European states, the growing military tributary monopolization and the violence represented by the figure of an absolutist, the warriors lost their autonomy and they started to depend strongly of the power centralized in the monarch. This power caused fear and, consequently, restrictions to the old habits of the warlike class, which, in that sense, submitted itself to a more severe control of the emotions. A new rule in the warriors' life started to be effective: to link with the court, control the emotions and take part in a political game of interdependence.

Of that we can infer that was exactly in the tissues of existent interdependence in the court that the habits of the warlike class were reshaped, since the referred configuration "[...] is a type of stock exchange and, as in all "good society", an estimate of each individual's "value" is continually being done" (ELIAS, 1994b, p. 226). For that it is that the warriors' best integration in that society depended of the adaptation degree to the values and emergent habits in the court's life, as well as of the judgement made by the others about the nature and direction of such adjustments.

It is worth we observe that, to Elias, the civilizing process does not have a beginning nor an end susceptible to be determined. That process consists of a slow course of psychogenetic and sociogenic transformations operated in the sense of a refinement of the conducts and of monopolization of the violence. By the way, one of the most common criticisms driven to Elias's work is that the European civilizatory process, which he studied during five centuries, would already be completed. Besides, the holocaust and the great wars occurred throughout the XX century could be confronted with his theory of the civilization process, placing in check his premises. However, that argument is a product of a superficial reading of Elias's work.

To refute those criticisms and impressions, Elias, in partnership with Eric Dunning, started to study the sporting civilizatory processes. For him, the genesis of the modern sport is one of the main evidences that the civilization process that he had described about Middle Age would not be closed. The author tries to demonstrate that "civilizing impulse" of the sports through the growing passage or, even, substitution of the old and traditional games by the modern sporting practices.

According to Elias, the civilizatory process imposed and continues imposing norms to the societies and its behaviors, causing emotions to be repressed in all that is considered as serious life activity. It is what happens, for instance, in the work, in the bus or in the supermarket, where nobody in healthy conscience has courage to "jump" or "scream ". Elias states that "people that are too anxious, under the domain of feelings that they cannot control, they are cases for hospital or for prisons" (ELIAS; DUNNING, 1992, p. 69).

Notwithstanding, the sociologist accepts that there are places, moments and circumstances that allow to liberate a kind of "pleasant excitement" without being necessarily rated as a lunatic, abnormal or insane. He mentions situations as: cheering at the soccer stadium; individuals involved in sporting practices, as players or as spectators; or still

(extending those elements to our discussion) a group of people gathered around Bobby Fischer or watching a match between Fischer and Spassky reproduced in a screen.

In this sense, let us observe again the four images previously introduced. It would be a little simplist of our part to think that that social figuration of fans structured during the "match of the century" in 1972 was gathered just to search for social prestige within a class, or then, thanks to the movement of resulting alienation of the cultural industry, that, according to the impressions of Adorno and Horkheimer, it would permeate all social and individual action regarding sporting events.

On the contrary, it is important we also consider the mimetic and cathartic aspects of the competitive game as suggested by Elias and Dunning. For the authors, when the individuals meet in game situations, it is allowed to experience a fight without the many physical dangers that a real battle would represent. In truth, it is what they called mimetic combats, this is, "[...] confrontations accomplished through the game in a context that can originate a pleasant excitement, unchained by the combat, with the minimum of wounds in the human beings" (ELIAS; DUNNING, 1992, p. 95).

Those nuances can be more satisfactorily understood when reported in relation to the historical-social context of the Cold War, transferred mimeticamente, if our hypothesis is correct, to the confrontation among Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky before the chess board. Let us explore better that argument.

Even before, in 1972, the "match of the century", the United States and the Soviet Union were disputing a long "chess game" that had begun after Second World War. That "match", that we called Cold War, became possible through a series of moves, each one of them endowed with historical significance and, for that, crucial for the understanding of the social demands that they would have put in opposition USSR and the USA, in a confrontation that did not reach the battlefields.

