



OBSERVATÓRIO DAS DESIGUALDADES

A DISTORTED MIRROR:

Inequality, cultural policies and
access to cultural production in
Brazil

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“When I surprise myself at the bottom of the mirror, I am frightened. I can hardly believe I have boundaries, that I am jagged and defined. I feel scattered in the air, thinking inside creatures, living in the things beyond myself. When I surprise myself in the mirror, I am not frightened because I think I feel ugly or beautiful. It is just that I discover myself of a different quality. After not seeing myself for a long time I almost forget that I am human, I forget my past and I am with the same liberation of end and consciousness as a just living thing. I am also surprised, with my eyes open to the pale mirror, that there is so much in me beyond the known, so much that is always silent.”

(Clarice Lispector)

“[...] that culture gives mankind the ability to reflect on itself. It is what makes us specifically human, rational, critical, and ethically committed beings. Through it, we discern values and make choices. Through it, mankind expresses itself, becomes aware of itself, recognizes itself as an unfinished project, questions its own achievements, tirelessly searches for new meanings, and creates works that transcend it.”

(UNESCO, 1982: Declaración de México sobre las Políticas Culturales)

1. INTRODUCTION

Every good story tends to have a good backstory, too. Even this Culture Bulletin – which you, reader, have in your hands in such a simple way – had behind it a certain journey until it was published. This is because the idea of the Observatory of Inequalities launching a study on culture had been shared for some time, and there was no lack of ideas, material, or willingness on the part

of those involved. The big question is that the theme carries with it a weighty combo: add to such a broad and abstract term as “culture” its central importance in the Brazilian socioeconomic formation, and you will obtain a whole range of topics to be explored, besides great doubts about the best textual path to follow.

Thus, the challenge in this Bulletin is to draw a cultural panorama, much to the liking of this Observatory and in the manner usually worked, seeking to identify its relations with inequalities and resistance to them. In the initial sections, an introduction about the great realm of culture: how is the term usually defined? What is the importance of culture for a society? Which areas does it impact? The conclusion, as can be seen, is that the multiple facets that culture assumes – whether in the anthropological formation of personal identity, the enrichment of the world view, economic diversification and growth, or even the production or reduction of inequalities – incisively suggest how important this dimension is to the most diverse citizens and segments.

And this finding is widely corroborated. Thus, in the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, launched by UNESCO in 2001, it is stated that “culture is at the heart of contemporary

debates about identity, social cohesion, and the development of a knowledge-based economy.” (UNESCO, 2001). Such a sentence, even if short in this way, evidences some facts. The first, as already mentioned, is that culture is indeed a relevant theme for reflection, since it encompasses several branches of human existence and social coexistence. The second point is that such aspects – abstract as they are – deserve more detailed explanations, which this Bulletin intends to address in these initial sections.

The more conceptual discussions about culture will be followed by a section in which we will discuss citizens’ access to cultural production (in a stricter sense) and to cultural facilities and the disparities that surround it. First, an approach on municipal investments in culture reflects how these reveal regional inequality in the intensity of citizens’ contact with cultural events. In this, both aspects more related to management, such as

the Municipal Culture Plan (PMC) and the Municipal Culture Fund (FMC), as well as infrastructural aspects, such as the existence of cultural equipment in the municipalities, were included. Subsequently, the disparity between Brazilian regions will no longer be addressed, but between income strata. In this way, it will be possible to verify how the unequal distribution of income, wealth and schooling also interferes in the access of citizens from different socioeconomic realities to culture. From the context brought so far, the ultimate goal of this Bulletin is to expand in readers the conception of culture, going a little beyond common sense and bringing other perspectives in a rigorous way, although accessible in the same way. Moreover, as could not be otherwise, it is intended to bring to light some points of debate about the inequality of access to culture, an issue not always discussed in the routine media or not always internalized in its importance by citizens and public policy makers in general. The intention here, we

emphasize, is not to create a manual or a code of cultural conduct and understanding, but only to elucidate some abstract points of the theoretical part and provide a glimpse of other points of the cultural experience of Brazilian society.

2. Culture as an element of identity construction, cohesion and symbolic disputes

As presented in the introduction, this section will bring some more conceptual notes that will contribute to the construction of the debate and set important reflections on culture and its various approaches.

2.1 Culture as a phenomenon and cultural identity

What is the difference between the human being and the other animal species? Yes, this will be the question to start a bulletin about culture and cultural inequality. And no, not by chance. This question is memorably present in the human mentality,

both in the academic sphere and in common sense, and the reflections arising from it are, as can be seen, useful to introduce the understanding of the theme treated here.

By way of common sense, for now, some topics that can be raised when the question presents itself are, in a very general way, “rationality,” “thought,” even “intelligence,” among other terms that may come up. The core of all these answers, in short, consists in the fact that the human species would be able to reflect on the world around it – and imagine different realities or possible futures – before acting on it or transforming it. More than that – because instinctive observation and reaction are also part of the realm of other animals –, what is being said is that the abstraction of reasoning would allow humans to interact with the context beyond the biological programming they were given.

Thus, for example, a bird instinctively interacts with its surroundings in order to discover

the best branch to build its nest; and it will do so, thus fulfilling the purpose of its initial “analysis”. There is, however, no abstraction or social construct. The nest will be made, the way it will be made, according to the species in question and to what the biological instinct and genetic programming have defined. About this line of reasoning, Aranha and Martins (2009) add:

There is no one who has not already observed with attention and amazement the patient “work” of a spider weaving a web. However, the acts of these animals have no history, are not renewed and remain the same over time, except for the changes determined by the evolution of the species and those resulting from genetic mutations. But, even if these changes occur, they continue to be valid for all individuals of the species, and are transmitted hereditarily. (ARANHA; MARTINS, 2009)

Anthropology and Philosophy start from this path to build what would trace – now leaving common sense and entering the academic discussion in these areas – the human differentiation with other animals. The cited authors, in instance,

bring the **combination between concrete and abstract intelligence, symbolic language, work and culture** as the elements that guarantee to the human being a differentiated behavior (ARANHA; MARTINS, 2006. Emphasis added). Since the purpose of this section is not to extend the discussion anthropologically and philosophically, the contribution of these areas to the theme is brought here in a simplified way. Moreover, the first aspects listed by the authors will remain only as mentions – and culture, logically, will be the element to be addressed in more detail.

The word “culture” can have several meanings. In Anthropology, it refers to everything that human beings produce, in a way that goes beyond the biological realm, when building their existence. This includes various aspects that are routinely dealt with, such as institutions, material values and spiritual values. Thus, if the contact of the human being with

the outside world is guided by the symbol, which can be defined as the agreed assignment of meanings to initially unrelated meanings, culture is the set of symbols developed by a people (ARANHA; MARTINS, 2009). A synthetic and wonderfully comprehensive concept of the phenomenon can be obtained from the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, published by UNESCO:

(...) culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO, 2001).

