Unicamp – State University of Campinas

Distinction in São Paulo

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Definition

Understand how distinction works in São Paulo and mainly the role played, if any, by cultural capital in it and in the class dynamics of the city.

What is new?
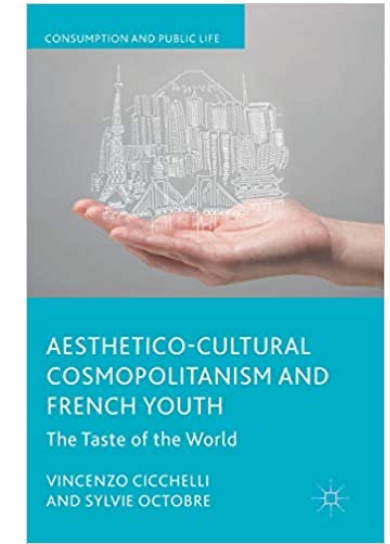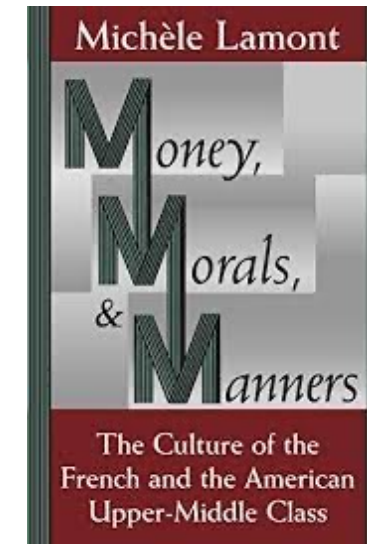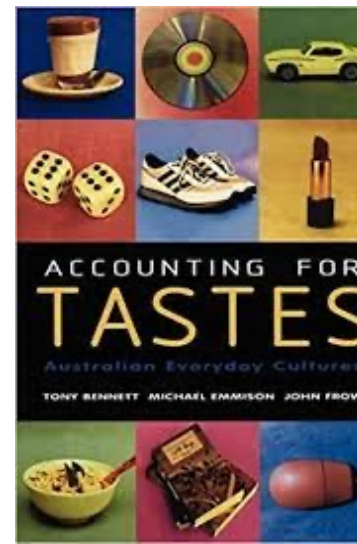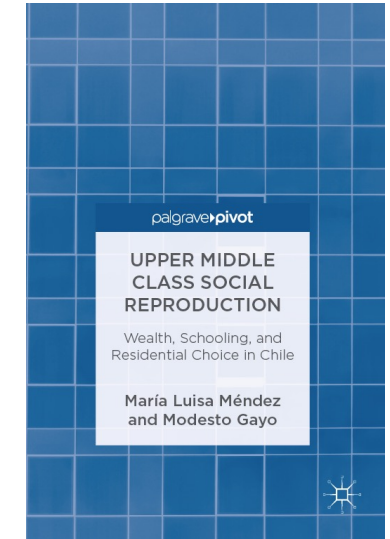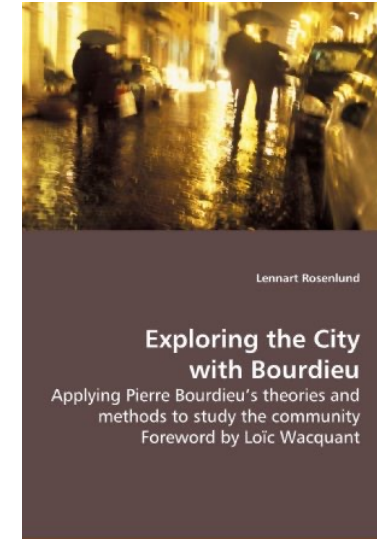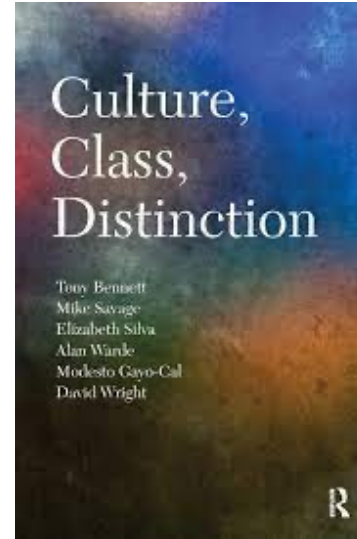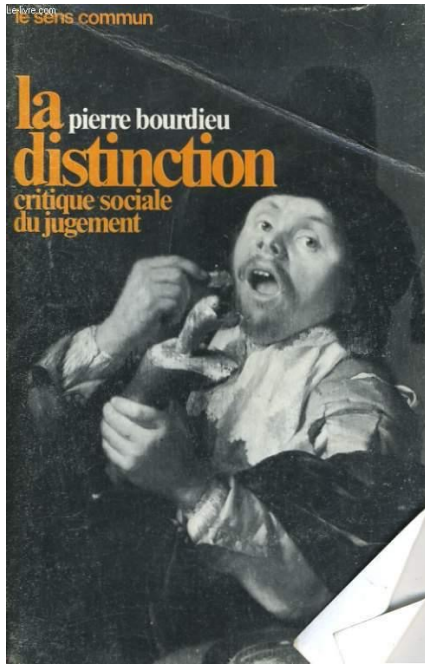
What is new?

