
THE MYSTERY OF COMEDIES BETWEEN CINEMA AND SCHOOL RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO THE RESPONSES OF GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS

EL MISTERIO DE LAS COMEDIAS ENTRE CINE Y ESCUELA
PREGUNTAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN A LAS RESPUESTAS
DE LOS PROFESORES DE GEOGRAFÍA

O MISTÉRIO DAS COMÉDIAS ENTRE O CINEMA E A ESCOLA
PERGUNTAS DE PESQUISA ÀS RESPOSTAS
DOS PROFESSORES DE GEOGRAFIA

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ABSTRACT

This article starts with the question “Where are the comedies?,” made from the results of the research “As telas da escola: cinema e professores de geografia” [School screens: cinema and Geography teachers], held between 2016 and 2019 to map the relationships between Geography teachers and cinema. It wishes to make a move towards the processes of regulation of Law 13,006/14, which makes monthly compulsory, a two-hour film screening of national cinema in Brazilian schools. The questions and results exposed here seek to show fragments of the teaching culture evidenced in the responses to the questionnaires. They also aim to question the answers themselves, since the teaching preferences, crossed with the titles of films shown at school, point to the almost disappearance of comedies of Brazilian films shown in schools, despite the fact that they are one of the favorite genres of teachers who took part in the research. Throughout the text, we seek to give clues to answer the original question and to create new questions to the teaching culture expressed in the results.

KEYWORDS: Teaching culture. Cinematographic comedy. Cinema. Geography teaching. Research.

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RESUMEN

El texto parte de la pregunta "¿dónde están las comedias?" realizada a los resultados de la investigación 'Pantallas escolares: cine y profesores de geografía', realizada entre 2016 y 2019 para mapear las relaciones entre profesores de geografía y cine, con miras a actuar en los procesos regulatorios de la ley 13.006 / 14, que hace(ria) obligatorio exhibir dos horas de cine nacional en las escuelas brasileñas. Las preguntas y resultados aquí presentados buscan exponer porciones de la cultura docente evidenciada en las respuestas a los cuestionarios, así como cuestionar las propias respuestas, ya que los números tabulados de las preferencias docentes cruzadas con los títulos de las películas proyectadas en la escuela apuntan a la casi desaparición de las comedias entre las películas brasileñas más proyectadas en las escuelas, a pesar de ser uno de los géneros preferidos de los profesores que participaron en la investigación. A lo largo del texto, buscamos dar pistas para responder a la pregunta original, así como intentamos inventar nuevas preguntas a la cultura docente expresada en los resultados.

PALAVRAS-CLAVE: Cultura docente. Comedia cinematográfica. Cine. Enseñanza de la geografía. Investigación.

RESUMO

O texto parte da pergunta "Onde estão as comédias?", feita aos resultados da pesquisa "As telas da escola: cinema e professores de geografia", realizada entre 2016 e 2019 para mapear as relações entre professores de geografia e cinema, tendo em vista atuar nos processos de regulamentação da lei 13.006/14, que torna(ria) obrigatória a exibição de duas horas de cinema nacional nas escolas brasileiras. As perguntas e os resultados aqui expostos buscam revelar parcelas da cultura docente evidenciada nas respostas aos questionários, bem como questionar as próprias respostas, uma vez que os números tabulados das preferências docentes, cruzados com os títulos de filmes exibidos na escola, apontam para o quase desaparecimento das comédias de entre os filmes brasileiros mais exibidos nas escolas, a despeito de serem elas um dos gêneros preferidos dos professores que participaram da pesquisa. Ao longo do texto, busca-se dar pistas para responder à pergunta original, bem como inventar novas perguntas à cultura docente expressa nos resultados.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Cultura docente. Comédia cinematográfica. Cinema. Ensino de geografia. Pesquisa.

1 INTRODUCTION: RESEARCH CONTEXT

The International Network “Images, Geographies, and Education” has been developing, since 2009, research and writings² in which cinema is one of the focused images, but only in 2016, Brazilian Law 13,006/14 opened the possibility to conduct studies around the relationship between cinema and the teaching of Geography.