An example that clarifies the symbolic issue: when, in a certain country, people say that breaking dishes on New Year’s Eve brings luck, the combination between an action (breaking a dish), a time of year (New Year’s Eve) and a “superstitioned” consequence (bringing luck) generates a combination that is originally unrelated, but makes sense to

that community. This action is part of the local culture, just like music, customs, clothing, theater, painting, folklore, literature, and so many other known symbolic manifestations.

Given the infinite human possibility of symbolizing, cultures are multiple and varied: there are countless ways of thinking, acting, expressing yearnings, fears and feelings in general. That is why ways of working, of occupying oneself with free time, artistic expressions and ways of interpreting the world, such as myth, philosophy or science, always change. (ARANHA; MARTINS, 2009)

Thus, it can be seen that culture is a representation of the way of thinking of a particular group, and reflects how it builds its existence in interaction with the outside world. This is because, through the peculiarities and cultural manifestations of a people, it is possible to know their reality and history. In them, not only the typical value judgments are revealed, but also the historical issues and the contextual settings that led to them and to that particular behavior (SILVA; SOUZA, 2006).

As can be deduced, the cultural world is a milieu that is already available when one is born, since others have already previously chosen this whole system of most basic meanings. And, in the face of Anthropology, one realizes that almost everything is culture, since most social behavior is conventionalized: language, the way of dressing, talking, family relationships... all this, that is done daily, is usually in line with the place (country, region, etc.) or social group to which one belongs. Therefore, what is the individual's behavior like in the face of this milieu?

In fact, as we have seen, the human being is inexorably the fruit of his symbolic cultural milieu. Identity, however, is formed in a dialectic between inculcation and contrast. Cultural identification, according to Silva and Souza (2006), is in the confrontation process between the cultural environment and the individual, moments in which the knowledge passed on by the

community in which the person is located is confronted with the knowledge acquired in personal experience. Thus, although cultural goods already have in themselves an intrinsic value given by the support of the community, it is with access to these manifestations and the values that govern them that the individuals manage to format their identity – in other words, their value judgment and positioning within the symbolic realm in which they find themselves (SILVA; SOUZA, 2006).

For example, if in a particular region Carnival is overly valued, to the point of being a part of local common sense that this holiday is the best of the year and that everyone should celebrate it, this means that the cultural identity of this region, i.e., the set of experiences and values that this people agreed (CASTELLS apud SILVA; SOUZA, 2006), is permeated by this symbolism. Individuals who are born or live in this place will probably see signs of carnival cheer at various times of their life,

and interacting with them is how the individuals delimit if they are adherent or not to the sentimental phenomenon by the holiday.

Extrapolating a little from the theoretical discussion and moving on to plausible scenarios derived from it, it is possible to reach some conclusions about the importance of access to culture. Keeping the previous fictitious scenario of a region that idolizes Carnival, one imagines that an individual from another part of the world, or a culturally marginalized native, might have some difficulty in grasping what is apparently an important historical and social part of the people in question and in forming an opinion towards it. In the case of the culturally marginalized native, the little contact with one's own cultural identity is probably a detriment, for one loses some of the absorption of the symbolic and historical essence of the native land, as well as the opportunity for identity enlargement from the cultural identification or rejection

of the value in question. At the same time, the more distinct cultures that the outsider individual gets to know, probably the greater the worldview expansion he or she will have, either absorbing elements of other cultural identities or respectfully reaffirming one's own identity. One way or another, access to culture is perceived as of great value and an activity to be promoted in an easy way to the citizens.

This section has presented culture as a social construct phenomenon, an important element in differentiating human behavior. Furthermore, the breadth of possible cultural demonstrations allowed one to understand that, potentially, almost everything that is done routinely is permeated by the culture of where the individual is at the moment. Finally, in the face of the construction of the concept of cultural identity, it is inferred that cultural manifestations have the dubiety of being both the materialized set of influences that

the human being socialized in a certain group suffers, and an impulse, in the individual sphere, of personalization and identity formation in the face of this scenario. Thus, at the end and from the formatted theoretical foundation, it was possible to infer what would be, at least in the anthropological and philosophical scope, the reasons why the broad access to culture and to the largest possible number of its manifestations is important to the most diverse citizens.

2.2 Culture as an economic factor (among other derivations)

As it was possible to perceive from the reading of the previous section, the conceptualization of culture and its ramifications is, at times, abstract and broad. So much so that the Australian David Throsby (1995 apud SILVA, 2012), demonstrating this amplitude, defended the dual conceptualization of the term. The first conceptual branch would be basically the one already pointed

out, of culture as the whole set of beliefs, attitudes, values and practices common to a population, which are shared among its members and that are intrinsic to the functioning of that society.

On the other hand, the economist also defines culture as something more functionally oriented, namely all those activities that, to be developed, involve creativity and, again, encompass symbols, also involving potential intellectual property. Thus, in this branch of definition, the phenomenon is defined by the cultural sector of the economy – or, as it tends to be called, the economy of culture –, which boasts events related to music, cinema, literature, among others (SILVA, 2012).

Such notion is not restricted to the international scenario: corroborating all this introduction, is the Brazilian National Culture Plan itself – a document that presents the “set of principles, purposes, guidelines, strategies and goals that should guide the

government in the formulation of cultural policies” (PNC, 2021). He understands that culture should be considered a mix of anthropological, social, symbolic and aesthetic phenomenon, but also productive and economic (SILVA, 2012). Thus, leaving for now the discussion – perhaps more abstract – of Anthropology and Philosophy, in this section the goal is to verify the tangible aspects of access to culture in Brazil. More specifically, we will discuss its relationship with the economy of a place.

