

Do jornalismo esportivo ao infotretenimento: o caso do contrato entre Neymar Jr. e Globo como paradigma

From sports journalism to infotainment: the case of the contract between Neymar Jr. and Globo as a paradigm

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Resumo: *Este artigo parte do desenvolvimento teórico da Economia Política da Comunicação voltada ao Jornalismo para analisar as mudanças na cobertura esportiva midiática. Analisa-se as mudanças no jornalismo esportivo do Grupo Globo, indo das questões estruturais neste setor no conglomerado ao contrato com Neymar Júnior, vigente nos anos de 2014 e 2015. Dada a necessidade de fonte secundária não científica sobre o observável, além da revisão teórica, utilizamos o método de pesquisa documental para resgatar matérias jornalísticas que tratam das mudanças no grupo comunicacional e do contrato com o jogador de futebol. Assim, conta-se o que ocorreu, possibilitando a análise a partir do marco teórico escolhido. O fato analisado representa o ápice da transição do jornalismo tradicional para o infotretenimento na cobertura esportiva, motivado por questões relacionadas à reestruturação do sistema capitalista.*

Palavras-chave: *Grupo Globo; Neymar Júnior; cobertura esportiva; entretenimento; economia política da comunicação.*

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Abstract: *This paper is based on the theoretical development of a Political Economy of Communication focused on journalism studies to analyze the changes in sports media coverage. The object is the changes in sports journalism of Grupo Globo, from the structural issues of the sector in the conglomerate to the contract with Neymar Júnior, in force in 2014 and 2015. Given the need for a non-scientific secondary source on the observable, in addition to the theoretical review, we used the documentary research method to rescue journalistic articles that deal with changes in the communication group and the contract with the football player. Thus, it is told what happened, enabling the analysis from the chosen theoretical framework. The analyzed fact represents the culmination of the transition from traditional journalism to infotainment in sports coverage, motivated by issues related to the restructuring of the capitalist system.*

Keywords: *Grupo Globo; Neymar Junior; sports coverage; entertainment; political economy of communication*

Introduction

The process of sport being treated as media entertainment is linked to the new step of commercialization experienced in this activity in the 1990, with the requalification of stadiums in England and the demands to perform sports mega-events. In addition to that, there is the interference of the American model of approximating the sports coverage to spectacularization, having in mind that 1994 FIFA World Cup and 1996 Summer Olympics took place in the United States.

In the Brazilian case, the sports coverage always gave more attention to soccer than other sports, following predominantly the cannon of journalistic practice. However, in the case of Grupo Globo, we identified that there is a change from 2009 onwards, moment we will present throughout this article.

The goal of this text is to describe and discuss this process that takes the conglomerate to treat sports coverage as entertainment, making the informative aspect something secondary, which had as a peak, in our analysis, the contract Grupo Globo had with Neymar Júnior, from 2014 to 2015. We understand that the treatment for a possible source as commercial partner represents the peak of infotainment at the time, a legacy that sports mega-events helped build, but that goes beyond the execution of 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil.

In order to do that, we will come from the methodologic-theoretical axis of Political Economy of Communications to understand how the business models end up impacting the journalistic work and, consequently, the criteria of noticeability. Therefore, this is a qualitative investigation, which mobilizes a bibliographic research from the discussion of a Political Economy on Journalism, as well as studies on the change in sports journalism and the constitution of Neymar as member of the star system³ of the global production of cultural merchandise,

3 The construction of a *star system*, according to Morin (1989), was a strategy adopted in the first half of the 20th century by Hollywood cinema studios to raise revenue, which ended up copied in different countries. With the raise of reach of the cultural industry, movie stars gained company in the Olympus of other types of celebrities, such as musicians, adventurers and athletes, after the professionalization and mediatization of sport.

generating interest in the exclusive contract with the communication group. We have also made a documental research on news websites such as *Folha de São Paulo* (SABINO; GARCIA, 2014; NETO, 2016), Globo.com (MARCOS, s/d) and UOL (GLOBO, 2015) to deal with the remodeling of the Sports sector on Globo in this century and the contract established with the soccer player.

