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**South America's *Cultural Distinction Ways*...Uruguay from Opera to "Cumbia"**

The paper examines the social class distinction through cultural tastes and lifestyles in Montevideo –the city capital of Uruguay- in the last decade. The main result shows how cultural consumption acts as an identity-key for all the social classes. High social classes use paintings and “technological jewelry” as the principal way to express social distinction. In the last period, the opera is also a way to express differences in that class. Middle class expresses their cultural distinction through the reading of books and newspapers. At the same time, they used to go out -to the theatre or cinema- more than others classes. Popular classes express their distinction with “cumbia” -a music taste- and domestic media consumption. Finally, the paper discusses the relationship between social class, cultural consumption and social integration in Uruguay. The paper is part of a Phd thesis from the University of Campinas Unicamp, Brazil.