When one thinks about “development”, especially when it comes to the characterization of a country or region, the word is commonly associated with economic criteria. However, although the accumulation of wealth is, in fact, one of the aspects to be taken into account to characterize a developed nation, the 21st century is emerging as an era of reformatting this concept, whose imaginary now encompasses items such as sustainability,

cultural diversity, innovation, and social inclusion. Silva (2012) continues:

Here, more than ever, the relationship between development and culture is narrowed, the latter being considered in both its substantive and material dimensions. In this development model based on creativity, the symbolic dimension of human production becomes the fundamental element in the economic definition. (SILVA, 2012)

Culture, therefore, starts to be noticed as an important part of economic activities, becoming a factor mainly due to the growing importance of cultural industries¹ in contemporary societies. Silva (2012) adds that the potential that activities such as artistic production and popular folkloric manifestations have in promoting social insertion and generating employment and income also contributes to this appreciation. This leads political agents who are interested in this type of

development to update their agenda to something more than heritage conservation or encouraging cultural events, also employing a set of innovations whose protagonist is the creative economy. (SILVA, 2012)

The “Panorama of Creative Economy in Brazil” report, published by IPEA in 2013, mentions that the conceptualization of Creative Economy is still evolving, since its emergence is recent. Therefore, different definitions and ways of measuring and characterizing it are presented around the world, but always around a more delimited core. Howkins (2001 *apud* IPEA, 2013), for instance, systematizes creative economy as a phenomenon that orbits in the relationship between the creativity, the symbolic and the economy. In this document, IPEA proposed the following definition:

Creative economy is the set of economic activities that depend on symbolic content – therein included creativity as the most expressive factor for the production of goods and services, keeping close relationship with economic, cultural and social aspects

¹ In the conception of Adorno and Horkheimer (1947 *apud* LEMOS, 2013), the cultural industry is the integration of the various artistic and cultural manifestations to the logic of exchange relations. In short, therefore, it is the participation of activities arising from culture in the economic logic.

that interact with technology and intellectual property (IPEA, 2013)

Silva (2012) points out that current definitions of creative economy allow for the inclusion of activities that range from more traditional ones such as handicrafts to sectors such as the creation of electronic games which involve cutting edge technology. It is inferred, therefore, that the vastness of the creative economy in a place may indicate, in the relationship between art and commerce, the recognition and appreciation of the arts as a major cultural trait (CAVES *apud* SILVA, 2012).

As could be expected in view of Brazil as a developing country, here the debate about this greater inclusion of culture in the economic agenda is even more recent. Silva's article (2012) points out a certain difficulty, probably derived from this short period of time of the arrival of the debate on creative economy in Brazil, to raise many pieces about

the phenomenon in the national literature.

However, this revolution is not extinguished at the theoretical level or is only materialized outside Brazil, as recent political actions confirm the change in mentality. In domestic territory, the creation in 2011 of the National Secretariat for Creative Economy and Cultural Diversity, within the scope of the Ministry of Culture, represented the political intention to propose a development grounded on stimulating the creativity of Brazilian entrepreneurs and also the innovation of their enterprises (SILVA, 2012). The following excerpt from the Creative Economy Secretariat Plan, which established policies, guidelines and actions resulting from the creation of the new National Secretariat for the years 2011-2014, corroborates the author's findings:

How to transform a "desperate effort for culture" into a fundamental right to development? The Ministry of Culture responds propositionally to this question by creating a Secretariat for Creative Economy, with the objective

of increasing the transversality of its policies within governments and with society. This is a strategy for affirming the importance of public cultural policies in the construction of a broad and transversal development agenda. It is about taking up the challenge of thinking of development less as a product than as a cultural process.

(...)

The social technologies produced by the immense Brazilian creativity have become irrefutable realities. However, these technologies still lack support from the Brazilian State to flourish. In many countries on different continents (such as Australia, Turkey, China), creativity has been supported by public policies and treated as the input par excellence of innovation. This new economy is growing, thanks to knowledge society and to new technologies. It is the symbolic dimension of human production (from circus arts to game content) that becomes a key element in defining the price of these new goods and services, building new solidarities, new ethics and aesthetics, bringing together communities and individuals, this time from networks and collectives. (MINISTRY OF CULTURE, 2011)

It is pointed out that, in fact, developing the creative economy can be positive, and not only for national economic results. The aforementioned Ministry of

Culture document, for instance, states that some of creative economy's potentials are socioeconomic growth, job creation and earnings exportation; furthermore, social inclusion, job creation and human development are promoted (BRASIL, 2011; UNCTAD, 2008 *apud* IPEA, 2013).

Regarding the personal scope, the IPEA report introduces that the literature points out that occupations of creative nature – and, therefore, involved in the economy of the same name – tend to pay better wages and, simultaneously or not, they have been associated with jobs with high levels of satisfaction due to the creative sense and cultural involvement. Moreover, the development of some creative industries and the encouragement of their operation can even reduce inequalities such as gender inequalities, since a significant portion of the production of handicrafts and fashion, for example, is carried out by women. Finally, one can mention the incentive to cultural

tourism in places of strong creative economy (IPEA, 2013). One imagines that this list is not necessarily exhaustive, but it represents well the extent of the well-being and benefits that the encouragement of cultural activities and industry can bring to the economy of a place and its inhabitants. And it is in this way that a section on economics and culture becomes positively broader than anticipated. With the panel brought so far, we can notice the extent that culture, in general, has on the lives of those who live with it. Whether in a way that forms identity, enters the symbolic values of the people themselves, becomes aware of the values of other communities, finds financial independence, reduces inequality, or increases the national economy, the fact is that access to culture – by itself or through its effects on other sectors – proves to be of enormous value to citizen life.

2.3 Normative aspects of culture and access to culture

We have already seen that culture is an important branch in many spheres of human life. But how is it treated normatively? Bringing this type of content to the scope of the Bulletin, it will be possible to make a compilation of the main norms currently in place regarding the theme – which will also be a good source of problematization when analyzing the data ahead.

Starting the normative list with an international demeanor, we have the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which inserts in its article 27 that “everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits” (UN, 1948). The notion of culture is thus introduced as so important as to be universally held that everyone should have the right to participate in its movements.

In addition to the 1948 Declaration, there are other Human Rights documents that are cultural in nature. The

appreciation for cultural diversity, that is, the praise for the variety of existing manifestations, is the guideline of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, which provides the principles concerning the theme adopted as parameters by UNESCO. As you can imagine, the entire document focuses on the importance of culture in its multiple appearances, but there is a section called “Cultural Diversity and Human Rights” that is especially representative of this rights issue. Within it, Article 5 says precisely in intertextuality with the 1948 Declaration:

Article 5 – Cultural rights as an enabling environment for cultural diversity

Cultural rights are an integral part of human rights, which are universal, indivisible and interdependent. The flourishing of creative diversity requires the full implementation of cultural rights as defined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (...). All persons should therefore be able to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice, and particularly in their mother tongue; all persons should be entitled to quality education and training that fully respect their cultural identity; and all persons have the right to

participate in the cultural life of their choice and conduct their own cultural practices, subject to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. (UNESCO, 2001)

In this case, the relevance of the achievement of cultural rights of the individual is reaffirmed, whose important part is the already brought individual freedom to create culture and participate in cultural movements.

Nationally, Brazil also has its normative share in the guarantee of cultural rights and in the incentive to cultural production, demonstrating the appreciation of culture and its recognition as an important human trait. The Federal Constitution itself and the Incentive to Culture Law will be brought into this scope.