The research “The school screens: cinema and Geography teachers” was developed by the aforementioned Network, aiming to qualify the regulation process of the referred Law³ based on the valorization of the already existing teaching culture, in terms of both current educational practices and school expectations regarding the multiple connections between cinema and school. This research aimed, at the same time: a) to take a broader look – regionally and quantitatively speaking – around a common database, fed by the application of an interview questionnaire⁴ with Geography teachers in all poles of the Network and b) to provide diversified research – qualitatively speaking – carried out from each of its poles, safeguarding their differences.

The interview questionnaires were applied simultaneously in several places where the Network has its poles, within the rhythms and partnerships that each researcher or research group established with the local or regional education networks. A single research instrument was developed: a basic questionnaire with 16 questions, between open and closed, which, so far, has been applied to 136 teachers in Brazil, 60 teachers in Colombia, 32 teachers in Argentina, and 1 teacher in Uruguay.

In this article we will focus only on the data related to Brazil.

² We mention only a few of them, which complete references can be found at the end of the article: Oliveira Jr, 2009; Ferraz; Nunes, 2013; Cazetta, 2013; Preve, 2013; Hollman, 2015; Barbosa, 2016; Oliveira Jr; Girardi, 2020. The Network also organizes the Colloquium “Education through images and their geographies”, which will have its VI edition in November 2021.

³ Other actions to this end have occurred in the past six years. We highlight here the book *Cinema e educação: a lei 13.006* (FRESQUET, 2015), which brought together reflections, perspectives, and proposals on the approval, regulation, possibilities, and risks that Law 13.006/14 traces for the relationships between cinema and school, considering that it makes mandatory to exhibit two hours of national cinema per month in Brazilian schools. However, the law has not been regulated since then, and there is little chance that this will occur as long as the current Brazilian government scenario lasts, in which the articulation between education, culture, and art has been deprived of the centrality that it had achieved in previous policies that have even resulted in the approval of this law.

⁴ The interview questionnaire is attached to the Presentation of this Dossier

Before this, however, it is important to remark that the referred research did not aim to point out ways of using and instrumentalizing cinema and its films by teachers, but rather to indicate the multiple ways in which teachers are crossed by cinematographic culture in their education process. We believe that it is from this crossing through films that they extract multiple relationships and uses, mediated by forces as diverse as curricula and disciplinary contents, their gender/sex and age, teaching time and the university where they studied, their access to mass media and festivals, as well as their access to national and foreign film production, their individual tastes and preferences for cinematographic genres, such as dramas, documentaries, and comedies.

Each teacher is crossed in a different way by these forces, and it was exactly due to this wide set of forces that acts in the relationships between films and teachers that, in the first tabulation of the answers to the research questionnaire, in 2017, a question arose and originated in these writings: “Where are the comedies?”. The question has continued to resonate ever since, having operated as an articulator of the presentation held in a scientific event with wide participation, in July 2017⁵, and in an internal event of the International Network “Images, Geographies, and Education,” in July 2020⁶. Therefore, this article is the result of an unfinished process of our focus on an absence that reverberates in the teaching choices. As the readers will notice, here we will list some possibilities of answers to the original question, but they will certainly find in the article many other unfolded questions.

After all, asking questions to the answers was the main intention of the research “School screens: cinema and Geography teachers,” to find clues to keep asking other questions that do not bring us closer to “ideal ways” of instrumentalizing national films to teach Geography, but rather to teaching practices and expectations in the relationships they already establish between Brazilian cinema and school, as well as to help these teachers to find their own answers and other questions to face the forces that cross them and modulate their personal preferences and educational choices.

⁵ XII National Meeting of Geography Teaching Practice, which took place between September 10 and 14, 2017, in Belo Horizonte. An essay on this question is published in the annals of that event. See References at the end of this article: Oliveira Jr (2017).

⁶ Virtual Seminar “School screens: cinema and Geography teachers,” which took place between June 30 and July 2, 2020.