No research in Brazil has so far studied how the social classes are positioned relationally to each other according to their volume and structure of capitals; and no one has ever studied the relative value of cultural practices and preferences to grasp what is distinctive.

In other words, no research has ever constructed the social and the symbolic spaces in Brazil as proposed by Bourdieu.

Method

Mixed and multi-method research

Focus groups, survey, and household interview

Phases

0 – Pandemic Survey, Defining the observation zones

1 – Focus Groups

2 – Questionnaire

3 – Household interviews

Phase 0 – preparing the research – The Pandemic Survey

The Pandemic survey

- o Academic staff, non-academic staff, and student of USP, UNESP, and Unicamp
- o N=5165

Due to the pandemic, some states of Brazil issued lockdown measures still in 2020. The in-person classes were suspended at the universities and schools across the country. Most of the universities shut their doors still in March 2020. These measures lasted for almost two years, and the in-person classes returned only in March 2022. The Pandemic survey was applied in the second semester of 2020.

USP, UNESP, and UNICAMP are the three state-owned universities by the state São Paulo. They are the largest ones in the state and generally considered as the some of the most prestigious universities in Brazil.

We used the pandemic survey to help us to choose some of the categories to be used in questionnaire. The survey is also important, as we can grasp how the pandemic may have change some cultural habits.

Phase 0 – preparing the research – The Pandemic Survey

Functions	Total (based on USP)	Sample
Graduate students	55.16%	51.02%
Postgraduate students	27.34%	24.28%
Non-academic staff	12.48%	15.45%
Academic staff	5.02%	9.25%

Phase 0 – preparing the research – the city of São Paulo

Studying the city of São Paulo

- Largest, and richest city in Brazil; unequal, and culturally diverse.
- 12.33 million

The following study helped us to understand better the city of São Paulo, and to define the zones of observation. We define the zones of observation to reduce the complexity of the city to an amount of data that are feasible to be analyzed. Each of the 20 observation zones should represent, taken altogether, the complexity of the city.