In other to do that, we made a documental historic analysis, considering the news materials collected for this study as factual documents. Here we understand “documents” in a wide form, going from written materials and statistics until iconographic elements that still have not gone through any scientific treatment (GODOY, 1995). “These documents are used as sources of information, indication and clarification that bring their content to clarify certain issues and work as proof for others, according to the researcher’s interest” (SÁ-SILVA; ALMEIDA; GIUNDANI, 2009, p. 5). Therefore, “everything that is a remain of the past, everything that works as testimony, is considered a document or a ‘source’” (CELLARD, 2008, p. 296).

The documental analysis is justified for considering that the documents examined in the analysis better describe the process studied in this article due to the few scientific productions on the theme and the timely proximity with the event studied. As Cellard warns (2008, p. 295), many times the documents remain “as the only testimony of particular activities occurred in a recent past”.

Journalism as field of scientific analysis

The news product is a product of the work of a group of professionals that act inside the newsroom, all considered journalists: photographers, graphic designers, editors, reporters, etc., in addition to the support staff (in case of drivers and graphics for the press journalism), among others. Journalism theories that deal with the production of news, known in the theoretic framework of newsmaking, seek to answer the question “why news are the way they are?” (TRAQUINA, 2004) through an analysis of

the so-called “productive routines”, which are nothing more than work routines.

Newsmaking intellectuals observed that journalists need to produce collectively a newscast in a determined space of time, so they are always concerned with the deadline. These theories were designed at the time where the internet was restricted to a few aficionados, academics and militaries, and, therefore, their proponents did not imagine that the technology would comprise in such a way the relationship between space and time, that the deadline would be drastically reduced.

To beat the deadline challenge, journalistic companies establish a series of routines and a set of places to be covered, which Tuchman (1978) calls a network of facticity. These social places are the ones concerned by institutions capable of creating facts with official legitimacy, which would make the news credible. As a consequence, the news field would end up reproducing the discourse of official spaces of power: police stations, legal field, parliaments, academia, etc.

Journalists would be, thus, within a structure that would make them end up reproducing the discourse of *status quo*. In addition to routines, the establishment of professional conducts and socialization within the newsroom would also end up influencing the production of news, since they would help shape the criteria of noticeability and the behavior about the sources.

It is undeniable the analytical value and the explanatory value of journalism theories on the forces that shape the newscast. However, the incorporation of ideology of professionalism as a category of analysis of these theories if, on one hand, shows how the journalist can use norms of conduct to defend himself from undue pressures from their superiors; on the other, erases them as an intellectual worker, whose role is to perform the mediation between market and consumers, the function of advertisement of information; and between State and citizens, the advertisement function (BOLAÑO, 2000).

EPC, through Marxist categories such as work and subsumption, can cast a light on blind spots of the theory of journalism. As Lopes said (2016, p. 12):

The approximation of both fields, under the aegis of a Marxist theory of communication would, if based in the epistemological dimension of conflict, allow the necessary conceptual and methodological revision capable not only to supply analytical instruments closer to an empirical reality and capable of contributing to social change, but also of better positioning them in front of epistemological fights in the field.

The journalist as an intellectual worker have always had their work subsumed to capital, despite the subsumption itself find clear limits in the news work. Historically, subsumption begins in the moment where the artisan becomes a salary worker within the manufacture. There is an abrupt disqualification of this worker, that no longer dominates all the process of production, only a part of that. It is what Marx (2013) calls formal subsumption to capital, because there is still the need of a big amount of live work within the manufacture. The advent of machinery, transforming the worker in a mere machine operator, marks the passage of formal subsumption to real subsumption of work to capital, because there is the massive substitution of live work for dead work, making live work superfluous.

The intellectual work presents clear limits to the subsumption due to the difficulty in objectivating the subjective element of this type of work, as pointed out by Bolaño (2002). The journalist, for instance, make different choices in his work. Chooses the angle of the news, the sources that will be interviewed (beyond those pointed out by theme proposers and editors), the questions that will be made in interviews, what to photograph during the stories, etc. Of course, this freedom is not complete. The editorial line, the socialization within the newsroom and professionalism work as incomplete forms of control.