2 WHERE ARE THE COMEDIES?

On Wikipedia, cinematographic comedy would be “[the] comic film, which is characterized by the inclusion of gags, jokes, or pranks, both visual and verbal, [and] started its existence practically at the beginning of this art”⁷ However, this definition is easily relativized by the variety of types of comedies that the history of cinema invented, whether in the world or in Brazil, where this cinematographic genre has always had a certain prominence. For example, also on Wikipedia we can read that “the first Brazilian sound film is the comedy *Acabaram-se os otários* [The Idiots Ceased to Be] (1929), by Luiz de Barros”⁸, and the Theater Dictionary states that comedy is “one of the main forms of the drama, which emphasizes criticism and correction through deformation and ridicule. The main effect is to provoke laughter” (VASCONCELLOS, 1986).

In the Brazilian context, *pornochanchada* was

[...] classified as *erotic comedy* at the time of its release, and as *popular urban comedy* or *comedy of manners*; these everyday comedies even came to be equated with the pornographic film, due to the freedom to show partial female and male nudes and the hint to sexuality. As a matter of fact, no one has ever really defined what *pornochanchada* was or how it was. Thus, we will try to examine it here associating it with the comedy genre and highlighting its popular character within Brazilian culture (SELIGMAN, 2004, p. 2, highlights on the original).

For the purposes of this research, we do not need to define cinematographic comedy precisely, but rather point out the difficulty in classifying a film as belonging to this genre, since provoking laughter can be the main motto of a film, but it can also be just one of the aspects, and laughter may be minor in the duration of the film, but with a strong intensity in the memory of the spectator-teacher.

Regardless of this elastic condition of comedy films, in the empirical results of the research we note the mysterious disappearance of them among the films used by teachers, although they watch many comedies in cinema, on television, and on the internet. This “good strangeness” led us to ask the many questions that circulate in this article about what could be understood only as resistance to laughter by the “serious” Brazilian school culture.

It was through the paths opened by the numbers that the question came to us: “Where are the comedies?”. The tabulated numbers of the teaching preferences, crossed with the names of films shown at the school, called our attention to the disappearance of comedies in the route between cinema screens and school screens, since the results of the research show

⁷ Available from: https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comédia_cinematográfica. Access on: Sep. 27, 2020.

⁸ Available from: https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinema_do_Brasil. Access on: Oct. 02, 2020.

that this cinematographic genre is among the favorites of teachers – who watch many Brazilian comedies –, but it is almost absent among the national films that they show – or wish to show – at school.

In the answers to questions 15, “What Brazilian films do you already use at school?”, and 16, “What other Brazilian films would you like to use?”, only eight films that could fit into the genre of comedy appear. They are: *O Auto da Compadecida* [A Dog’s Will] (ARRAES, 2000), *Narradores de Javé* [The Storytellers] (CAFFÉ, 2004), *O Homem que Copiava* [The Man Who Copied] (FURTADO, 2003), *Lisbela e o Prisioneiro* [Lisbela and the Prisoner] (ARRAES, 2003), *O palhaço* [The Clown] (MELLO, 2011), *O concurso* [The Contest] (VASCONCELOS, 2013), *Domésticas* [Maids] (OLIVAL; MEIRELLES, 2001), and *Saneamento básico* [Basic Sanitation] (FURTADO, 2007)⁹. In the set of almost 200 national films mentioned in the questionnaires, only three would be related to comedy, for having memorable fun scenes: *Que Horas Ela Volta?* [The Second Mother] (MUYLAERT, 2015), *Estômago* [Stomach] (JORGE, 2008), and *A Máquina* [The Machine] (FALCÃO, 2005).

Even though question 15 is directly related to question 11 “Which films do you use to work on what content or Geography themes?” (Chart 1), this restricted number of five Brazilian comedies is not repeated in both, with only 2 of them coinciding (precisely the most cited) and the addition of four other films of the genre, totaling 12 Brazilian comedies mentioned in the set of questionnaires, plus three films classified as “drama/comedy”.

