A CULTURAL PUBLIC POLICY AS A SOCIABILITY NETWORK – THE CULTURA VIVA PROGRAM AS A COLLABORATIVE EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT:

The current scenario of contemporary cultural policies has been a place for redefining the idea of culture itself as well as the role the State as a participant in a society. As an example of these new paradigms, The "Cultura Viva" Program is a governmental initiative that turns itself to the potential the society has to offer while aims to establish a conversation with the large cultural diversity of Brazil.
These new governmental initiatives also call our attention for the need to generate new methods of evaluation for these same actions, especially the ones related to cultural affairs. After all, the spectrum of tangible and intangible results makes the analysis of public policies even more challenging.
Based on this, the current paper is comprised of this exercise of understanding the Brazilian model and reflect this new State management based upon more participative dynamics.

KEYWORDS: Contemporary Public Policies; network organizations; social movements

While looking at the current experiences of cultural policies in Brazil, we notice their concerns in responding to the interest of society. Different from previous eras, the social groups stopped being perceived as mere benefitiaries of the governmental actions and became participants of the latter.
The contemporary definition of the concept (CANCLINI:1987) and (NIVON:2006) puts in evidence the need of mediation, inherent to the interaction between State and society, in the path of creation of public policies in cultural affairs. This interaction is perceived through tense relationships and are also centered in the development of actions that are concerned with democracy and in the acknowledgment of the citizens in the activities that are sponsored by the State.
The objective of this article is to thoroughly understand the Brazilian model and reflect on this new model, this new State management based upon more participative dynamics. With that, one can evaluate the position chosen by the different social groups and notice the potential of the public investment.
As a case study, the peculiarities of the The Programa Cultura Viva (developed by the Cultural Affairs Department in 2004), a policy developed by the Brazilian Government that has been getting a lot of attention in many countries, especially in Latin America , will be analyzed. According to the Program coordinators, this public policy is based on investing in the cultural action, differently from others that aim only at the structural aspects of the Field. The effort is for the State to dialogue with the culture makers in all levels, setting aside the idea that infrastructure is necessary in order to produce. The idea is to allow the promotion of activities from various social groups, from different expressions.
According to the program creator, Célio Turino, " The Cultura Viva is conceived as an organic network of management, agitation and cultural creation and is based on the Points of Culture." (TURINO: 2009. P.85)
This organic network that is part of the program consists of Five interdependant parts: the Points of Culture, The Lively School the Digital Culture, the Cultura Viva Agent and the Action Griô. All of these branches that create the program aim to interact and InterConnect diferent cultural makers while supporting the Brazilian cultural diversity.[1]

[1] Each of these sections will be defined in this section.

