

**DOSSIER**

*Childhood(s), social movements and the city: curriculum(s) and teacher training*

**Heritage education with children: memories and the production of social representations about the city*****Educação patrimonial com crianças: memórias e produção de representações sociais sobre a cidade***

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**ABSTRACT**

This text seeks to contribute to the study of children's social representations of the city, understood as a material, cultural matrix and artifact, and therefore as a legitimate object about which different social groups share and produce meanings. Historic city centers have their own objectifications because their spaces bear the marks of historical events, evoke the past in their specific form of organization, and tell the memory of the place. Specifically, the debate presented aims to analyze the *perezhivaniya* of children in the Historic Center of Cuiabá, considering the physical space as a memory site, affections and cultural identity, sustained by a representational project associated with different and contradictory historically constituted values. This is a single case study, anchored in a dialogical epistemology, whose subjects are children between the ages of 7 and 11 who participate in a cultural project. The data were collected through a *perezhivanie* in the historic center of Cuiabá, using a narrative script. The data were grouped into episodes and analyzed according to the concept of comprehensive analysis. The children of this study revealed the phenomenon of the emptying and silencing of the Historic Center and the rupture of the intergenerational dialogue that has prevented the replacement of social memory, with the Historic Center as a witness.

*Keywords:* Heritage Education. Social Representations. Children. Historic Center.

**RESUMO**

O presente texto busca contribuir para o estudo a respeito das representações sociais de crianças sobre a cidade, sendo esta compreendida como material, matriz e artefato cultural e, portanto, legítimo objeto acerca do qual diferentes grupos sociais compartilham e produzem significações. Os Centros Históricos das cidades são possuidores de objetivações pois detêm, em seus espaços, as marcas de acontecimentos históricos, evocam o passado em sua forma de organização específica e contam a memória do lugar. Especificamente, o debate apresentado pretendeu analisar as vivências de crianças no Centro Histórico de Cuiabá, considerando o espaço físico um lugar de memórias, afetos e identidade cultural, sustentado por um projeto representacional associado a diferentes e contraditórios valores historicamente constituídos. Trata-se de um estudo de caso

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único, ancorado na epistemologia dialógica, que tem, como sujeitos, crianças entre 7 e 11 anos, participantes de um projeto cultural. Para a produção de dados, utilizou-se uma vivência no Centro Histórico de Cuiabá, por meio de um roteiro narrativo. Os dados foram agrupados em episódios e analisados segundo a noção da análise compreensiva. As crianças deste estudo revelaram a constatação do fenômeno do esvaziamento e silenciamento do Centro Histórico e a ruptura do diálogo intergeracional, que tem impedido a reposição da memória social, sendo o Centro Histórico uma testemunha.

*Palavras-chave:* Educação Patrimonial. Representações Sociais. Crianças. Centro Histórico.

## Introduction

This article aims to analyze the *perezhivanie* of children in the Historic Center of Cuiabá, considering the physical space as a memory site, and a place of affections and cultural identity, supported by a representational project associated with different and contradictory values that were historically constituted.

The city is understood as a material element in this study, both a cultural matrix and a legitimate artifact in which different social groups share and produce meanings. The city's Historic Center plays a fundamental role in this regard, as it not only serves as a meeting point with the past, but also influences the way individuals and groups position themselves in the present.

Given this scenario, heritage education with children emerges as a practice capable of creating significant anthropological spaces. According to the National Historical and Artistic Heritage Institute (Iphan, 2014), heritage education focuses on the historical and social understanding of heritage, both material and immaterial. It plays an essential role in valuing and preserving the memory, the values, the customs and the aspects of life, ensuring that the entire community has access to the right to culture and memory.

Support in the Theory of Social Representations was sought in addition to heritage education. The former has as its object of study the process of construction of social knowledge shared by common sense, which was created by popular knowledge and is now considered true and mutually acceptable by the same social group (Moscovici, 2013). Furthermore, considering this theoretical approach, and specifically in the studies with children, the articulation with ontogenetic processes is used to think about the genesis and evolution of social representations and social identities in life contexts.

These social representations are announced as practical knowledge, a form of socially shared naive knowledge. Given the above, what is intended to investigate is the circulation of common sense as a way of naming, classifying and objectifying reality, making it intelligible, predictable and familiar, using the studies on social representations as a theoretical basis (Jodelet, 2001).

To this end, it is important to highlight that the study of social representations suggests an analysis of the meaning-making process, both on the synchronic and diachronic axis, which leads to highlighting the importance of social exchanges throughout historical time, with social memory being an important element to understand the processes of its formation in the present.

The set of social representations forms a representational project based on the social exchange model proposed by Bauer and Gaskell (2008), which involves a representational triangle

“Ego-Alter-Object” and its extensions related to time, covering past and future. It focuses on interactions that occur at specific times, anchored in past *perezhvaniya*, and how these interactions can shape social thinking in the future.

The creation of social representations arises from the need of groups and subjects to resolve the embarrassment created when dealing with strange information by making it familiar (Moscovici, 2013). The formation of social representations occurs from two essential thought processes: objectifying and anchoring.

The process of objectification, as proposed by Moscovici (2013), refers to the transformation of concepts or ideas into concrete representations that resemble reality, which implies creating an image that is an accurate copy of reality. On the other hand, anchoring involves the ability to classify or name an object or event based on preexisting social categories. When anchoring, subjects relate an object to a standard already accepted in society, to a model considered more appropriate.