⁹ It should be said that the first two films are mentioned by several teachers and belong to major film distributors, while the rest, which belong to both large and medium-sized distributors, had only one mention in questions 15 and 16, leaving clues and questions about the penetration and persuasion strength of the distributors in the choices – and tastes – of teachers regarding cinema. On the other hand, it is worth asking: is the choice of these films due to the massive dissemination of them by the distributor or the combination of this wide advertising with their intense dissemination by the teaching materials present in schools? And, as an escape route from these two massive modes of film choice, one of the interviewees wrote the following for question 15: “Up to the present moment, I have only shown a few videos from independent media to portray the social movements that are taking place in our country today,” and some teachers said they had already used short films and local films; in one case, produced at the university where they studied.

Chart 1 -Sum of citations, in Question 11, of all films of each cinematographic genre

TOTAL BY GENRE		%
DRAMA	238	49
DOCUMENTARY	115	24
COMEDY	45	9
ACTION	23	5
ANIMATION	21	4
SCIENCE FICTION	17	3
UNKNOWN	15	3
ADVENTURE	8	2
WESTERN	2	less than 1
THRILLER	2	less than 1
TOTAL	486	100

SOURCE: tabulation of the research results

The results in Chart 1 are not only those of national films, and it is important to clarify that the most cited of all was a comedy, *Modern Times* (CHAPLIN, 1936), with 20 mentions from teachers. The second highest number of citations was nine, for *Good Bye, Lenin!* (BECKER, 2003) and *A Dog's Will*, with the film *The Storytellers* obtaining seven citations. The remaining 13 comedies mentioned had only one or two citations. But it is important to point out, for the scope of this article, that five of them are of Brazilian production: *Cinco vezes favela* [Five Times Slum] (FARIAS et al., 1962), *Tapete vermelho* [Red Carpet] (PEREIRA, 2006), *Colegas* [Colleagues] (GALVÃO, 2013), *O Concurso* [The Contest] (VASCONCELOS, 2013), and Mazaroppi films (without indication of a specific film).

3 THE TASTE FOR COMEDIES

If it is true that, as pointed out in the previous paragraph, more than half of the mentions on the use of comedies related to geographical content and themes are for two foreign films, national comedies make up almost half of the titles cited in the genre. This knowledge about comedies produced in Brazil is also highlighted in question 4, "Do you like Brazilian cinema? Cite some Brazilian films you have seen", since 197 national films were cited, 50 of them from the comedy genre, which corroborates the results of question 3, which

directly addresses the mapping of the relationship between teachers' personal taste and cinematographic genres:

3. Do you like cinema? Yes () – No ()

What types of movies do you prefer to watch? (Check as many options as necessary, indicating the order of importance 1, 2, 3, 4...)

() Action () Animation () Biblical () Comedy () Documentary

() Drama () War () Musical () Police () Western

() Other. Which? _____

The results obtained among Brazilian teachers point out comedies in a prominent place.

Chart 2 - What genre of films do you prefer to see in the cinema? (first preference)

Action – 32
Animation – 6
Comedy – 11
Documentary – 29
Drama – 16
War – 7
Musical – 1
Police – 2
Religious – 0
Western – 1

SOURCE: tabulation of the research results

Action, documentary, drama, and comedy together had well over two-thirds of the cinematographic preference of respondents¹⁰. Action and documentary had virtually the same number of nominations, and drama had far fewer nominations, slightly above the comedy genre, which obtained about 10% of the nominations.

¹⁰ As we will see shortly, in the sum of the first three preferences of teachers, the genre “war” will have more indications, 37, than “drama,” 35, which will be followed very closely by “animation,” with 34 indications. It is important to reflect on these significant indications for the “animation” genre, and also on the disappearance of the “police” genre in the preferences of teachers, since it is quite frequent in Brazilian cinemas and television networks.

But, considering that our cinematographic tastes are not mutually exclusive, we followed the preferences indicated by the Brazilian teachers in question 3. Below, Charts 3 and 4 show the indications for second and third preferences, since they change, upwards, the position of the comedies indicated in the first option:

Chart 3 - What genre of films do you prefer to see in the cinema? (second preference)

Action – 12
Animation – 19
Comedy – 24
Documentary – 20
Drama – 14
War – 6
Musical – 3
Police – 6
Religious – 1
Western – 0

SOURCE: tabulation of the research results

Chart 4 - What genre of films do you prefer to see in the cinema? (third preference)

Action – 10
Animation – 9
Comedy – 16
Documentary – 25
Drama – 5
War – 16
Musical – 3
Police – 2
Religious – 6
Western – 2

SOURCE: tabulation of the research results

When looking at the figures in Charts 2, 3, and 4, we notice that the “documentary” genre stands out from the rest. In total, 74 teachers, among the 105 who actually answered this question, have documentaries as one of their cinematographic predilections. This means that almost two thirds of Brazilian respondents devote time and attention to this genre of cinema¹¹.