Phase 0 – preparing the research – the city of São Paulo
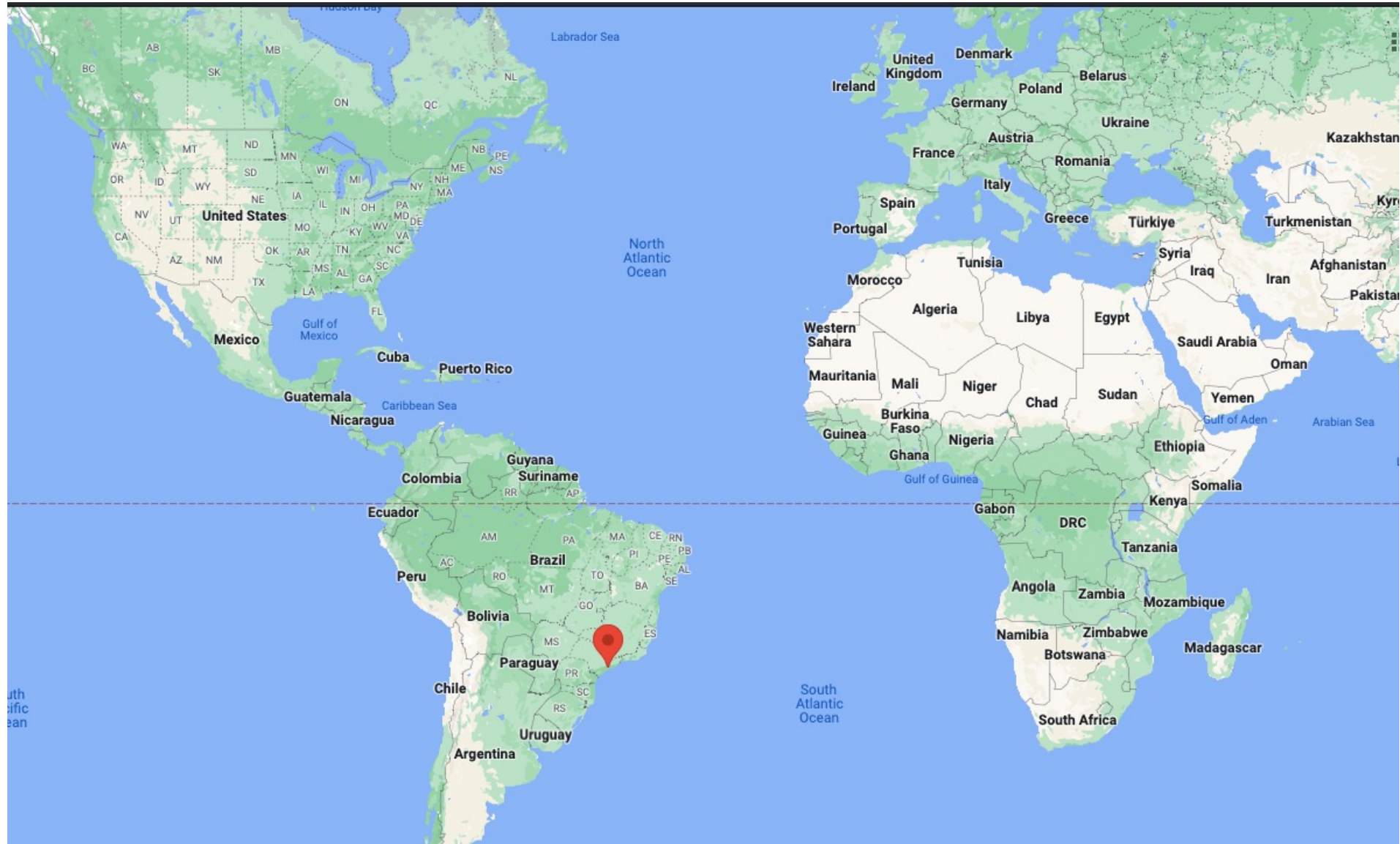
Phase 0 – preparing the research – the city of São Paulo

Defining the zones of observation with MCA

Bertoncelo, E. A cidade de São Paulo: padrões de desigualdade sociodemográfica

Bertoncelo, E. Comparação descritiva dos distritos da cidade de São Paulo em termos de características demográficas, educacionais e socioeconômicas

Phase 0 – preparing the research – the city of São Paulo

A PCA was applied to the data derived from the Census (2010). Variables included in the model:
- Proportion of households with 1 bathroom (in relation to total households in the district)
- Proportion of rented houses;
- Proportion of apartments;
- Proportion of households with no more than two residents, and of households with five or more of them;
- Proportion of households composed of couples without children;
- Proportion of households with monthly *per capita* income not higher than 1 minimum wage; between 1 and 3 minimum wages; between 3 and 5 minimum wages, and higher than 5 minimum wages;

Phase 0 – preparing the research – the city of São Paulo

- Proportion of individual aged 14 or less, and 70 or more;
- Proportion of adults having completed initial school years, middle school and college;
- Proportion of "pardos" and blacks;
- Proportion of nonmigrants;
- Proportion of adults in upper, middle and lower classes (according to a bourdieusian approach);
- Proportion of enrollments in public and private schools.