Beginning in 1970, a new regimen of accumulation, that would come to replace Fordism/Keynesianism, comes in: the mode of flexible accumulation. Until that moment, there was a pact of classes between

bourgeoisie and proletariat mediated by the state, also responsible for regulating the action of capitals, impeding systemic crises. Due to the crisis of discontent between minorities and workers and the depletion of the system leading to stagflation⁴, the circulation of capitals is gradually unregulated, as well as regulations between work and capital (HARVEY, 2012).

Journalists began feeling the consequences of this new state of things with the arrival of information technology in the newsroom: it is the phase of flexible journalism. The software for text editing and photo treatment enabled the elimination of work vacancies. This easiness in decreasing jobs due to the deregulation in the capital/work relationship and the entry of new technologies is what Rosso (2017) calls numeric flexibility, which leads to functional flexibility. Thus, journalists now need to have the capacity of filling more than one function. Such work organization increases the extraction of what Marx (2013) called relative surplus value.

The time of work necessary for the journalist to produce enough for his reproduction decreases, raising his surplus-work, since his work hours is retracted. The professional is overloaded with more texts and themes, making it difficult to produce news that come from the singularity of facts to treat the particular and the universal (GENRO, 1987). The arrival of the internet in 1990 is going to reinforce this frame of flexibilization and precarization of the journalist's work. The limits to subsumption decrease, but not cease to exist.

The convergence of languages ends up demanding the journalist to produce more news for different outlets, in addition to decreasing the time of verification, with generates news fixed to the pure singularity of the fact. The audience of articles becomes monitored in real-time, impacting in the competition for advertisement funds. *Websites* such as Google and Facebook become companies capable of selling directed

4 Nunes (2015, p. 6) says that after the oil crisis created stagflation, term that refers to the moment in which monopoly capitalism got to "elevated and growing taxes of inflation coexist with growth taxes of [gross domestic] product next to zero or even negative (followed by elevated unemployment rates).

advertisement with a high degree of precision through the analysis of a great part of data collected from user interactions during the navigation.

Such method is much more precise than the organization of the programming grid based in the monitoring of the audience per household sample. Thus, the instantaneity and the tactics of commercialization of news, emerged with the development of the internet, ends up invading other media that concur with social media and news websites for publicity. The decline of value of publicity caused by the raise of offer in the internet ends up creating the necessity that these companies produce more with less.

The first cost cuts were verified in the workforce, with the raise of the relative surplus value through the raise of productivity. Then, there were cost cuts with the dislocation of professionals, who increasingly work inside the newsroom. This has a direct reflex in the sports coverage, in which there is a decrease in going to the stadiums. These factors contribute to change in the criteria of noticeability and for the decrease in quality of coverage. Approximates, then, the Science of Communication in the discussion about the category of “info-entertainment” or “infotainment”.

Oselame and Finger (2013, p. 64) point that the infotainment practiced in journalism, especially sports journalism, “redimensions classical values of the profession, such as public interest, objectivity, independence, legitimacy and, mainly, a fundamental prerogative of the role of the journalist: credibility”, in exchange of profit that the news begins to have as a bigger focus in a version closer to spectacle. The journalist stops exercising the function, altering their social role of mediator of what is produced, to be an artist, not necessarily having the commitment with the truth of the facts.

The authors treat still of two consequences of this standard: the proliferation of an excessive humor and limitation of creativity. The attempting of making someone laugh often occurs with a doubtful humor, with poor texts and contents chosen by a “coverage of superfluous

events”, generating a “consequent devaluation of the news” (OSELAME; FINGER, 2013, p. 70-71).

Following this new standard of news creation, which the researchers call as “engraçadismo”, what is produced needs to meet a certain formula: “A play on words inside the text, an effect of editing, and, if possible, a theme that is not restricted to sports news so it can, thus, also please those who only want to spend some time watching TV” (OSELAME; FINGER, 2013, p. 71).

Therefore, the constant pressure for audience related to the need to decrease the shortage of verification ended up generating news about the athlete’s private lives, within a practice called “click-hunting”, with a low amount of informative content, whose goal is to inflate the audience of the news outlet (FRANGE, 2016). The search for audience and, consequently, for advertisement income, ended up making sport news websites publish “that material that were only published by gossip or celebrity news” (FRANGE, 2016, p. 118)

Globo responded to these transformations through internal changes in the company to the organization of rights of transmission, in the name of the department responsible for the sports coverage and in the way to present the content, as we will see next.