Returning to the issue of comedies, the sum of the citations in Charts 2, 3, and 4 shows us that they have almost the same number of indications, 51, as the films of the “action” genre, 54, if we consider up to the third preference of Brazilian teachers¹².

Taking as a reference the teachers’ answers to question 7, the selection of films they show at school has as an important criterion “watching and liking it”.

7. How do you select the films you show at school? (Check as many options as necessary, indicating the order of importance 1, 2, 3, 4...):

Among those you watched and liked ()

Among those shared by teachers on social networks ()

By direct indication from another teacher ()

By indication of students ()

From reading some material about the film ()

At some school meeting ()

Other () Which? _____

The first of the parentheses, “Among those you watched and liked,” had 73 indications as the first selection criterion; and 26 as second. Two-thirds of the total teachers actually

¹¹ Although this is not exactly a surprise pointed out by the results, many questions arise, from those linked to the school tradition of documentaries to those related to the large and diverse production of Brazilian documentaries in the so-called resumption of the 1990s (LINS; MESQUITA, 2008). However, we leave for a further article the reflection on the research data, which revealed this “national preference” of Brazilian teachers for documentaries. Clues can be found in the teachers’ own responses, who wrote phrases like these: “Films and videos that portray elements of our culture, language, and particularities of our country, such as *A Dog’s Will*, which exemplifies northeastern particularities,” in response to question 15, “What Brazilian films do you already use at school?”.

¹² From the research point of view, it is quite interesting to note that the significant change in the number of completed questionnaires, from 32 to 136, from the first tabulations that subsidized the work presented at the XII National Meeting of Geography Teaching Practice (OLIVEIRA JR, 2017) and those made for this article, in 2020, did not significantly change the results, maintaining practically the same preferences between the cinematographic genres of the sample that was three times smaller.

answered this option. It was, by far, the most indicated criterion, since the second most indicated, “From reading some material about the film,” had, respectively, 37 and 16 indications, a number very close to that obtained by the third most used criterion, “By direct indication from another teacher,” only inverted in terms of priority, 5 and 34 indications. Only as a fourth criterion did social networks appear, with 4 and 15 nominations, as the first and second criteria used by teachers to choose the films they will use in their activities with students.

4 MISMATCH BETWEEN WHAT YOU SAY AND WHAT YOU DO?

Well, if Brazilian teachers are so fond of comedies and if the main criterion for choosing films to be shown at school is this liking, why are so few comedies listed among the films they have already show and, more significantly, among the films they would like to show at school?

This question becomes even more relevant if we look at the results of the answers to question 4 (Chart 5), where we ask “Do you like Brazilian cinema? Cite some Brazilian films that you have seen”. In them, the mismatch between the number of comedies actually used in Geography classes and the number of films of this genre watched by teachers is even more surprising, since this second result is almost five times greater than the number of comedies actually present in Geography classes.

Chart 5 - Sum of citations, in Question 4, of all films of each cinematographic genre

TOTAL BY GENRE		%
DRAMA	313	50
COMEDY	147	23
ACTION	113	18
DOCUMENTARY	41	6
RELIGIOUS	6	1
ANIMATION	5	1
POLICE	3	less than 1
ADVENTURE	2	less than 1
UNKNOWN	2	less than 1
SCIENCE FICTION	1	less than 1
TOTAL	633	100

SOURCE: tabulation of the research results

Almost a quarter of the films cited by teachers were comedies, as shown in Chart 5. Among them, the most cited were *A Dog's Will* (ARRAES, 2000) and *The Second Mother* (MUYLAERT, 2015), with 46 and 38 citations (the sum of them being more than half of the total), respectively, followed by *The Clown* (MELLO, 2011), with 12 citations; *Lisbela and the*

Prisoner (ARRAES, 2003), with 11 nominations; and *Red Carpet* (PEREIRA, 2006), with 8 citations. The other 45 comedies listed had few citations, 33 of which had a single citation, among them the film *Basic Sanitation*, a comedy which title refers explicitly to a curricular theme in Geography teaching.