Having its main focus segregated segments of cultural production in Brazil (low-income population, public school students, native Brazilians, slavery refugees, among others), the program aimed to sponsor and encourage existing groups and regulate the capacity of circulation of the Brazilian cultural production from restricted circles to the whole territory through an agreement between the Cultural Affairs Department and non-governmental organizations. A mechanism of appreciating concepts such as cultural diversity, another model of management, articulation between various social actors, incentive to diffuse digital mechanisms and develoment through new social arrangements.
The State proposed by this model is an interventor but also a master of questions and distinct realities. It generates public policies that deconstruct in programs and actions to change a certain scenarium while aiming to generate equality and justice in the access to cultural goods.
In practice, the Cultura Viva can be understood as a reflection of the change in the perception of the role of cultural policies in current societies. An alternative that wants to establish a new relationship between State and culture.
The interesting aspect in the "Point" is to be an arena of exchange and mediation of questions, ideas and activities realized by the cultural managers and the artists. In this place the sharing of the program management becomes effective, since its purpose would be, throught the acknowledgment of an action – the transformation of it in Culture Point, allow this protagonism and centrality in the decisions about the local activities and the regional and national direction of the Program. In consequence, the public space of reflection and discussion of the future of the Brazilian cultural policy would be empowered, without losing autonomy, which means a shared management between State and society.
The Point of Culture can be understood as a place, following the definition by the anthropologist Marc Augé. The space of mediation and Exchange between distinct actors. The environment of experimentation that allows the regulation and Exchange between new circuits of cultural production and fruition of cultural affairs that had little or none reverberation in the Brazilian society.
The challenge proposed was enormous since the beginning considering that putting into practice a program that had as a goal the participation in so many distinct areas is not an easy task. Even more when the management model chosen aims to empower the society with the decision power and make them co-managers of the actions. In the case of the Programa Cultura Viva, this approximation allowed also the development of new identities, sponsoring the creation of places of belonging and sharing between distinct individuals. Logically, in its management, it must be prepared to fulfill the multiple interests without losing the vision of a public policy that is strengthned by this cultural diversity.
The goal of this research is to analyze the peculiarities of this governmental action that received a lot of notoriety since its creation. In that way, the work Will be constructed in two areas: a more general that turns to the effort of trying to visualize the place that this action occupies in the main scenarium of contemporary cultural public policies, noticing the influences of the public agenda in its construction and also admitting that this policy can contribute to the creation of new models.
And the second area being the reflection on what is considered the greatest power of this political action: the establishment of a cooperative network (politically, culturally, ideologically, symbolically, economically, among other ways)
In that perspective, the main aspect of this work is to analyze the network that the program allows with the knowledge and the contact of various organizations of society in its diverse origins, potentializing the approximation of a relationship between State and society. Although believed that the force of this policy is its associative pattern and the potential to mobilizing the participants, such concept proves very complex, given the need to overcome individual wishes, personalities and the difficulty of managing public policies in a democratic manner.

For dialogues of public policies with new issues present in the government agenda:

In the last years, the Brazilian government has been living new experiences in the field of culture public policies. During this period, the people were able to observe some changes in the government attitude that enabled a greater opening to dynamics and interests of civil society. A greater effort is noticed to establish actions that bring closer the bureaucratic management of cultural manifestations that before were disowned to the outskirts of this huge country.
Such attitude is part of a scenario that enables the construction of these new government postures through impingement of distinct speeches. Whether they're built in collective spheres or not, they purposed to reconfigure the role of culture in contemporary societies. A confrontation of perceptions that

enable more focused approaches in the democratic interest and also enables a more plural environment. As Alexandre Barbalho defines:

cultural policy is understood not only by concrete actions, but also by a more strategic conception, "clash of ideas, institutional struggles and power relations in the production, dissemination and symbolic meaning in society (MCGUINAN, 1996, P. 01). Thus, they are creative and propositional by producing speeches and owning symbolic power acting in the cultural field. (BARBALHO: 2007. P.3)

Therefore, we can understand that when cultural policies are discussed, we are talking about productions in the sense that they should be built collectively, as in this way, they will be able to reproduce more trustworthily the latent interests of the several cultural groups. The look on the "Programa Cultura Viva" – Living Culture Program – allows us to understand this change of approach a little bit and watch matters that are in countries' political agenda and have been characterizing the contemporary actions.
Thus, to begin the debate, it is necessary to understand the Brazilian political field in terms of public investment in culture. After all, we believe that contemporary experiences have a common denominator, the incoming of government and society. According to Lia Calabre, this has been a present concern in the defined attitude in Brazil.

(...) present concern in the contemporary scenery is the amplification of participative processes. Cultural policies are defined as a consequence of actions implemented by the government and the civil society in their most diverse representation forms. The implemented policies tend to be carried out the greater the pactuation with the audience affected by it. The challenge presented is to create and maintain dialogue channels and representation shapes that allow the building policies in a collaborative way. (CALABRE:
2001.P. 295)

Therefore, besides dialoguing with a development perspective activated by exercising citizenship, the contemporary actions use civil society's interest as a driver to accomplish activities. Promotions for sharing responsibilities and the tension with multiple social interests are initiated. The dialogue with civil society starts to be seen as a tool that facilitates the existing demand's perception in the most diverse social groups. As Mariella Pitombo emphasizes:

In the specific case of Latin America, the State acted for a long period as an almost exclusive agent in implementing and instigation of cultural policies, thus creating a high degree of dependency from its achiever to their gains, getting to the point of building a kind of demiurge for the destinations of cultural production of the region's nations.
Notwithstanding, with the intransigence of globalization processes changing the landscape of world geography and printing deep transformations in within the social tissue of the different regional realities, the dynamics that turns the wheels of the cultural sphere begins to go through deep metamorphosis in the last decade of the 20th Century. The phenomenon of emergence of new social actors, personified by civil and private organizations that came to act in the field of culture, plus the huge growth of cultural industries became symptoms and conditioning elements of these changes. (PITOMBO: 2004. P.2)

In this new scenery, the State takes over the facilitator's role and not a director's one. After all, the dialogue between government and society presents another logic – the one of negotiation. This strengthens the management and elaboration of public policies.

The local cultural policies encourage the diversity and plurality, i.e., they enable the companionship in its most diverse forms of expression, the use of many expressive languages and also seeking the participation of minorities from all the sectors of civil society. (MARTINELLI: 2003. P. 99)

This more democratic perception guided the government administration that began in 2003 with Gilberto Gil being appointed Minister of Culture in Brazil. Rapidly, there were concerns on redefining the roles performed by the civil society and by the State aiming the development of a specific political project. In his inaugural address, the Minister Gilberto Gil showed such concerns as you can see in the excerpt below:

It's not the State's role to make culture, but o create universal access conditions to the symbolic assets. It's the State's role to make culture, but to provide the necessary conditions for the creation and production of cultural

assets, whether they are artifacts or "mindfact. It's not the State's role to make culture, but to promote society's general cultural development. Therefore, access to culture is a citizenship basic right, such as the right for education, health and life within a healthy environment. Because when investing in creation and production conditions, we'll be taking an initiative of unpredictable consequences, nevertheless brilliant and profound – since the Brazilian popular creativity from the first colonial years until nowadays has always been much beyond than the educational, social and economical *conditions* of our existence allowed. In fact, the State has never been up to the makings of our people in their most diverse branches of the great tree of Brazilian symbolical creation. (...). (GIL: 2003, p. 05)

There's a belief that the perception developed by the Brazilian government follows the field's contemporary trend by strengthening the valorization of a "partnership" between State and civil society. An approach that brings benefits to scheduling and implementing public policies in the area, but also it exposes several difficulties existing in the State's institutional framework and in the field capacity of dealing with the existing diversity of demands. Notwithstanding, beyond the discord, the contact with society makes the administration more agile and alive. Again, turning to words of the manager and one of the formulators of the object studied here, Gilberto Gil:

The present administration does not build its agenda in cabinets, but within these spaces, in the body of each one of us, in network embodiment or in the permanent incarnation of all the ideas. Ideas that make us say out loud that the incorporation of diversity in our hearts – and in our institutions – is the recognition that cultural differences are positive, but social inequalities are not and never will be. (GIL: 2006 p. 03)

So, the implemented administration from 2003 to 2010 sought to value participative mechanisms and programs that have artistic groups aloof from the national cultural industry as protagonists. The thought exposed by the ministry through its Cultural Policies Department, allows us to identify the adopted government attitude and ton understand it as a political choice that sees the fuel in society for the development of public policies.