Phase 0 – preparing the research – the city of São Paulo

Phase 0 – preparing the research

Agrupamento 1

Agrupamento 2

Agrupamento 3

Agrupamento 4

Agrupamento 5

Agrupamento 6

Agrupamento 7
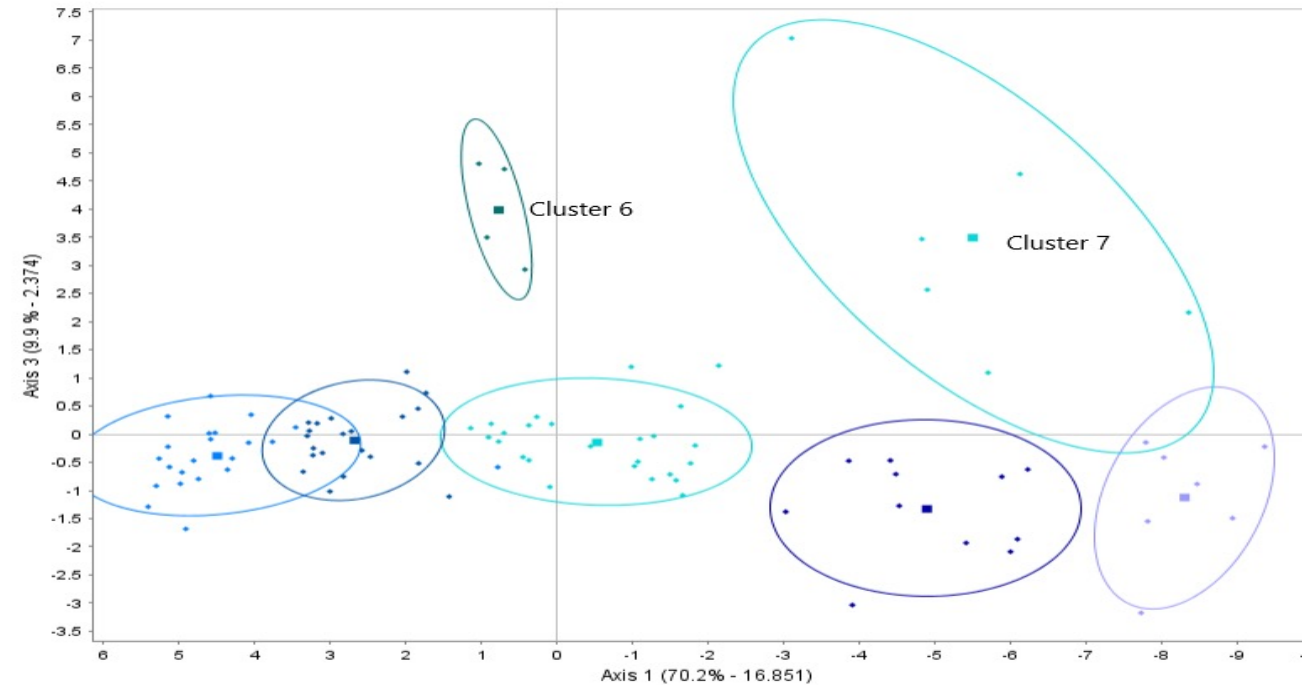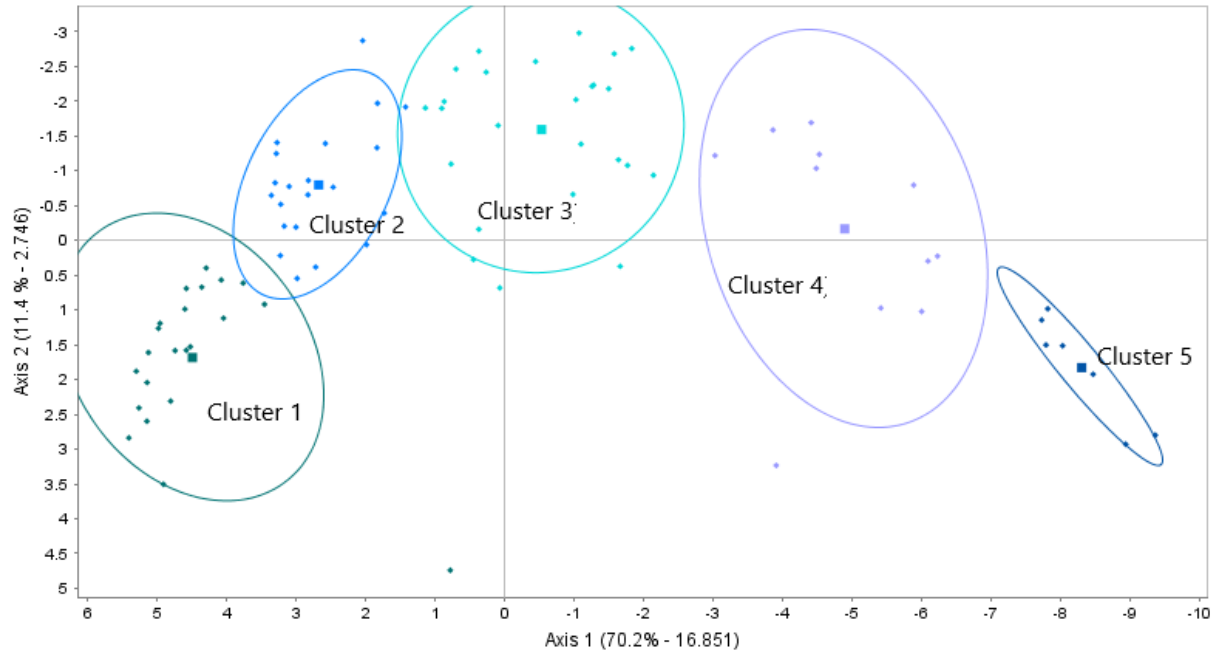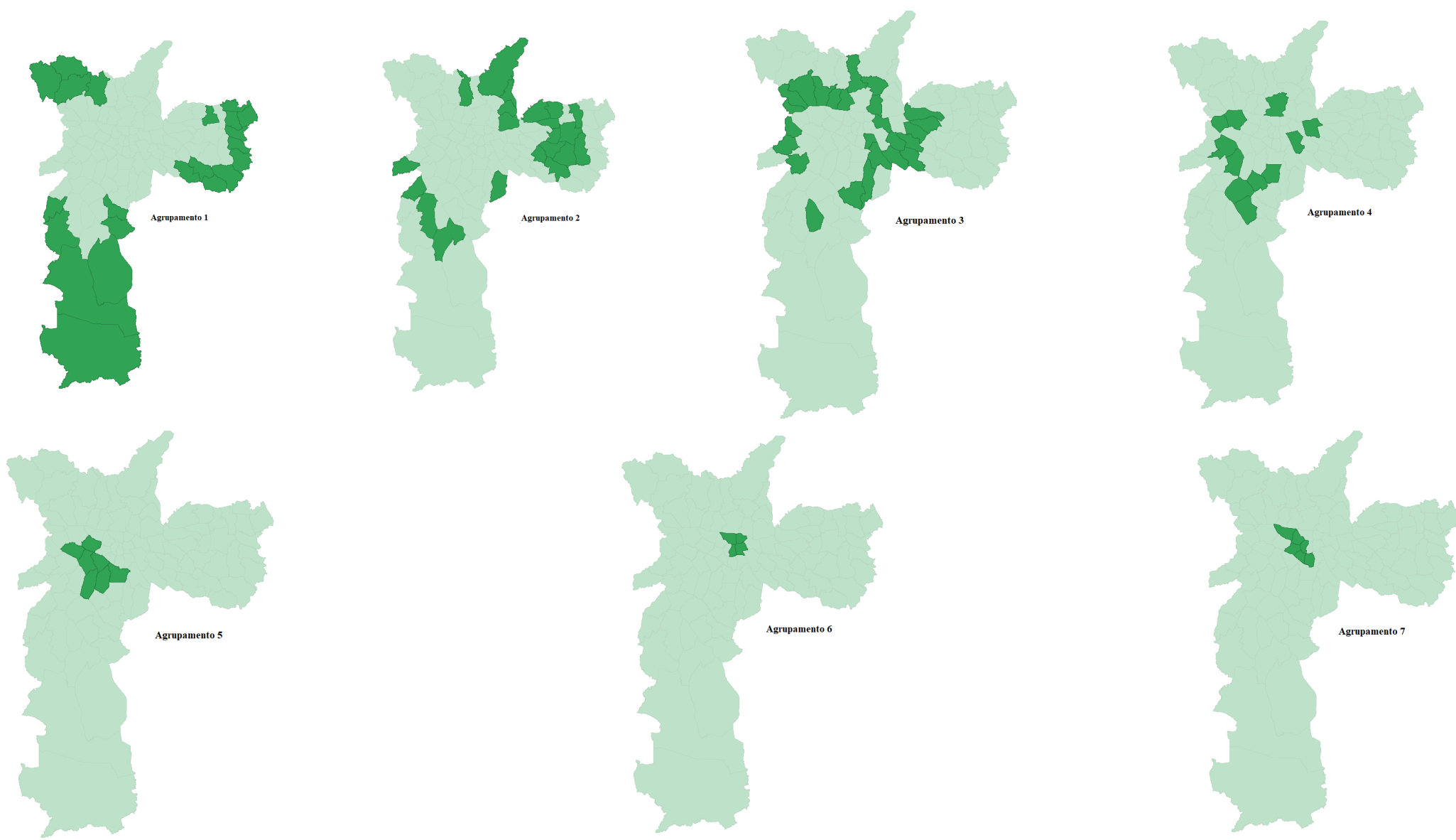
Phase 0 – preparing the research – the zones of observation