Changes in sport at Grupo Globo

Soccer is a subject that is a part of the news in Brazil since the 1910’s, gaining strength specially in the 1930’s decade, with the professionalization of this sport and the radio⁵. The development of the sports area at Grupo Globo is present since their treatment to press, initial media of the conglomerate, following next to radio stations and television

5 The first government of Getúlio Vargas (1930-1945), period known as a dictatorship of the New State, used football and radio transmission as a form to nationally integrate and for political propaganda. In 1931, published the decree establishing the comercial model of radiophonic transmission. Two years later, he included in the labor laws that playing football could be a profession, making it na oficial profession with generation of income. Vargas would speak to the population in open speeches at Estádio de São Januário, in Rio de Janeiro, with broadcast at Rádio Nacional, a state radio (SANTOS, 2013).

channels, where it is established, with internet products and mobile media benefiting from this historic construction.

The concern in transmitting it for open TV, given the initial characteristics of this media, passes the pool of channels in the 1970's Mexico FIFA World Cup, until getting exclusivity to Rede Globo in the transmission of 1982's Spain FIFA World Cup and Copa União in 1987, considered as the Brazilian Championship of that year. In addition, sports programs are present in this channel since 1966, less than a year after the inauguration of the first concession of the network. Still, according to Santos (2013), the first pack of transmission offered to the advertisement market, with the amount of matches per year, will only happen in 1990 and the definition of fixed days and schedules in the programming of Rede Globo only occurs in 2001.

Since the 1970's, sports journalism of the channel was a part of Central Globo de Jornalismo. Grupo Globo creates, in the 1990's, a specific division to treat the acquisition of rights of sports transmission, Globo Esportes. When the channel loses the rights for transmitting Olympic competitions from 2008 to 2014 to Rede Record, a series of changes happen in this area, which generate reflexes in the organization structure and coincides with changes in the form of coverage.

About the coverage structure of sports events, in 2009, Rede Globo created the sector Central Globo de Esportes, linked to the Direção Geral de Jornalismo e Esporte (DGJE), which was also under Central Globo de Jornalismo, delimiting, therefore, a different between both areas.

Globo Esportes would be the lead role two years after the implosion of Clube dos 13, association that represented the clubs with a biggest amount of supporters in the country, responsible for negotiation the rights of transmission of the Brazilian Soccer Championship, facing the threat of losing these rights to Record.

In 2015, their director, Marcelo Campos Pinto, was one of the names that showed up in the midst of a big FBI operation on corruption in soccer, through sales contracts of rights of transmission of sports events,

which forced a new alteration. The sector would be now led by Pedro Garcia, the director of channels and sports products of Globosat, with the teams of Rede Globo and Globosat acting in conjunction for the negotiation of rights. The area, autonomous until then, became subordinate to Sports Rights Committee, formed by Carlos Henrique Schroder (Rede Globo's CEO), Alberto Pecegueiro (Globosat's CEO) and Jorge Nóbrega (member of the Administrative Board of Grupo Globo) (GLOBO, 2015).

About the content, in 2007, Rede Globo made the option of broadcasting Globo Esporte – daily sports program with 30 minutes of duration – for all the network from Rio de Janeiro. In addition to reproducing the centralized transmission of their television news, they put a bench in the studio, with the presentation of Tino Marcos and Glenda Kozlowski. Yet, Marcos (2018) already indicated a change in language.

Our way to do it walked towards more conversational and colloquial texts. More and more, the window of entertainment is expanding its space. The window of journalism is still there, but in sport, people now have this perception that the entertainment is also a very correct way of working in sports news.

In 2009, the de-centralization of *Globo Esporte's* transmission returned. It is in this process that Tiago Leifert appears as a presenter and editor of *Globo Esporte São Paulo*. With journalistic training made in the United States, where the profession is more technical and sports are closer to spectacle in the media coverage, there are “changes in the technical/aesthetic standard of sports news of the channel, with a bigger presence of humor and other forms of narrating stories, beyond the telejournalistic standards built by Rede Globo de Televisão” (SANTOS, 2013, p. 147)

The primary product for this alteration was the show *Central da Copa*, which would occur after the matches of 2010 South Africa FIFA World Cup or during *Jornal da Globo*. It was repeated in Copa América and in two FIFA megaevents that took place in Brazil, in 2013 and 2014. The show had the participation of an audience to comment on

the matches, with the presence of some of the names of the sports coverage of the channel as guests.