What we want to highlight with these numbers is the enormous concentration around a few films in a universe of very broad knowledge. In other words, despite the fact that teachers, as a whole, indicate that they know more than 50 different comedies, most of them are known by only one or a few teachers. These data would indicate not only the importance of a greater permeability between Brazilian film production and teachers, but also the coincidence, at least regarding comedies¹³, between what is seen in the cinema and what is watched in the classroom.

Would the teachers be choosing the films also in order to keep the students attentive and “pleased,” leading them to a type of film that they are already used to and even would have already watched in the cinema or on television? If that were the case, comedies would be much more present in Geography classes.

We bring some indications that liking comedies is not restricted to teachers, at least in Brazil.

In the short article (CARMELO, 2017) “Retrospective 2016: the 20 biggest box offices in Brazilian cinema,” the first subtitle is “Many comedies, some biographies, and a biblical mystery in the first place,” which reveals the great distinction between the preferences of the Brazilian public in general and the preferences of Geography teachers mentioned above. If, among teachers, documentary and action are preferred, among the general public comedies are absolute leaders; so we can read: “Unsurprisingly, the best results came from popular comedies, with an important portion of children’s comedies (*Carrossel 2* and *É fada*)”. The list of the 20 most watched films in 2016 in Brazil has seven other comedies aimed at the adult audience, in addition to the two children’s comedies mentioned above.

The same website features the “Retrospectiva 2019: the 20 biggest box offices in Brazilian cinema” (ALOI, 2019), where comedies stand out again: seven for the adult audience and two for the children audience, between 20; and we have four comedies among the top five box offices of the year.

Children and adults go in large number to laugh in front of Brazilian screens. Certainly many of these adults are teachers and many of these children are students in our schools.

¹³ But only a few, as we will see later.

Why, then, are comedies not more present in schools? Are teachers resisting (aware or not) the possibility that is left as one of the few opportunities to leave work may be captured? In other words, do they resist the pedagogization of their “time off”?

Perhaps the reason is in the sentence that one of the teachers left in response to Question 16: “I don’t have much knowledge of Brazilian films to use in the classroom. The Brazilian films that I know are more of entertainment”. This sentence seems to bring something of the teaching thinking concerning Brazilian cinema, since there are rare films of great box office in the set of films mentioned by teachers in the questionnaire. And this is especially true for the type of comedy that most of the big box offices fit in: the so-called ‘comedy of manners,’ “the humorous critique of everyday life” (SELIGMAN, 2004, p. 6), the one that “has seen and studied almost always as an easy genre, closely linked to its historical time (contextualization and identification are one of the predominant factors in the acceptance of the comic text), popular and minor” (p. 3).

The few ‘comedies of manners’ – films such as *Minha mãe é uma peça* [My Mom is a Character] (PELLENZ, 2013), *Colleagues* (GALVÃO, 2013), *The Contest* (VASCONCELOS, 2013) – were mentioned by a single teacher. The comedies that “pierce” this siege and are indicated by several teachers do not fit as ‘comedies of manners’ and enter the school rooms supported by geographic content, such as *A Dog’s Will* and its “northeastern characteristics” or *The Storytellers* and its “sources of resources, cultural diversity, and public management” (POLICASTRO, 2020, p. 74 and p. 77, respectively).

This distinction between the types of comedy and the teaching choice of some and not others to be used at school shows that the power of dissemination of film distributors and the indications of textbooks are modulated by the teachers’ understanding that cinema images educate for themselves. Camila Policastro (2020, p. 13) points out that

it is important to think about how the images structure geographic knowledge and enable its understanding. However, not only that, because we also have to consider that the images and the way they are reproduced in our discipline ensure a certain look at the expense of another; they show and, consequently, hide other glances, other notions of what is said to be real, shaping the notions of the world that we access by looking.