Cluster 1
- Cidade Tiradentes
- Perus
- Grajaú

Cluster 2
- Cachoeirinha
- Raposo Tavares
- Itaquera

Cluster 3
- Jabaquara
- Casa Verde

Cluster 4
- Butantã
- Santo Amaro
- Tatuapé
- Vila Leopoldina

Cluster 5
- Pinheiros
- Moema
- Jardim Paulista
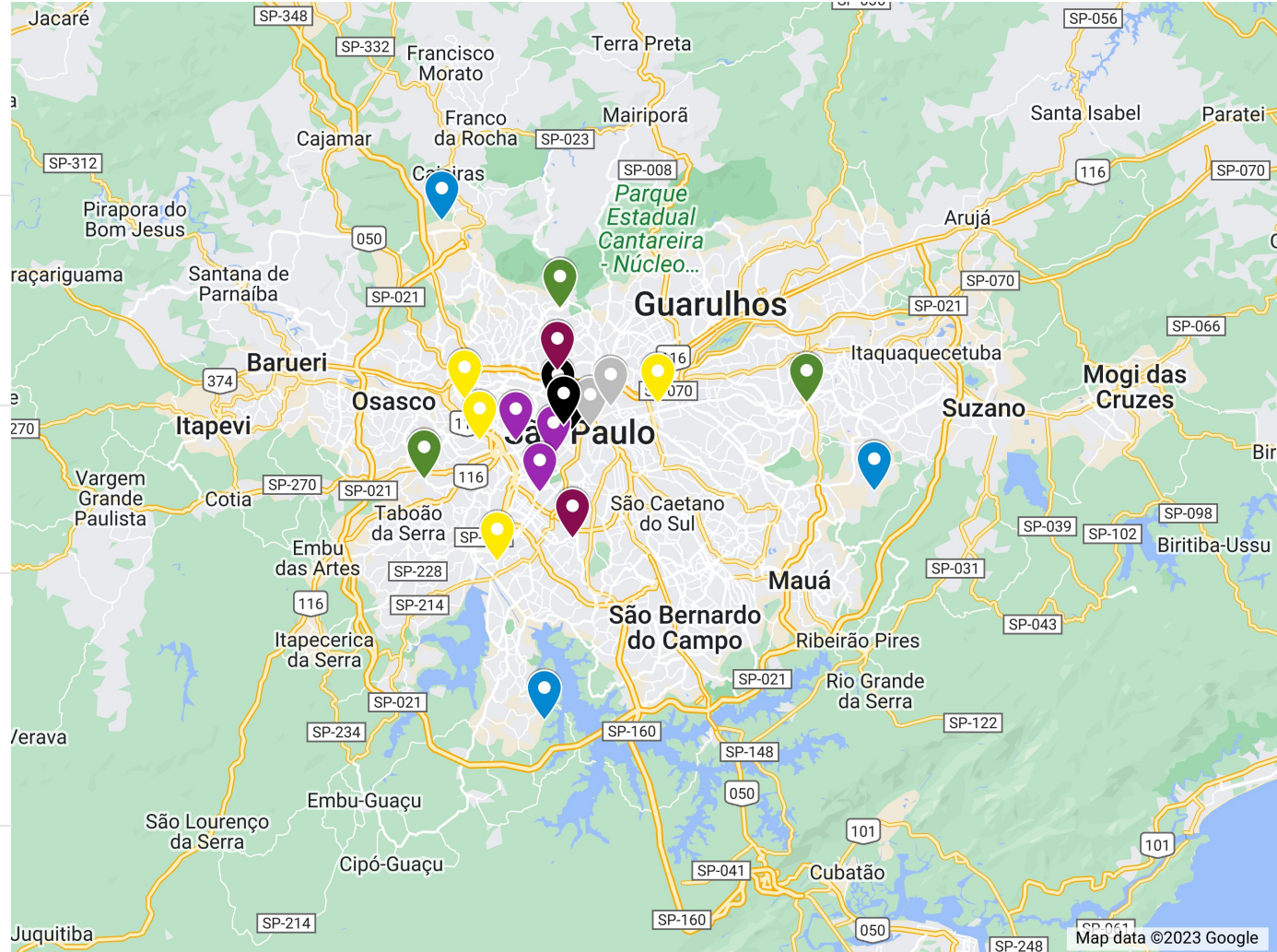
Cluster 6
- Brás
- Sé

Cluster 7
- Bela Vista
- Consolação
- Santa Cecilia

Phase 1 – Focus groups (finished in July 2022)

How did we form the focus groups?