In a comparative analysis of the versions from Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo of *Globo Esporte*, television sports coverage would begin to be considered as infotainment, because:

When privileging *omnibus* facts, the show puts sports news in the background and assumes the posture that it is more important to create laughter, entertain and let loose than actually informing. This is the *engraçadismo* phenomenon: the essential role of the journalist is no longer selecting, treating and presenting news in a package that is both attractive and informative, but, before that, is to entertain the audience. Privileging the joke in opposition to the information, the journalist becomes a type of humorist. Therefore, news isn't just harmed, but, often, is no longer there (OSELAME; FINGER, 2013, p. 67, *highlighted by the authors*).

Leifert eventually started working in the entertainment area of the conglomerate in July 2015, but there was a new structural alteration in sports in October 2016. Grupo Globo created an independent area of journalism to take care of the production of sports content at Rede Globo de Televisão, at Globosat, at Globoesporte.com and at Sportv.com, gathered under the command of Roberto Marinho Neto. This decision resulted into the dismissal of 40 journalists in the next year, including the director of Central Globo de Esportes, Renato Ribeiro, with Marinho Neto being his replacement (NETO, 2016).

The news department also became “responsible for the acquisition of sports rights, market research and multiplatform solutions” (NETO, 2016), an event that reinforces what we point out in the previous excerpt on the challenges for journalism nowadays.

Grupo Globo's contract with Neymar

When dealing with sports journalism, it is necessary to understand that press access to players has changed in the last two decades, with a bigger control of press offices. It is also an element to be considered for the search of new paths for an informative coverage.

Globo Esportes began using the fact to acquire exclusivity to the rights of transmission to demand priorities in sports coverage. Santos (2013), for example, tells that Marcelo Campos Pinto started sending emails to soccer teams in the second semester of 2012 so that the media of the conglomerate would have easy access in the daily coverage of Brazilian teams.

Therefore, the staff of Esporte Espetacular covered the backstage of the final matches in the Brazilian Championship of that year of the champion Corinthians and the downgraded Palmeiras. The same happened in relation to the Brazilian Confederation of Soccer (CBF) about the coverage of the Brazilian team, as a case during the 2014 Brazil FIFA World Cup.

Even before the championship started, the coach Luiz Felipe Scolari gave an exclusive interview to *Jornal Nacional* in the same day the team for the World Cup was announced. About the world cup, Lisboa (2014, p. 5) describes that there was control of the offer of CBF's material for journalists, who faced a series of restriction, with the exception of Grupo Globo.

To do that, in addition to conditioning to a previous accreditation to the release for press coverage of the Brazilian team during the World Cup, the organization controlled all the contacts of journalists with soccer players. Most of the time, the interview opportunity that journalists had were press conferences, which had all their rules established by CBF. [...]. In addition to that, CBF would offer journalists through a YouTube channel, videos showing a little bit of the backstage of the preparation of athletes, and through their websites and social media profiles, other information that ended up guiding the news on the Brazilian soccer team. The only outlet that seemed to have more freedom in its coverage of the national team was TV Globo, which had a history of good relation with CBF and, in addition, was the holder, in Brazil, of the broadcasting rights for 2014 World Cup.

Rocco Júnior (2015) defends that this relation harmed the preparation of the Brazilian team, with different actions that disrupted training sessions, case of the arrival with helicopter by Luciano Huck in the lawn

during the training to record a segment of his show. The author says that: “The channel acted freely in the facilities of the CBF’s Training Center doing, with total autonomy, the actions that interested them, Rede Globo, without any concern with the trainings and focus of the Brazilian athletes to such an important competition” (ROCCO JÚNIOR, 2015, p. 166)

This imposition of the group to privilege the access to sports news sources exists especially as a commercial partner of events organizers. “Due to the involvement of television channels, not only in the transmission of sports events as in their own promotion, it becomes hard to distinguish the borders between journalism and the valorization of spectacle” (OSELAME; FINGER, 2013, p. 65). It is through this premise that we want to analyze the contract between Neymar and Grupo Globo, granting privileges in the access of the player Neymar Júnior in 2014 and 2015.