In this continuous transformation process of the Brazilian cultural scenery, we base ourselves in the fact that the public policies' development and implementation process should be as much democratic as possible. Without this, the policies lose a relevant component in its legitimacy before society. The Sectorial Chambers and the different existing Councils – and strengthening the action of the Culture Ministry – are the practical expression of this premise.
The second political guideline that we work with is that the state has a series of untransferable responsibilities in the Brazilian cultural field. Operating a less ideologized and more practical concept in terms of national State attributions in the contemporary context, it is possible to indicate at least ten relevant fronts for the action of the public sector in the cultural field.
The third fundamental guideline in which we operate is that culture is a central component for an effectively sustainable development strategy in Brazil. Since the arrival of Minister Gil, the ministry of Culture has been striving to move culture towards the center of the country's political, economical and social agenda, consolidating it as the crucial dimension that we seek. It's about withdrawing culture from the subordinate role in which it had been laid by the previous administrations. (MINC: 2007. P.01)

By the exposed guidelines above, it is possible to understand the existing governmental choices in the agenda formulated by the Ministry of Culture of Brazil – appreciating the social protagonism and encouraging a social auscultation attitude. It is a key point that can be seen as an appropriation process of the international public agenda generated in the last years.

THE CULTURA VIVA PROGRAM

The Cultura Viva (Living Culture) Program reinforces the chorus in perceiving culture as an important variable for other spheres – for the guarantee in activities' autonomy, in subject's protagonisms, in channels empowerment, in strengthening associations and in managing the network. It aligns itself very coherently with a perception that culture enables the assembly and vocalization of groups off great centers, allowing to transform activities restricted to small circuits into public activities.

*If the Ponto de Cultura (Culture Spot) is the support (base) point, the *Cultura Viva* is the leverage. Heart and lung pulsating in cadence, activating a continuous flow of life. As part of a living system, the *Ponto de Cultura* works

as a settler tank and approacher of initiatives and actions. And these actions are the ones that guarantee the system's vitality, constantly feeding it with new ideas and tasks. This living system concept makes the one and the multiple to be complementary and, at the same time diverse. If you observe the Cultura Viva and Ponto de Cultura logo, you see this interconnection and complementarity. The "Ponto" is represented by a human character with open arms – a reference to the "Vitruvian Man", by Leonardo da Vinci. Around him, affection waves pulsate – in reference to the philosophical thought of Espinosa – and the Cultura Viva promoting the integration of these characters that fit and connect between each other. This is the concept.
The Cultura Viva actions work as power plants irrigating the Spots with new enquiries and ideas. It is a "weaving together" in a web infinitely composed from points, previously isolated, that realize themselves as component part of something broader. So, the program is always unfinished. "Where there is life, there is unfinishing", used to say Paulo Freire.
If the Ponto de Cultura is the simplicity, the Cultura Viva is the complexity and both complete each other, integrating a common tissue that goes beyond determinations and chances. It's the actions and interactions of the Cultura Viva that make it have this subversive nature in the relationship between State and society in State's internal apparatus next to the social organizations and movements – that go through internal changes when take part in the "*Ponto da Cultura*" network and above all, in the creative enquiry process of culture itself. (TURINO: 2009. P. 85-86)

Cultura Viva is based on the perception that power in the field of culture is guaranteeing access and production of artistic groups. The role of the State in this scenery is of a process facilitator.
It also stands out a characteristic of contemporary public actions – the greatest approach between State and civil society. A trend that materializes in experiences that establishes dialogue channels with society, which are more specific, such as the ***Cultura Viva*** program. A process that is not so simple generates a kind of distinct exercise – reinventing the Brazilian State. – It exposes fragilities and demands that were latent and that gain space and voice when the dialogue is built. Once again, using a reflection suggested by ***Cultura Viva***'s creator, Célio Torino:

This interaction is hard in the beginning and it exercises a new State model, which is different from the ones we already know. In the known standards, we have to choose heavy State forms with an interventionist and bureaucratic nature, or, on the other hand, the minimal State, with equally minimal sensibility to social needs. A (new kind of) State that shares power with new social subjects listens to those that have never been heard, talks to those to who have never talked for it saw them as invisible. Amplifying all this, present and, at the same time, light as the air. (TURINO: 2009. P. 65)