Section II of the 1988 Constitution encompasses articles 215, 216, and 216-A, and deals specifically with culture. The first article – the only one to be presented at this point due to its general character – states that “the State will guarantee to all the full exercise of cultural rights and access to the sources of national

culture, and will support and encourage the appreciation and diffusion of cultural manifestations” (BRASIL, 1988), which, as could not be otherwise, is in dialogue with the international provisions already exposed. It also introduces in the third paragraph the National Culture Plan (PNC), an important instrument of the federal sphere directed to the accomplishment of what the *caput* foresees: the PNC aims, according to the norm, at the Brazilian cultural development and the integration of the actions of the government. It has already been mentioned and briefly explained in the previous section, and the Constitution, specifically in this part, affirms its purpose for the defense and valuation of Brazilian cultural heritage, the production, promotion and diffusion of cultural goods, the formation of qualified personnel for the management of culture, the democratization of access to cultural goods and the valuation of ethnic and regional diversity (BRASIL, 1988).

The simple constitutional guarantee of free cultural manifestation, however, is not enough for this right to become effective. In many situations, policies, actions, resources and investments are necessary for certain events and cultural productions to take place and be easily accessible and promoted to the population. In Brazil, when we observe the history in the investment in Brazilian cultural productions, we notice that, besides being timid, the actions with more fervor would operate in a very late period of national history, around the twentieth century, and with interest only from the wealthiest classes, without support or intervention of the public machine for the plural fomentation of this right (WAGNA et al, 2021).

It was only in the final years of the 1964 Military Dictatorship, when the country was in a process of transition to democracy, that the then President of the Republic, José Sarney, sanctioned Law No. 7,505/86 of his own

authorship (for this reason it was named Sarney Law), giving rise to the first legislation of cultural incentive. The Law had been circulating in the Brazilian parliament since 1972, but faced great difficulties, being vetoed for violation of the 1967 Constitution. Upon coming into force by decree, the Sarney Law established the first pillars in public-private partnership for operations of a cultural or artistic nature (BRASIL, 1986). The introduced instruments allowed income tax payers to deduct from gross income the value of donations, sponsorships and incentives to legal entities of a cultural nature registered with the Ministry of Culture.

One of the main landmarks of the Law is the freedom granted from the removal of the barriers of state domination over culture, giving greater autonomy to private initiative in the construction of its own cultural sphere. In this sense, the inauguration of this regulation promoted an environment of enjoyment of freedom and voice

for those who experienced harsh years of artistic and cultural persecution during the Military Dictatorship (WAGNA et al, 2021).

The norm, however, was the target of much criticism for the precarious procedures of accountability and the questioning of the real responsibility of the State in fostering cultural activities, whose understanding, by certain groups, should be developed by private initiative through its natural instruments of supply and demand. In light of this understanding, the Sarney Law was revoked by President Fernando Collor in the first year of his mandate, in 1990, putting an end to cultural activities promoted by federal institutions. The inertia of the market in promoting the fostering of cultural actions aligned with mobilizations of the artistic class pressured the then government for the effectiveness of incentive policies for Brazilian cultural production, which resulted in the creation of Federal Law No. 8,313, of December 23,

1991, today baptized as the Culture Incentive Law² (WAGNA et al, 2021).

According to data from the Rouanet Law Primer (2019), Brazil currently has more than 300 laws to encourage culture, mostly encompassing the municipal and state spheres. In this tangle of norms, the Culture Incentive Law constitutes the main normative instrument in supporting, encouraging, and valuing Brazilian cultural manifestations. The new legislation incorporates the principles of the Sarney Law and creates the Program of Support to Culture (PRONAC), whose function is to raise and allocate funds from companies or individuals. As in the old legislation, when sponsoring shows, literary products, plays, concerts, and other cultural productions, the partial or total

destined amount is deducted from the supplier entity's income tax. In order to compensate for the resources received, the benefited projects are obliged to favor the population's access to culture, whether in the form of free allocation of part of the tickets or by promoting actions in the local community.

The role of the Culture Incentive Laws is undeniable in establishing more democratic environments in the access and promotion of Brazilian artistic-cultural manifestations. However, for Belém and Donadote, they are not free from criticism (2013):

“the incentives policy works in a double logic that guarantees the entrepreneur a tax strategy with a return in marketing, whose greatest advantage is the linking of the company to the promoted product. This dynamic returns in benefit to the sponsor with the fixation of the corporate brand in cultural actions, however, this “free transfer” of money to cultural projects with promotional and institutional purpose of advertising is made with public money”.

² Federal Law No. 8,313/91 was first dubbed the Rouanet Law, in honor of the then secretary of culture of the Collor government and creator of the law, Sérgio Paulo Rouanet. In April 2019, the Bolsonaro government sanctions new rules for the release of funds and renames the norm, which is now known as the Culture Incentive Law.

2.4 Examples of Brazilian Cultural Manifestations

In this topic, we seek to illustrate some of the diverse cultural manifestations present in our national territory. Obviously, due to the great multiplicity of peoples, communities and, consequently, cultures, it is not feasible to encompass all the existing manifestations, either because of the quantitative issue, but also because of the low documental record of these elements. Therefore, we have registered two manifestations: the Kusiwa art, of great relevance for native Brazilian culture; and passinho, a peripheral expression.

2.4.1 Artistic Manifestations of the Wajapi

The Wajapi belong to the Tupi-Guarani ethnolinguistic group located in the current territory of Amapá, bordered by the Oiapoque, Jari and Araguari rivers. In all, it is estimated that there are more than a thousand indigenous people distributed in 48 villages, which maintain constant contact among their members, making the composition of each unit always fluctuating (ISA, 2021). Over the centuries, the Wajapis have developed particular artistic expressions that carry with them extremely complex techniques and meanings, but which at the same time transmit the history and social organization of this people (UNESCO, 2021).

Image 1: Artistic Manifestations of the Wajapi



Source: Iphan Portal, 2002.

The very specificity of the Wajapis' art guarantees them a proper name: Kusiwa. Besides the artistic production itself, which involves the mastery of several stages in the processes of preparing the materials and drawing, Kusiwa art is full of symbolism that transmits and congregates aspects of the Wajapis social, cultural, religious, aesthetic and metaphysical life. Kusiwa manifests itself in body paintings, drawings and in the making of objects and utensils, whose patterns are found in the firmness of the strokes, the contour of the geometrically delimited angles and usually in the coding of jaguars, anacondas, boa constrictors, fish and butterflies (IPHAN, 2021).

In graphic art, the inks are produced from natural elements, such as urucum, monkey fat, genipap juice, resins and andiroba oil, which when grouped together form the colors light red, bluish black and dark red. The graphic patterns, their ornaments and colors refer to the cosmology and worldview of the Wajapis, with reference to myths and the history of the creation of humankind and nature. However, the Kusiwa art is not static and stuck to the same ancestral patterns; it incorporates new elements and symbols to its repertoire through learning and reinterpretations; ornamental forms belonging to the enemies of the Wajapis have already been found, as well as letters of the

alphabet and even clothes brands (IPHAN,2021).