According to Sabino and Garcia (2018), the channel defended that the contract would “refer to special participations of Neymar in shows and campaigns of the channel, as well as the use of audiovisual content produced by the player” Until January 2019, the player’s official website (neymaroficial.com) remained in the Globo.com platform.

Still according to journalists, Neymar attended different shows from Rede Globo in the period before the World Cup. *Domingão do Faustão* (in May); *Esporte Espetacular* (in May, with an exclusive interview); *Caldeirão do Huck* (in his house in Barcelona, just before the Cup); *Fantástico* (interview in July). Later, the appearances became less frequent: *Domingão do Faustão* (in two tributes to friends); *Esporte Espetacular* (in December, in Barcelona) *Globo Esporte* (in a segment recorded in Praia Grande - SP); and in the telenovela *A Regra do Jogo* (SABINO; GARCIA 2018)

It is important to understand that Neymar was the main Brazilian player in the Cup, having invitations from different brands, with the biggest amount of appearances in advertisement in Brazil. As affirmed by

Silva (2017, p. 3, our translation), when talking about the first interview he gave to *Esporte Espetacular*:

“This initiative of the news story aims at increasing ratings during the World Cup, broadcast by Rede Globo, Brazilian television network. The exaltation of Neymar is a narrative strategy of the sports agenda so as to personify the exhibit game and, later, the 2014 World Cup. Neymar is invoked as the star of the national team, the one who could give the Brazilian people the world champions title – images show the player singing the national anthem, scoring a goal and passing, cheering”.

Helal, Lisboa and Mostaro (2015) highlight the report about Neymar’s life in *Jornal Nacional*, which closed the series about all the players called for the World Cup. In this case, in addition to being the last one, which gives a special attention, it had 9 minutes, 3 minutes more than the average duration of news on other Brazilian athletes.

In turn, Oliveira, Rodrigues and Araújo (2015, p. 16), when analyzing the news broadcasted by *Globoesporte.com* a month before the beginning of the World Cup, they observe there was not any negative information about the player in the period observed. On the contrary, they “glorified the position of Neymar as a big idol in Brazil and possible hero in the conquest of the world hexa championship”.

The contract announcement put in question Grupo Globo’s journalistic coverage because, precisely in 2016, with the conclusion of contract, some commenters and narrators began to criticize Neymar. For instance, the coverage of men’s soccer in 2016 Olympic Games, with the player avoiding to give interviews in certain moments of the tournament; the 2018’s controversy with Walter Casagrande Júnior, who called the player a brat, receiving an answer from Neymar’s father through social media; and the coverage of the conglomerate at 2018 Brazil FIFA World Cup, which also criticized Neymar of overreacting when he suffered penalties.

But it is also important to remember that, at least in 2014 Brazil Fifa World Cup, with the poor performance played by the national team in a good part of the tournament, Neymar was one of the few that stood out.

In addition, the athlete was absent in the 7x1 defeat for Germany in the semifinals, because he suffered an injury in the previous match.

Lisboa (2014, p. 9) says, even, that the player was chosen by CBF after the 7x1 match to give a press conference, as a way to calm the environment of criticism and pressure by the journalists making the coverage of the national team.

After two days of very tense interviews, filled with direct pressure to the members of the national team after the biggest defeat in the history of the Brazilian team, what prevailed in Neymar's interview was a sense of cordiality in relation to the interviewee.

This cordiality was evidenced in the manifestations of care made by journalists and had the climax in the enthusiastic round of applause directed to Neymar at the end of the interview.

The interest for celebrities is a phenomenon proper to mass culture, according to Morin (1977), according to whom celebrities form a Modern Olympus. Thus, "olympians are superhuman in the role they play, humans in the existence they lead" (MORIN, 1977, p. 106). The author considers that "the mass press, at the same time that it gives these Olympians a mythological role, dives into their private lives in order to extract in them the substance that allows identification", (MORIN, 1977, p. 106-7). This identification and insertion in the collective imaginary end up making the audience follow every step of these individuals.