Perhaps this is the reason for the almost absence of ‘comedies of manners’ in teachers’ quotes – would they teach how to make a humorous criticism of everyday school life? – and why *Lisbela and the Prisoner* was not mentioned in Question 11 by any teacher, despite having been remembered by them in Question 4. Would this film be considered a ‘comedy of manners’ and, therefore, understood as mere entertainment – and, as such, its use in schools

was prohibited? Despite this, it is good to remember that it appears, even though once, in Question 16, among the films that teachers want to use¹⁴.

5 FILMS AS CULTURAL EXPANSION

If we go back to the research results, there is another clue to the absence of ‘comedies of manners’ and the low presence of comedies in teaching choices, in general. Based on the results tabulated by Policastro (2020, p. 35) for Question 10, “What are the reasons that lead you to show films at school?,” 48% of the teachers wrote number 1 in the first pair of parentheses, more than double than the 23% that marked number 1 in the parentheses in “Because it is linked to some specific geography content,” indicating that the most frequent reason for using films at school is “because cinema is a way of cultural expansion for students”.

10. What are the reasons that lead you to show films at school? (Check as many options as necessary, indicating the order of importance 1, 2, 3, 4...):

Because cinema is a way of cultural expansion for students ()

Because it is a moment of entertainment for students ()

Because you liked it and you want your students to see it too ()

Because it brings important knowledge, even if unrelated to Geography ()

Because it is a moment of rest for you ()

Because cinema expands artistic sensitivity ()

Because cinema expands critical sensitivity ()

Because it is a Brazilian film and, as such, it helps to get to know Brazil ()

Because it links to some specific Geography content ()

Other reasons: _____

¹⁴ The same occurs with the aforementioned films *The Contest* and *Colleagues*.

Could these percentages indicate, perhaps, that teachers do not take comedies to school because they know that their students watch this genre of films outside it? This assumption makes sense, because, when aiming to expand the culture of students¹⁵, it is really pertinent not to show in school what is already seen outside.

It is important to note that cinema and its films are not taken exclusively as privileged sources for access to certain geographical contents, but rather as a cultural expansion that extrapolates these contents, and it is also interesting to observe that 10% of teachers take the film as a possibility of increasing ‘critical sensitivity,’ perhaps indicating reasons that lead them to disregard films understood as mere entertainment and not cultural expansion for students. On the other hand, 1% of teachers marked the parentheses in which the film “is a moment of entertainment for students”¹⁶.

Finally, we bring here the fact that no teacher put the number 1 in front of “Because it is a Brazilian film and, as such, it helps to get to know Brazil”. This caused us another “good strangeness” and some questions, such as “when can a film be taken as a geographic content of a country?,” “Most of the teachers who took part in the research do not teach classes for the seventh year, where the contents on Brazil are concentrated?,” “Would this be a redundant question, already contained in another, related to the “specific Geography content?”. Questions that seek unforeseen answers, and a conclusion, perhaps hasty: for

¹⁵ In view of the teachers’ desire for the cultural expansion of students through cinema and a certain concentration on few titles, types, and formats of films cited by the teachers in the research, we indicate here some initiatives and websites where teachers can find other titles, types, and formats:

<http://www.afroflix.com.br/>

<http://portacurtas.org.br/>

<http://www.inventarcomadiferenca.com.br/canal-inventar/dispositivos/>

<https://www.mostradecinemainfantil.com.br/>

<https://ecofalante.org.br/>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/animamundifestival>

<http://www.videonasaldeias.org.br>

<http://educacaoconectada.campinas.sp.gov.br/programa-cinema-educacao/acervo/>

<http://www.sementecinematografica.com.br/>

¹⁶ It would be/will be interesting to conduct a search on the data from the individualized responses, to see if comedies in general and, especially, ‘comedies of manners’ are cited exactly by this 1% of teachers.

Geography teachers, one of the bets of Law 13,006/14¹⁷, when pointing the requirement for national films, is not confirmed, since the choice of films is about showing Brazil to Brazilians.