The genuineness and strong historical, social and cultural attributes of Kusiwa art was included by the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute (Iphan) in the Book of Records of

Forms of Expression, in 2002, and six years later it was recognized by UNESCO as part of the intangible heritage.

2.4.2 The Passinho Dance

Image 2: The Passinho Dance



Source: Veja Rio

Popularized in the 2000s, the Passinho Dance is a mixture of funk, samba, break, frevo, and kuduro. It was born in the slums of Rio de Janeiro, more specifically, at the beginning of the funk parties, when the venue was still empty and the younger public already started to party to the experimental sound of DJs. The accelerated movement of the feet marks the aesthetics of passinho, with short steps involving the bending of the knee, while raising

the foot rapidly forward and backward. However, it is the improvisation and creativity of the dancer that makes this style unique, diverse and inclusive.

“The Passinho dance is mostly individual and, even if a dancer performs several performances to the same music, they will not match each other, since Passinho has as one of its main characteristics the absence of choreography, that is,

improvisation (...)”
(NASCIMENTO, 2017, p.30)

In the beginning, what was a festive reunion among teenagers and children from Rio de Janeiro’s periphery, gained popularity in the country in 2008, when a group of friends from the Jacare community posted the video entitled “Passinho Foda” on the YouTube platform, in which teenagers casually perform the passinho, gaining millions of views and attracting attention to the new dance style.

With the dissemination of passinho through social networks, more young people became interested in the style, creating new steps and sharing their skills on the Internet. The most popular dancers would arrange duels among themselves, through social networks, for the role of best performance and the most beautiful and difficult steps, which later gave rise to the Battles of Passinho. Different from the old duels, which involved an informal dispute between dancers, the Battles maintained the competitive nature of the duels,

however, they involve a more complex structure with the presence of a stage, jury, awards, and the involvement of event producers and managers.

It is at balls and gatherings that the exhibitions gain greater public involvement, where, normally, circles are formed and the dancers perform for the spectators who are lucky enough to get to the first places and view the best angles. However, audience participation is not limited to passive observation – at any moment a spectator can become a player, in addition to the applause, booing and chorus that make up the crowd. All this dynamic involving the audience and the dancers harks back to other popular expressions that also had their roots in the peripheries and marginalized areas of Brazil, such as capoeira and samba.

In 2018, the City Council of Rio de Janeiro approved the initiative for the bill No. 390/2017 of councilwoman Verônica Costa (DEM) enacting, thus, the law No.

6381/2018 that declares the Passinho Dance intangible heritage of the carioca people, with the responsibility of the executive power to support actions that value the dissemination of this dance genre (RIO DE JANEIRO, 2018).

Passinho, more than a dance style, represents the hybrid expression of the marginalized classes of modern Brazil. The mixture of several dance styles of popular culture potentiated with the rise of social networks has attracted the attention and admiration of young people from communities and other Brazilian areas, not only as a form of entertainment and fun, but also signifying a new professional proposal for those who excel in the swing of Passinho.

3. DIMENSIONS OF INEQUALITY OF ACCESS TO CULTURE IN BRAZIL

When we talk about culture, we have several lenses to analyze, as already seen. The access to culture is no different, we have

problems ranging from the existence of cultural equipment to the financial support from the State for the promotion of cultural activities, as well as the families' income for access to culture.

This is what we try to show in this bulletin and in this topic, how much the population has access to culture. The practical aspects of access to culture in Brazil go beyond what is normatized – as in other areas as well – precisely because of our record of class and regional inequality.

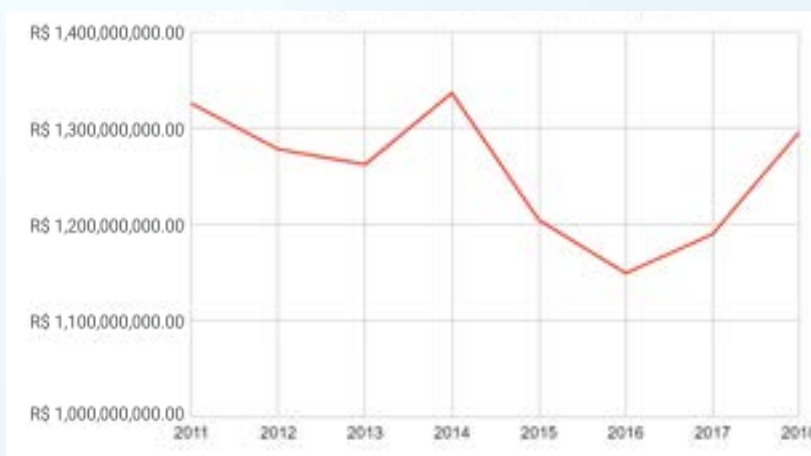
3.1 Federal investments: Analysis of tax incentives of the Rouanet Law

The Rouanet Law, as already mentioned, is the main instrument of support, incentive, and cultural valorization in Brazil. It is a tax incentive, i.e., the government withholds part of the income tax of companies and individuals and this is directed to cultural activities. The supported proposals go through analysis by the Ministry of Citizenship, the

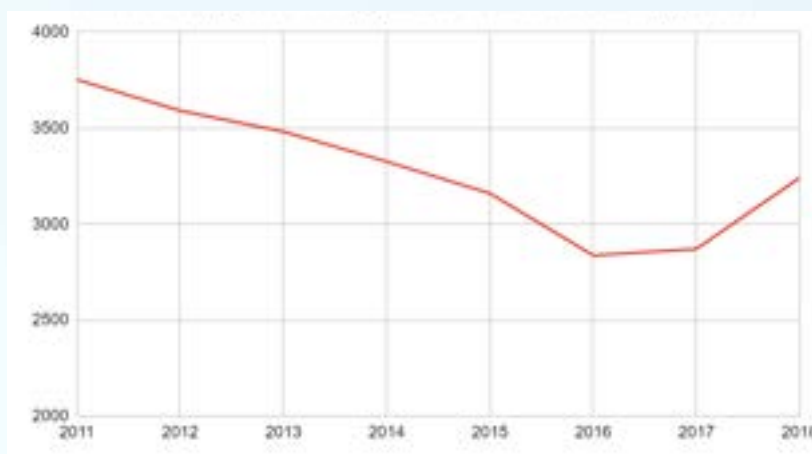
National Commission for Cultural Incentive and, afterwards, through an evaluation of results. They can be from the most diverse areas: production of shows and spectacles, cultural events, support for literary activities, cultural spaces, among others.