The attitude adopted by the State causes the need for transformations in its own management way as the manager in the text above emphasizes. After all, as we believe that culture is perceived by distinct angles and takes on a specific role in society, it also reflects changes in the Brazilian political culture. The management of a public policy such as these needs to modify the present structure, new patterns need to be established to overcome the hurdle of speech by a defense of a shared administration and to effectively be able to materialize it.
Thus, the management dynamics takes on a societal role where there is a valorization of new institutional formats that organize the social participation. One aspect, according to Ana Paula Paula, that appeared in Brazil in the eighties and intends to break the State's centralized and paternalist management structure. This keeps a consonance with the governance ideals and collective will manifestation. Using an excerpt from the author:

(...) a conception began to become predominant within the societal aspect – the implementation of a political project that seeks to widen the participation of the social actors in the definition of the political agenda, creating tools to have more social control over the State actions and demonopolizing the definition and implementation of public actions. This way, the view that guides the speech of the societal aspect was consolidated. The State's reform is not only a management and administrative matter, but also a political project. (PAULA: 2005. P.155)

Models centered in the popular mobilization and in the stimulus for the citizens to feel as propagandists of the government administration are established. There are no more profiles on delivery of a service, but there

is a programs' collective construction, space appropriation, supervision of every citizen and so on. As Alexandre Melo also emphasizes:

Thus, the valorization of the substantive democracy in the Eighties meant a redefinition of social policy evaluation criteria. Introduced in the public agenda as a democratic principle, the participation also became a necessary pre-requisite for perfecting the *modus operandi* of policies to make them more efficient. **(MELO: 2007. P . 19)**

There is also another relationship approach to society that provides the creation of other models of public policy enabling the real social participation in the decision structure. This is an important category and quite present in the most recent experiences. There can be several generating reasons for this attitude, but the important data is that this participative nature enables a more open and productive dialogue for the governmental action. Logically, it is necessary to stress that this is not an easy path. There is an inherent tension for projects being formulated and that need to be readjusted. Once again, we have a reflection suggested by Célio Turino:

During the process of implementation and follow-up of the Points, there is tension. On one hand, the cultural groups use management mechanisms and public resources. On the other hand, there is the State, with its control norms and tight rules. In a way, this tension is inevitable. It plays an educative role that will result in long –term changes in both fields. The goal would be a more flexible bureaucracy more suitable to life's reality, as well as a social movement more prepared to deal with management matters, enabling oneself to follow more closely the public policies and the planning of their specific activities. (TURINO: 2009. P. 64)

The paradigm of the relation between the state and civil society changes, or at least that is the purpose! In the discourse pronounced by the managers, the force of the people as real producers of culture in the country and the need of the state to turn to the people and search for a frank and open form of dialogue is valued. The existing barrier is broken, and yearnings, preoccupations and duties of both sides are brought closer together. However, it is with this huge challenge that the effectuation of the policy searches to overcome hurdles, for how can the state deal with such unequal characteristics? Can civil society really be empowered in this channel of participation and action?
This governmental action innovated in centering on the beneficiaries as the focus of its management, but also suffered with the kind of relation created between the state and civil society. Bringing "into" the government actions and people that were already used to being outside the focus of actions has many positive sides, after all, but also indicates existing weaknesses. Management problems come up, the difficulty of dealing with such distinct cases, the paternalist relation created between the state and members of the program, etc. This is a latent obstacle in the contemporary environment. The approximation between the state and civil society is beneficial; it translates a more democratic approach, but also exposes weaknesses and the huge need for change in the institutional structure, especially in the Brazilian case.
Culture, therefore, is a strategy for valorization and transformation of social paradigms. It brings the state closer to the hidden demands of civil society and fulfills a specific function.
Following the dynamic of perception concerning contemporary characteristics, there is an understanding that the aesthetic function of culture is then perceived as a catalyst for a citizen- oriented ethic.