The historian Paul Kennedy (1991) supplies a possible explanatory conjuncture to understand what would have started so called Cold War. For that, according to the author, it is opportune to think of a series of events and factors that were drawn on internal political scenario of the United States and of the Soviet Union, as well as in the previous global order. For the author, during the Second World War, the differences of political and ideological principles already existent between the United States and the Soviet Union were provisorily put aside considering the need of joining forces to combat the Nazism and the Fascism, then in ascension (KENNEDY, 1991, P. 355).

With the end of Second World War and the victory of the Allies (United States, Great-Britain and Soviet Union), those political, economical, cultural and ideological divergences were brought to the scenario under what it was known as Cold War. Actually, the view of harmony, freedom and world peace sought by the United States with the end of the Second War was still committed by the Soviet regime.

More specifically, some Soviet postures, such as: the elimination of the democracy in Poland and in Czechoslovakia; the desire of the Soviet elite to isolate their main countries and their people from the ideas and "wealth" of the Occident; enfin, the Soviet resistance to the North American influence, raised by the intensification of the ideology in that block did not pleased the United States (KENNEDY, 1991, p. 349).

Eric Hobsbawm (1995) also studied the problem of the Cold War. In his classic text "The era of the extremes", the author defends that the period from the release of the atomic bombs to the fall of USSR, did not represent an homogeneous, unique and lineal period in the history. Hobsbawm presents some important points: the first of them is the existence of, at least, two phases for the referred war; the first Cold War, that was on until 1970, and the

second Cold War approximately, from 1970 to the fall of the Berlin wall and the fragmentation of the Soviet Union.

One more point emphasized by the author is that the Cold War possibly did not start in Europe, but in the United States, due to the North American government's fear with relationship to a possible socialist expansion throughout Central Europe and other areas. Another aspect that Hobsbawm approaches concerns the constant study and attention that one potency exercised over the other, without what the game of the arms, the technological, the scientific and the ideological race was made unfeasible (HOBBSAWM, 1995).

Before such a conjuncture explicited by the authors, we can glimpse that during the Cold War the United States and the Soviet Union formed what Elias called, functional interdependence, that is, a configuration in what "[...] the moves of a group determine the moves of the other group and vice-versa" (ELIAS, 1970, p. 83). Something capable to illustrate that structure of mutual dependence was, for instance, the retreat, in 1962, of the North American missiles located in Turkey and, in answer, the deactivation of the soviet missiles installed in Fidel Castro's Cuba in the same year (HOBBSAWM, 1995, p. 227).

Due to that social scenario, the "*match of the century*" can be seen as a mimetic confrontation, a dispute of entire symbolic attire that, possibly, generated in the fans/spectators a considerable excitement, provoked by the imaginary picture of a war among two ends, which did not take place in battlefields but, in alternative stages. In another way, the "*match of the century*" was characterized, in fact, as a war played in a chess board, or better, part of a war, since the collision between capitalists and socialists also had embraced the other sports, and other sections of the social life.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR CLOSURE

The central argument that guided us through the discussion briefly rehearsed in this article was formed from the possibility of developing a sociological problematization on some factors and social pressures inherent to the objective constitution of a social figuration of fans during the final *match* of the world championship of chess played in Reykjavík, Iceland, between the months of July and September 1972. More precisely, the discussion we tried to suggest during the construction of the text, although implicitly, is that the search for agents to certain sporting practices, especially for the sporting events of "prominence" and of potential "visibility", does not happen by chance, but it is socially built, starting from some factors and criteria that cannot be understood themselves and by themselves. In other words, they cannot be properly apprehended and understood without the help and support of the methodological, theoretical and analytic reference

Armed of that knowledge, what we tried do, within our limits, was to recover some theoretical contributions from consecrated authors of the sociology that retook, in some degree, the study on sporting phenomenon as object of discussions and as part of their ambitious projects of understanding the society. In this article we decided to lean over, more specifically, on the arguments of Veblen, Adorno and Horkheimer, Bourdieu and, finally, of Elias and Dunning, in a way to recompose systematize, starting from the main texts where those authors discussed the sport and leisure, some categories and sociological notions that, visibly, are articulated- or in fact they explain - the very "factors" and "social pressures" inherent to the constitution of a figuration of fans during the "*match of the century*" in 1972, that we could describe throughout the text and, in a certain way, to explore.