What we have is that the number of projects supported in the Culture Incentive Program comes from a drop, as we can see in Graph 1, just like the amount captured by the program – although it has been rising since 2016 (see Graph 2).

Graph 1 – Amount raised in the Culture Incentive Program, 2011- 2018



Source: SIIC 2018, IBGE

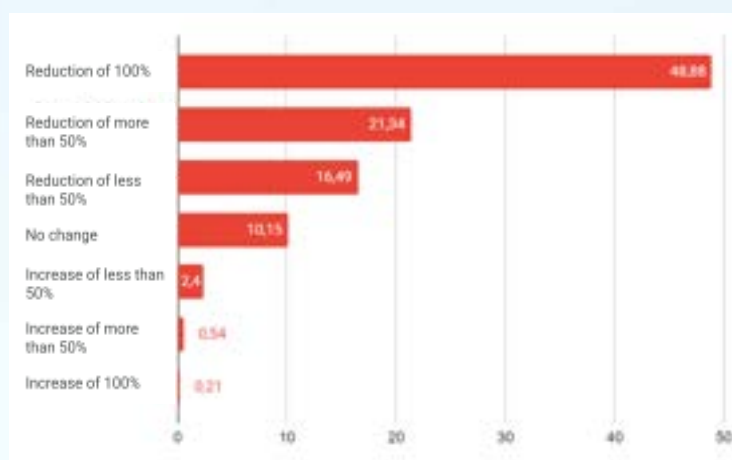
Graph 2 – Number of projects supported in the Culture Incentive program, 2011-2018

Source: SIIC 2018, IBGE

In addition, it is believed that because of the pandemic, these numbers will have fallen again as of 2020, due to the isolation and difficulty of cultural productions at a distance and the difficulties of the sectors linked to culture. The data from the research on the impacts of

covid-19 on the cultural and creative sectors in Brazil – done by researchers Pedro Affonso, André Lira and Rodrigo Amaral, in partnership with Unesco, USP, and SESC – showed that almost 50% of the cultural agents lost their income between May and July 2020. Graph 3 shows the results of this research.

Graph 3 – Impact of the pandemic on the income of cultural agents between May and July 2020



Source: NEXO JORNAL

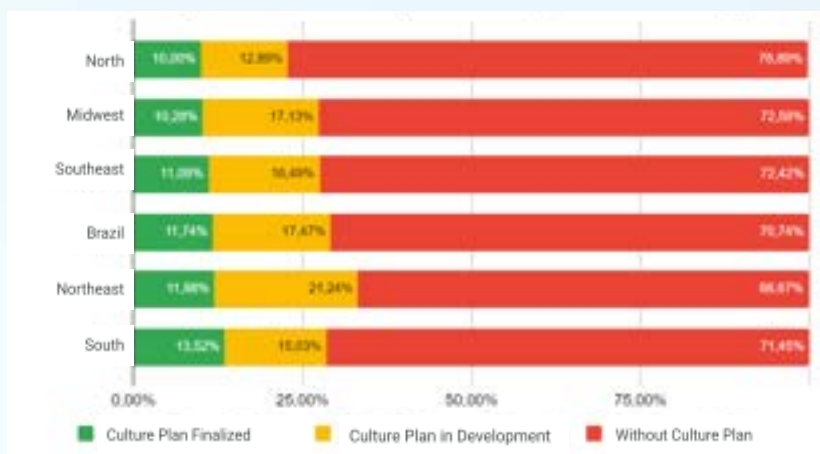
3.2 Municipal investments: infrastructural/regional inequality

Another crucial look we have when we analyze inequality in access to culture is the structure of Brazilian municipalities with respect to culture. In this, we have to analyze both public policies and cultural incentives.

To start, it is strategically important that plans exist for a

good execution of public policies. There are Municipal Plans for Health, Education, Social Assistance, and also for Culture (PMC). Its objective is to guide, for a period of 10 years, the entire cultural policy of the municipality, through guidelines, actions and goals. However, most Brazilian municipalities did not have these instruments in 2018, as shown in Graph 4.

Graph 4 - Existence of the Municipal Plan of Culture, in Brazil and the Regions, in 2018



Source: MUNIC 2018, IBGE

In addition to the Municipal Culture Plan, another component of the Culture System is the Municipal Culture Fund (FMC). The FMC's main purpose is to finance public policies and other cultural projects. Its resources come, in

base, from the budget resources of the municipality, besides other transfers between the federative entities and also from public-private partnerships. Again, most Brazilian municipalities do not have a Municipal Fund of Culture, as shown in Graph 5.

Graph 5 – Percentage of Municipalities without Municipal Fund for Culture, in Brazil and the Regions, in 2018.

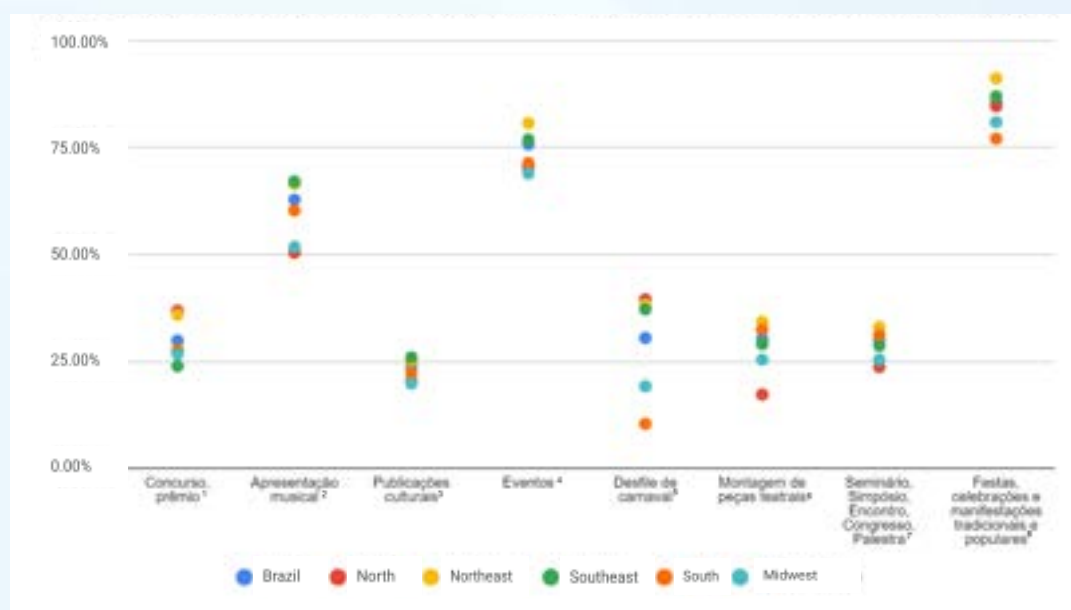


Source: MUNIC 2018, IBGE

But how important is this fund? It is the main provider of incentives for cultural projects within the municipality, through the municipal governments. The existence of the Municipal Culture Fund also represents a greater importance that the municipality gives to culture through these incentives.