On the other hand, the attention these Olympians galvanize makes them extremely attractive to the advertisement industry. Olympians sign huge contracts with brands of sports materials, food supplements and anything else they can sell. However, they need to stand out not only for their sports feats, in an athlete's case, but also for their lives outside of the field so they can get in the collective imaginary. "The star is a full merchandise: there isn't a centimeter of their body, a fiber of their soul or a memory of their lives that cannot be released into the market" (MORIN, 1979, p. 76). Therefore, their daily lives, including achievements, joy, sadness and love relationships, must be faced as a merchandise.

Therefore, these celebrities need to constantly create pseudoevents that are manufactured, not spontaneous, uniquely built to be divulged by the media (BOORSTIN, 1961). Part of the daily life of Olympians works for potentializing the audience's attention. Social network websites, such as Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, in conjunction with changes in journalism contributed so that these athletes fabricate small pseudoevents throughout the day, which were replicated by journalistic websites in their desperate search for audience.

The contract between Neymar and Globo seems unusual but follows a logic process within the constitution of what we call flexible journalism, in which the borders between entertainment and journalism are increasingly blurred, even in more traditional areas of journalism such as politics (BRANTS, 1998). However, Globo, with this contract, elevates this tendency to an unimaginable level, transforming a player, a valuable source for their journalists, into a part of their star system. An arrangement in which the commercial logics end up shaking the foundations of journalism while breaking taboos in the relationship between sources and journalists. At the same time in which it benefits them in comparison to their competition for having access to the idol of this moment, which, as affirmed by Brito and Rego (2019, p. 9), his presence or absence "in a determined event broadcasted in media would affect the content of the message and the form in which it is received by the audience".

It is necessary to consider that the television broadcasting of big sports events such as the World Cup and the Olympics walked hand in hand with the professionalization of athletes and the arrival of the sports marketing, as pointed out by Smit (2007). In the 1970's, companies of sports goods such as Puma and Adidas competed for exclusivity contracts in the use of sports goods with athletes such as Pelé, Beckenbauer and Cruyff. However, these athletes were a part of the sports' Olympus, covered by different media, and they weren't a part of the star system of conglomerates of the Cultural Industry.

Throughout its history, Globo used the tactics of star system to raise their audience in telenovelas and other shows of their schedule, but the incorporation of an Olympian of the sports world to their constellation of stars creates conflicts of interests between the parts of entertainment and journalism of the channel.

As observed by Gans (1980), the relationship between sources and journalist is seen as a tug of war in which frequently both parties have different interests. The journalist wants to extract information of public interest while the sources want to promote facts of their interest. The contract between Globo and Neymar is the commercial accommodation between the interest of them both, which would only be explained by the strategies of adaptation of the group to a new reality in the market. In this contract, there isn't any care for the public interest.

Final considerations

Throughout this article, we sought to demonstrate, both in the point of view of the theoretical discussion and using the example of Grupo Globo, the historic alteration in the principles of journalism, especially in the case of sports coverage, which begins to fit into the concept of "infotainment".

More than a legacy exclusive of the cycle of sports megaevents that took place in Brazil from 2007 to 2016, two performed by FIFA (2013 Confederations Cup and 2014 World Cup), the changes in the soccer coverage by the main communicational conglomerate in the country represent a process developed throughout two decades of the 21st century. As we sought to demonstrate, the alterations in the standard of transmission follow other structural transformations in the communicational conglomerate, letting clear the importance of guaranteeing the exhibition of the main soccer tournaments and the priority given to entertainment in terms of content.

In this process, Neymar's case represents the climax of problems that arrive in cases where sources become commercial partners, susceptible to pressures for benefits in the journalistic coverage. At the same time,

these sources can get a better “defense” by the media, where criticism cannot occur. After all, the best the player is, more opportunities of exclusive content for the media of the company. It is not a coincidence that contracts of this type are treated with confidentiality.

The studies of the Political Economy of Communication enable the analysis of the historic process of development of market appropriation of communication and culture through the mode of capitalist production, where they include both the cultural work of the journalist on soccer and the possibility of wealth accumulation. Disconnecting the analysis to these factors is to stop presenting fundamental appointments for change observed in our study.

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