6 IN THE MIDDLE OF OTHER MANY QUESTIONS

When going through the responses of more than 130 Brazilian teachers to various questions raised by the research, a conclusion seems clear to us: there is not a single teaching culture that mediates the relationships between Geography teachers and films. Although we can see some predominant patterns, none of them exceed 50% of teachers. This seems to us to be a clue that opens up the need to look more carefully at data per cities, to see, for example, whether this variation is related to regional situations or even to specific university backgrounds – or whether they would be much more related to conceptions of education and (teaching of) Geography that cross each of these teachers in their film choices for school screens. Or even if they suffer some type of mediation of sex-gender or teaching time, (non)access to mass media and festivals, (non)access to national and foreign production of cinematographic comedies.

As we have pointed out since the beginning of this article, each teacher is crossed in a different way by the multiple forces that act in their choices of which films to select to compose their teaching performance. We understand that there is no “ideal way” to carry out this composition between cinema and education, between films and Geography teaching, but that it is possible to identify the forces that have been most striking in making some films and some cinematographic genres present at school.

In this article, we chose to focus on absences, on what was not included in an intense way in the answers to the questionnaires – in this case, the comedies –, either because it is in the cultural field, or because the inclusion of these films in the educational scene could create noise or unwanted deviations from an educational and teaching perspective and/or from a (school) Geography perspective.

¹⁷ The concerns and potentials more circumscribed to the relationship between Brazilian cinema and schools became more present among researchers and teachers at the end of the first decade of the 21st century. They conducted to the initiatives that led to the approval of this law, as well as books, articles, and other academic works, such as the theses *Brazilian cinema in public schools – recognition of the difference* (REIS JUNIOR, 2010) and *What you don't see – clues to a pedagogy of images* (PIPANO, 2019), to name just two of the many possible examples, one more focused on assistance to films and the other on their production in Brazilian schools.

Perhaps what is strongly mediating the absence of comedies in teaching choices is a certain way of organizing work with thought (and the world) in educational activities, by dichotomous contradictions (us/them; center/periphery; rich/poor; developed/underdeveloped; rural/urban), which makes it difficult, or even prevents, that the images crossed by irony and laughter – the images of comedies – can be used “solidly” as an engagement or as evidence in one of the poles of the dichotomies

Therefore, this may be one of the reasons associated with the inherent difficulty of attributing, to the ironic and humorous images of comedies, some stable sense of “document of a situation or of a geographical place,” which is more easily possible with the images from dramas or other cinematographic genres that, although fictional, preserve the images in more stable and more directly transferable ways to illustrate or prove that a space is real, a very common resource among teachers in their use of films.

Given the results presented here, and considering the national preference for comedies, why laughter and comedy – being it the cinematographic genre that explores the potential of laughter – have not been taken, by the vast majority of these teachers, as entertainment or criticism, as artistic elaboration, and, mainly, as cultural expansion or even as geographic content? Wouldn't it be expected that laughter and comedy, so present in the Brazilian cinematography cited by the teachers themselves, were more present among their motivations for film choices?

It seems to us that it would be. And, precisely for this reason, other questions assail us in the data, in the search to better understand the teaching practices and expectations regarding cinema in schools in general and in Geography classes in particular.

We leave the reader with some of them: aren't the comedies seen as a cultural expansion or as a work of art? Could their exclusion or little use by teachers be understood as one of the ways in which art is contained – as what inevitably causes deviation, ambiguity, meaninglessness – by teaching practices? Wouldn't Brazilian comedies fit into geographic content? Or wouldn't they deal with the critical dimension of laughter? Or are they of poor quality? Or the great risk, that which hinders the path of comedies between cinema and school, is exactly that of laughter as a libertarian, undisciplined, not very “serious” power, experienced by each of these teachers when they go to the cinema, and therefore introducing them to school frightens them? But are teachers more composed of fears than desires for liberation? Would they be afraid of the public that comedy sets up, since “[a] comedy needs the audience to be fully realized” (SELIGMAN, 2004, p. 3), which makes the way of watching comedies – for being much more collective, noisy, and contagious – distinguish itself from the way other cinematographic genres are appreciated? ⁱ

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