This cultural incentive can be destined to several sources and cultural activities. This is what Graph 6 shows – the cultural activities most financially supported by the municipalities of Minas Gerais in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Graph 6 – Percentage of Municipalities that Financially Supported Each Cultural Activity, in Brazil and the Regions, in 2018



Source: MUNIC 2018, IBGE

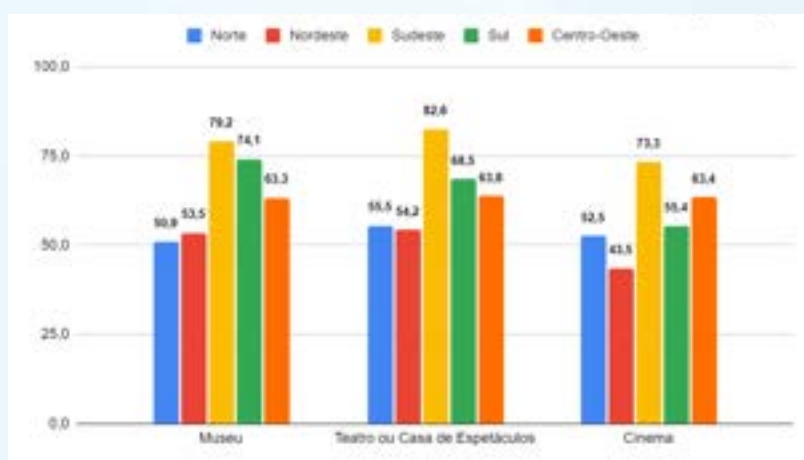
Note: 1 - Contest, prize; 2 - Musical presentation; 3 - Cultural Publications; 4 - Events; 5 - Carnival parade; 6 - Theatrical plays; 7 - Seminar, Symposium, Meeting, Congress, Lecture; 8 - Feasts, celebrations and traditional and popular manifestations

It is interesting to note that most financially supported traditional festivals are by far the cultural activities. This is not by

chance, because these festivals – municipal anniversary, patron saint’s day, anniversary of a typical item of the city – are much more common, especially in small municipalities. This type of activity, along with events and musical performances, are the most popular activities in smaller municipalities and the most popular with the population.

Going beyond financial incentive, cultural access is also represented by the cultural equipment existing in the city. For this analysis, the most common equipment – museum, theater and cinema – was grouped, and the percentage of people living in municipalities with such equipment was analyzed (see Graph 7).

Graph 7 – Percentage of People Resident in Municipalities with Cultural Equipment, by Region, in 2018



Source: SIIC 2018, IBGE

What is most evident in this Graph is the regional inequality. The population in the North and Northeast has, accordingly, less access to all the cultural facilities analyzed. In contrast, in the Southeast region, most of the

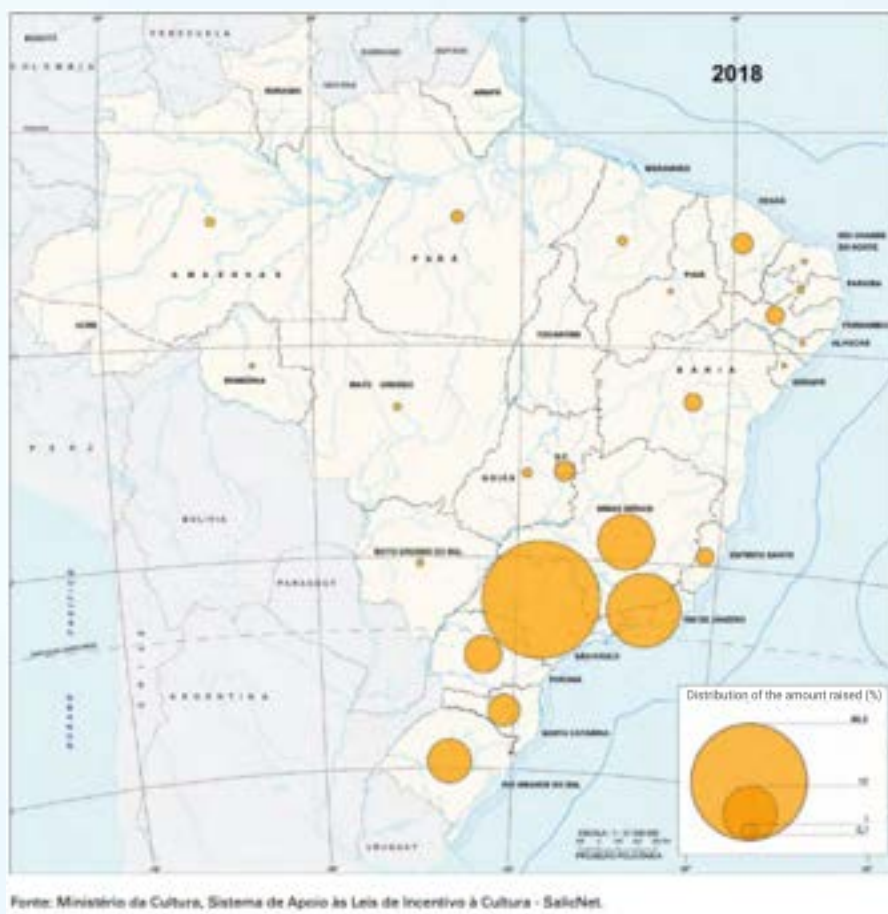
population resides in cities with museums, concert halls or movies.

This regional inequality was also seen in the other analyzes, and we saw that the North region has the smallest number of municipalities with municipal

plans and funds for culture. Finally, in this analysis, it is worth mentioning the drop in the percentage of resources allocated to culture. In 2011, culture represented 0.28% of the total consolidated expenses of the public administration. In 2018, however, culture represented 0.21% of the total consolidated expenses of the public administration. When we bring the analysis to the municipal entity, the drop was from 1.12% in 2011 to 0.79% in 2018.

Corroborating this debate on regional inequalities, when we shed light on the distribution of the amount raised for application in cultural projects observing the Brazilian states, the highest proportions of fundraising are present in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro with a slice of 46.8% and 18.6%, respectively, of the fundraising, and these states represent 21.8% and 8.2% of the proportion of the Brazilian population.

Image 3: Distribution of the amount raised for application in cultural projects, according to the Federation Units – 2018



Source: Ministry of Culture, Support System for Culture Incentive Laws - SalicNet.

It is important to reflect on these data, thinking about the cultural diversity of the Brazilian territory and which people that represent cultural expressions are accessing resources to produce and reproduce themselves. In a dynamic set by the rules of capital, the choice for the stories that will be told is not made in a neutral way.