In a synthetic way, the articulation of those categories and of that group of notions to the problematization of some factors and social pressures inherent to the structural

constitution of a figuration of fans/spectators involved objectively in the final game of the world championship of chess of 1972 were recomposed in this article in the following way:

1. From the conspicuous consumption in Veblen, we recovered the search for the prestige within the wealthy classes as one of the potential factors that take the individuals to get involved in the sporting practices;
2. Having as a reference the notion of cultural industry by Adorno and Horkheimer, we extracted the sense of alienation and obedience that the sporting events can engender in the society;
3. Based on the reconstruction of the thematic of the taste in Bourdieu, we pointed the social distinction and the dispute for symbolic capitals as motivational factors in the consumption and practice of sports;
4. From the mimesis and catharsis category, we understood the search for emotions as classifying criterion of the prominence place, evidence and popularity that the sporting phenomenon brings among the most different social segments.

Aided, therefore, by that group of notions and categories, as well as by our own readings of the empiric universe in study, we reached some conclusions, that in any way are definitive and, besides, they will be retaken with greater degree of acuity in future opportunities. Thus, in Veblen we could notice that the participation of the higher social strata of the Icelandic society in the matches of the so called “*match of the century*” and, especially, in the ceremonial of opening of the event, deep down they manifested the desire to patent their wealth to the eyes of the others and to recruit prestige for themselves. In certain way, that economy of the social distinction was also confirmed by the Bourdieu theoretical-conceptual presuppositions, although with some provisos.

For Bourdieu, the taste, while properly defined unconsciously in relation to the certain class condition, expresses the agents' dynamization before the social structures. Be the taste distinctive or vulgar, for ostentation or from necessity, the agents are not passive, which, does not mean that we should consider the same agents as rational calculators, especially if we think that the class taste corresponds to the incorporation of a habitus, in other words, of a programmed structure for an end, but without being necessarily driven for that end.

However, the more vulgarized consumption represents a quite promising possibility to problematize the effects supposedly alienating pertinent to the action of the cultural industry. As we saw previously, the vulgarized taste, for Bourdieu, it is related to a more banal consumption and an easier access to it, while the cultural industry, for Adorno and Horkheimer, consolidates as a process that tends, firstly, to alienate the masses according to the immediatist values and signs of the capitalist cultural system for, soon after, to lead them homogeneously to the obedience.

In Elias and Dunning, again the individuals were brought to the center of the debate. It would be very naive to discard the element of excitement and of the *mimesis* in the life of the fans/spectators gathered around the “*match of the century*”. That is, it would be compromising to reject the individuals' incessant search for an emotional economy in the sports. Besides, it is necessary to consider the imperative that the “*match of the century*”, in fact, was characterized as a mimetic confrontation and that, possibly, it generated in the fans/spectators a considerable excitement, supplied by the imaginary picture of a war transferred mimetically to that microcosm.

Coming to a close, we should stress that the factors and social pressures that potentially explain the social construction of a figuration of fans around the “*match of the century*” could not be explored here in its totality, nor it was our pretension; however we

believe to have taken an important step so that in more opportune moments we can recompose, in a more comprehensive way, the nets of social interdependence built during the 1972 “*match of the century*”. Concerning the greater or smaller pertinence or adaptation of each theoretical model which, having the sport as a mediator, here were quickly evoked to explain the relationship between the individual and the society, we leave to the readers the elaboration of their own conclusions - after all, that is an answer that oscillates according to the specificity of the research problems and of the visited empiric universes.

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