➢ Occupation, as a proxy of cultural and economic capitals;
➢ Many other indicators of social position, such as:
  • Economic capital: employee or company owner; labor situation; houselhold income; number of residents in the household
  • Cultural capital: degree; in case of higher education, which university attended to; if the parents and/or any other person in the household has attended to higher education

➢ Each of these indicators had a score
➢ Acoording to the occupation + total score we would place the participant in a focus group
  • We also gathered other informations that were not scored, such as: genre, race/ethnicity, place of origin and residence, sexual orientation.

➢ We put together 6 focus groups

Lower class

Cultural Capital +	Cultural Capital -
Plastic artist, cultural producer, dance teacher, library assistant, nursing assistant, guitar teacher, graffiti artist, child development assistant.	Seamstress (2), caregiver for the elderly, security guard, day laborer, app driver, bricklayer, house painter; educational agent.
Only one participant had a higher degree, two attended higher education, and two had incomplete higher education.	One participant is attending higher education.
Age between 30 and 40 years old.	Age between 28 and 45 years old.
Household income per capita between R$ 1,000 and R$ 2,500.	Household income per capita between R$1,000 and R$ 2,000.
3 women, 5 men.	5 men and 4 women.
3 white, 5 black/pardo.	5 white and 4 black/pardo.

Intermediate Class

Cultural Capital +	Cultural Capital -
Music teacher, violinist, guitar teacher, photographer, language teacher, artisan.	Administrative manager, support analyst, small shopkeeper, purchasing manager.
All with higher education.	Higher education in low-prestige colleges.
Age between 25 and 39 years old.	Age between 28 years and 40 years old.
household income per capita between R$ 1,300 and R$ 4,600.	Household income per capita between R$ 2,500 and R$ 6,000.
5 men, 5 women.	5 women, 4 men.
5 white, 2 yellow, 3 black/pardo.	5 white, 4 pardo.

Upper class

Cultural Capital +	Cultural Capital -
Director of photography (cinema and TV), journalist-editor, university professor, lawyer, film director, teacher and audiovisual producer, cultural manager and actress, theater teacher and actress, musician	Sales executive, general director, engineer, manager (3), public servant (economist), lawyer, dentist.
Graduate at public university.	Higher degree in private universities.
Higher education with parents with higher education.	Parents with higher education.
Age between 31 and 49 years old.	Age between 36 and 52 years.
Household income per capita between R$ 4,000 and R$14,000.	Household income per capita between 6,000 and 16,000.
5 women, 2 men.	5 men, 4 women;
6 white, 1 indígena	All white.

Phase 1 – Focus groups (finished in July 2022)

Analysis

General differences in terms of structure of capital

Cultural Capital +	Cultural Capital -
Fluent talk about culture	Less talk about culture, but fluent on other issues, such as the price of things, how to find their ways in the city driving the car.
Denegation of the economic	
	Affirmation of the economic. Domain the price of things, as distinctive
Search for the alternative, the authentic e the unknown	
Value the cultural intermediary (Institutions, search engines, content platforms, youtubers, reviewers)	Choose culture according to what is famous, such as name of actor for film, or blockbusters, etc. But the higher class choose what is rare in other things, such as travel
Aesthetic judgement	
	Distaste has moral basis

Lower class

Cultural Capital +

Talk slowly, low, and do not interrupt each other

Culture is less articulated with aesthetic, rarely articulated with moral, but very articulated with politics

Value the territory: eating in the neighborhood, buying clothes in the neighborhood

Value the traditional culture, such as classic movies

Value awards to choose their practices, such as Oscar winners. Also value best of lists. But they don't give names of these lists.

Lower class

Cultural Capital -

Talk loud, interrupt each other, especially the men

Husband's occupation is frequently mentioned by the women

Shopping mall is central to their consume and cultural practices. They go to cinema in the mall

Like recent and massified culture, such as blockbusters

Dislike what is more legitimate. Example: they don't like Oscar winners' movies: "They reason different from us. We like to see action, we like to see 'pá, pá'. They like to look at what the actor is talking and stuff like this".

Religion plays a role. It impacts distaste. It is a place of socialization and cultural activities.