3.3 Income inequality in access to culture

A last analysis that directly affects access to culture, beyond the cultural equipment and activities available, is the families' income and how much they spend on cultural activities. In Graph 8, we analyze the monthly family expenditure on culture, per income class.

Graph 8 – Monthly family expenditure on culture, per monthly income class, in 2018

Source: SIIC 2018, IBGE

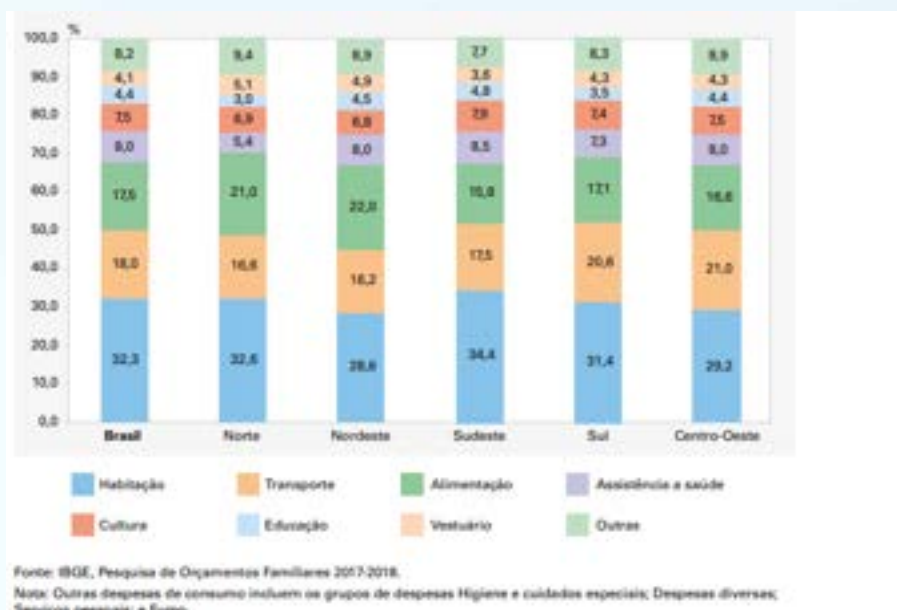
What we can see is that, as logical and expected, families that have a lower family income will spend less on cultural activities. The difference of this expenditure on culture between the lowest and the highest income class is more than 1,700%.

However, one deficiency of this data and analysis is that it cannot show us the spending on culture among the poorest families, with a monthly income of up to 1 minimum wage. As much as it is believed that spending on culture among these families is

even lower, it would be important to have this data to be able to measure this relationship between poverty and access to culture.

Another piece of data that we would like to call attention to concerns the percentage of spending on culture in relation to total family spending, by region. Once again, it is possible to see a difference in the percentage between families in the North and Northeast regions, in relation to the Brazilian average, with a greater weight for families in the “food” group.

Graph 9 – Percentage distribution of average monthly family monetary and non-monetary consumption expenditure, by selected types of expenditure according to Large Regions – 2017-2018



Source: IBGE, Household Budget Survey 2017-2018.

Note: Other consumption expenditures include the expenditure groups Hygiene and special care; Sundry expenses; Personal services; and Smoking.

Still thinking about expenses with activities related to culture, leisure, and festivities, we present the next map, which illustrates the inequalities between Brazilian states when we think about this issue. These

evident inequalities are the result of several elements that set the discussions in this bulletin and highlight the convergence of other dimensions of inequalities.

Image 4: Average monthly household expenditure in the Cultural activities, leisure and festivities group, according to the Federation Units – 2017-2018



Source: IBGE, Household Budget Survey 2017-2018.

4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

If you have followed us this far, from the dilemmas presented in the introduction – even in an attempt to bring theoretical aspects to this debate – until we observed the evident inequalities that are presented in relation to access, consumption, and even the distribution of resources destined to cultural productions in Brazil, you probably realized that

this is a multidimensional phenomenon and that it has diverse impacts.

In this sense, this Bulletin came to analyze some points of debate about the inequality of access to culture. The provision of the Declaration of Human Rights and the Federal Constitution about access to culture most of the time is not fully put into practice in Brazil, and inequality is one of the factors that impact this.

Firstly, in a sociological analysis, culture has an important role in identifying society and the

citizens. But beyond this, it also has economic and developmental importance. The creative economy, besides bringing culture and leisure to the populations, is equivalent to more than 2% of the Brazilian GDP.

Normally, the Culture Incentive Law came to unite the existing laws and put into practice the provisions of the Citizen Constitution. Its importance, besides being the main normative instrument in supporting, encouraging and valuing culture, also comes in order to establish a more democratic environment in the access to and promotion of culture.

In the data analysis, we can see that the practices – the norms – do not always match reality. Most municipalities still do not have any planning or a fund for culture resources. In the same way, the characteristic of having small municipalities means that most of the population lives in cities without cultural equipment, such as museums, theaters and movies.

Analyzing the data on culture incentive, we see that Brazil has seen a drop in the amount of money raised by the program and in the number of projects supported, and that in recent years these numbers have gone back up. However, it is believed that the pandemic has worsened these numbers due to the difficulty of carrying out cultural activities in the midst of the pandemic.

Finally, when we analyze family income and cultural expenditures, we see the expected discrepancy that already resembles income inequality in Brazil. Just as there is a huge difference between incomes, there is also this difference in investment in culture among families, due to their income class.

That is, when we analyze the inequality in access to culture in Brazil, we see that the regional scope and the income scope are preponderant: the regional due to the lower level of development between some regions and also within regions between small and

large cities; the income level, as is already expected, from the discrepancy in spending on culture between the poorest and wealthiest families.

The inequalities highlighted in this Bulletin should be observed in articulation with various other debates undertaken on the path to fighting inequalities. We also emphasize the centrality of the reflection on the inequalities that set culture, since it also means mentioning the possibilities of existence: saying who can access cultural productions, as well as who produces them, or even under which aspects, tells which history will be narrated, but always

accepting the history of the winners is not part of the countless cultural resistances that set our society.

Therefore, when we speak about these inequalities, we also speak about the power of culture and arts in their combat and deconstruction; we throw a spotlight on the processes of resistance and understand even more about the incongruities that set the dynamics of capital. Defending access to culture and its production and reproduction, in its most diverse manifestations, is a political act and a core element in the fight against inequalities.

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EXPEDIENT

The Inequality Observatory, a partnership between the Joao Pinheiro Foundation and the Regional Council of Economics – MG, is an extension project of the Public Administration course, which seeks to contribute to the debate on the different faces of social inequality, disseminating and making knowledge and information on the subject more accessible. The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the position of the institutions.

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