The question of citizenship presented itself, thus, as a historical challenge in Brazil. (...) an attempt to discuss how the notion of citizenship is translated into ethical principles of liberty, dignity, respect of differences, justice, equality and solidarity. It is necessary to check how the idea of citizenship, related to the equality of all in any social space, is lived and validated from the point of view of social practice, (...). (WAISELFISZ, 1998, p. 96)

Culture, allied to an empowering perspective, goes beyond the purely aesthetic fruition, it corroborates a reflexive discourse about our historical contradictions and may aid in a posture that transforms and questions reality. However, the challenge is that of not limiting the dimension of a cultural policy to the citizens' sphere or to the guarantee of rights, which can be seen as a sphere that is part of the process of interaction and collective struggle, for we understand that:

Citizenship is a collective construction, linked to the participation of the members of a certain society in the decisions of this society, with the guarantee of rights and recognition and demand of equal duties, without privileges of some over others. (WAISELFISZ, 1998, p. 143)

The perception of a public policy for culture currently goes beyond the guarantee and fruition of cultural goods. It seeks to fulfill other intangible aims of transformation of the participants' reality. A perception observed in the Cultura Viva Program and also stated by Marilena Chauí during her experience in the city of São Paulo's Culture Secretariat:

The cultural project was placed, therefore, in the perspective of the democratization of culture as the right to fruition, experimentation, information, memory and participation. Against the visible and invisible violence dissimulated by mythology and non-violence, we prioritized programs of critical comprehension of Brazilian society and history. Against the universe of the mass media, we emphasized the expressive, experimental and diversified character of cultural creation as work. Against populism, we sought to expand the network of cultural services so as to guarantee to the poorer strata access to information and to the more advanced forms of cultural production. Against oligarchic elitism, we sought to develop not only projects of social memory, but above all to give visibility to the fact that we are all cultural subjects, even though we may not all be creators of works of art and of thought. The programs were directed to formation (schools and workshops, seminaries and courses), information (libraries, music libraries, historical archives, video libraries, access to theaters, museums and movie theaters), critical reflection (oral, social and political memory), leisure and social solidarity (great open air music and dance events), to the guarantee of access to cultural goods and cultural creation (broadening and extension to the poorer peripheries of the city of the network of libraries, video and music libraries, art schools, theaters, cultural centers, cultural houses, museums and historical buildings). (CHAUÍ: 2006, p. 83)

Chauí's perception helps us to better understand the place that public cultural policies seek to occupy in societies, a broader environment, interconnected to other social spheres. Especially in the Brazilian case, there is an important effort of dialogue between the cultural secretariat and other secretariats that are a part of government. The repeatedly mentioned transversality of culture which, although it is an expression used to the point of exhaustion, translates this posture of not seeing cultural action as an end in and of itself. It is perceived as a starting point, a point of dialogue with other assets that government can guarantee to the population.

In short, it is believed that the Cultura Viva Program materializes issues that are a part of the agenda and the discussion related to public cultural policies in the contemporary environment. A scenario that entails small transformations in making a wager in social autonomy and in the reinforcement of the citizens' self-esteem at seeing themselves represented.

This posture potentiates the creation of new forms of interaction between the State and Society, the management of a heterogeneous net, full of contradictions. However, one must perceive the utopia of equalizing the power of action in these two fields. There is evidently a gap of power between these two actors, but in the field of public policies, this correction of "course" abandons the vision that the individuals are beneficiaries of the State's action and seeks to adopt the concept of participating party.

It potentiates, therefore, performance and the place to be occupied by civil society, for it allows for a feeling of belonging of the individual in relation to the State. The citizen feels contemplated and nominated by a structure that previously eschewed him; a posture that, in a certain sense, may contribute to the renunciation of the citizens' subservient attitude in relation to the State.
In this environment, the aim is to abdicate of the relation of "delivery" between the two, the profile of a "counter of opportunity" being abandoned in favor of the valorization of the individual and his social role.

The intention is to allow for the construction of a State that is made up in the image of its people, that reflects most of the interests of the population and that is not a continuity of an interest group: to bring the greater beneficiaries of action, the citizens, into the political process.
A governmental posture focused on a prism of democratic values is perceived; without forgetting the symbolic profile of culture, but placing it in a spotlight in the governmental agenda and seeing it as a booster for the practice of citizenship.

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