Intermediate Class

Cultural Capital +

Value alternative circuits of movies.

Reject shopping mall to everything, from going out to eat and shopping to going to cinema.

Dislike massified culture, but value it when it is "old". So, they don't like rock in general, but like "classic rock"; they don't like sertanejo, but like the "old sertanejo".

Rejecct things, but with a aesthetic judgement. Example: I don't like funk, I don't like sertanejo, yeah... The songs that are so popular on Tik Tok, for me, they had to be only 15 seconds long, which is Tik Tok time and never played on the street. For example, because a while ago I had to go photograph a trap show. (…) I left there and said "I never want this job again", because that song is unbearable. And it's all auto tune, if the auto tune doesn't work, there's no career, because the person's voice is [inaudible], the lyrics are: "I have a car, I have a wife, I have a... So, it's very empty. I also consider sertanejo to be very empty, if you stop to see all the lyrics – they are all the same. It's always the same thing! [laughing]"

They don't watch TV, but choose the streaming platform they prefer

Strong judgement on the public behavior. They suppose they know better how to behave in a cultural event.

Intermediate Class

Cultural Capital -

Value shopping mall to various activities

Rejection on moral basis. Example: they don't like funk, and so they justify it: "The people is a bit depraved"; "there were dances where people commented that women went without panties"; "there are a lot of drugs in there, they sell in there"; "What is life.... called the life of crime", "They carry guns".

They would love to go to Disney

Upper class

Cultural Capital +

Extreme value to what is authentic, alternative, and unknown. "hidden stuffs on Netflix", "alternative circuits"

Value the knowledge of the cultural intermediary and the institution. They judge best of list, they choose the institutions they like, etc.

Value diversity and openness to difference.

Value experience over possession.

Value Brazilian culture (travels, music, films, gastronomy), but not in opposition to international culture

Upper class

Cultural Capital -

Recognize the value of legitimate culture but does not master its symbols. Very often they don't remember the name of books or films. "I'm have terrible memory"; "We all have terrible memories".

Value safety and easy access by car. So, they say they prefer shopping malls over, for instance, cinemas or concerts in the center of the city. "Too dangerous"; "Too many beggars".

Value moving in the city with the car

Choose their cultural program by the greatness of it. They like blockbusters musicals, etc.

Judge culture on moral basis. Funk is pornography.

Value expensive presents and travels. They like to go skiing in Chile, to rent a house in Orlando

Value USA, and are ashamed to "look like" a Brazilian when abroad

Final remarks

There may be different forms of mastering the symbolic. It seems that mastering the price of things, knowing how to take economic advantages may be distinctive, as much as mastering culture.

Differences among frequency, knowledge and taste may differentiate the classes

Classes seem to judge culture differently: the opposition between aesthetic and moral judgements

Taste seems to oppose traditional vs emergent; common vs rare (authentic)

Knowing the cultural intermediary may be as distinctive as knowing the cultural good in itself

Cultivating and consuming seem to be different orientations to culture. On the one hand, culture is seen as an asset, acquisition, investment, and cultivation; on the other, culture is seen as consumption, entertainment, and leisure.

Phase 2 – Questionnaire (ongoing)

Sources:
- o Pandemic research
- o Focus group
- o Expert panels
- o Magazines, websites, and TV programs of lifestyle

Phase 2 – Questionnaire (ongoing)

- Execution
    - Company will apply the questionnaire
    - Household
    - Stratified, random sample, designed to represent the adult (aged 18+) of São Paulo.
    - N=1200-1300
        - Margin of error = 2,8%
        - Confidence level = 95%

- Analysis
    - MCA

Phase 2 – Questionnaire (ongoing)

- Modalities to capture
  - o Practice (frequency)
  - o Preferences (taste)
  - o Knowledge
  - o Inheritance

- Also
  - o Highbrow and lowbrow culture
  - o Traditional and emergent culture

Phase 2 – Questionnaire (ongoing)

- Symbolic space
    - Audiovisual: cinema, series, and TV
    - Music
    - Art
    - Travel
    - Fashion
    - Food
    - Reading
    - Free time
    - Uses of language
    - Other cultural practices
    - Education

Phase 2 – Questionnaire (ongoing)

- Social space
  - Cultural capital: level of education of the respondent, parents, and grandparents
    - Detailed categories: area of studies and institution.
  - Economic capital: level of wealth of the respondent, parents, and grandparents
    - Occupation, income, and property.

Phase 3 – Household interviews (planned to the end of 2023)