According to Jodelet (2002), the social representations constructed about spaces are called socio-spatial representations. The constituent elements of these representations are the dialogical relationship that individual subjects establish with their living spaces, through constructions of sense and meaning, both from the perspective of immediate and/or past *perezhivanie* and also in the symbolic value elaborated within the dialectical relationship subject-territory (Alba; Dargentas, 2015).

The historic center of a city reflects its cultural history and the activities carried out in this place, representing a cultural expression of the city (Conte; Freire, 2005). Searget (1981 *apud* Jodelet, 2002) proposes the analysis of the built environment as material, artifact and matrix, in which it is material because it influences the opportunities and limitations of people’s actions; It is an artifact, as it represents human production reflected in objects, places and social practices as well as in the relationships and cultural models of the time; and is considered a matrix, as its transformations can create new ways of life and interaction.

The concept of social memory has received important attention within social psychology. It has an umbrella characteristic and encompasses the phenomena of society, and within society, covering aspects of material and immaterial heritage present in everyday life (Sá, 2015).

Regarding the relevance of the city in the field of education, it is essential to consider the relationship between the city and the children, highlighting it as a fundamental element in the formation and development of the way they relate to the world. At this juncture, the city is understood as an “educational community” (Gómez-Granell ;Vila, 2003, p. ?), which not only plays a vital role in the construction of identity, but also serves as a platform for the creation and sharing of socially relevant meanings.

Therefore, the question is: what interactions are produced when children’s *perezhvaniya* are created in the historic center? How are children and childhoods affected by the erasure of their city’s social memory? What subjective marks can be noticed in children’s speeches about their relationship with the city and their living spaces?

Faced with these questions, the Theory of Social Representations, along with currents of thought focused at understanding the social realities of children in the urban and historical context,

constitutes a relevant theoretical basis for the study of educational and human development phenomena.

This approach recognizes the interconnection between the subject and culture, emphasizing the importance of identity and affective issues in the construction of reality. The preservation of the historic center depends on the collaboration of the inhabitants, especially children, to reestablish the connection between memory and the city through intergenerational dialogue.

## **A look at the historical dimension of the Historic Center of Cuiabá**

The city of Cuiabá, known as the Geodesic Center of South America (IBGE, 2018), has a rich heritage of social memory dating back more than 300 years, with architectural influences of Portuguese, Iberian and North African origin. The history of this county is related to the discovery of gold, which attracted migrants to the historic center, with its architectural characteristics and social memories (Conte; Freire, 2005).

In the 1960s and 1970s, the city underwent significant changes due to public investments inspired by modernization, which generated conflicts between the traditional and the contemporary perspectives, which affected the historic center. The 1970s saw the emergence of new development poles in the city, such as the Goiabeiras neighborhood, which underwent through an elitization process; the district of Coxipó da Ponte, which was driven by the university and the industry; and the Political and Administrative Center of the city (CPA), which represented the modernization (Romancini, 2005).

In the following decade, the historic center became the scene of tensions over its meaning as cultural heritage, with groups diverging between those who defended the preservation and recognition of memory and those who saw listing as infeasible due to commercial interests.

According to Ferreira (2017), the process of listing the Historic Center of Cuiabá began with the Administrative Process no. 1.180 - T85/IPHAN, officially established on September 25, 1985. Subsequently, the provisional listing was carried out on October 1st, 1987, becoming permanent in 1988. Finally, the definitive approval occurred on November 4, 1992, by the Ministry of Culture (Cuiabá, 2010).

During this process, several challenges were attempted. The management of the mayor Frederico Soares de Campos submitted an appeal against the listing, in an attempt to avoid approval, claiming that:

In the desire for preservation, the listing notice was created, covering precisely the entire perimeter in which the city's commerce pulses, where the changes were the most radical, all due to respect for an already destroyed past, generating complex problems for the curtailed public administration. of their duties. The conflict between the ancient, which is really not historical, and the modern objectives that are compatible with the economic and social development of the city, exists today in a very serious manner and leads us to appeal to Your Excellency for action. The Cuiabá from the 1930s, which I have vividly in my memory, is only recorded in photographs and old stories, as its colonial appearance had been completely changed, with only its irregular road construction remaining, which gives it the personality

of an ancient city. [...]. The old houses linked to the past of illustrious sons have already been demolished, no longer existing to revive the memory of those who wrote brilliant pages of their history (Process nº 1,180 – T-85. OFº GP nº 678/89 of 09/18/1989, p.02 *apud* Ferreira, 2017, p. 59 [translated to this article]).

The records of objections and the attempt to avoid the listing of the Historic Center of Cuiabá represent the lack of recognition on the part of society and political authorities in relation to the historical value of this place. Added to this context is the perception of the center as a commercial zone, driven by social representations which emphasize its value in terms of consumption and entertainment (Zukin, 2017). Thus, the center is often seen as a commodity, to the detriment of its historical importance.

In previous research carried out by the Grupo de Pesquisa em Psicologia da Infância [Child Psychology Research Group] (GPPIN/UFMT), it was highlighted that the Historic Center of Cuiabá is often perceived as hostile and threatening, while its qualities as a memory site are often underestimated, as evidenced in studies of Silva (2014), Poubel (2016) and Cunha (2017). These findings emphasize the need to implement heritage education initiatives aimed at children, focusing on strengthening the identity of the community and the city through the appropriation of the Historic Center.

The results highlight the pressing need to develop subjective policies, as suggested by Tedesco (2004), in order to combat the emptying and silencing of the Historic Center along with the breakdown of intergenerational dialogue, which has prevented the regeneration of social memory.

Furthermore, the negative impact of this context on intergenerational dialogue results in the erosion and removal of children from memory sites, relegating them to private and controlled spaces. According to Choay (2014), this scenario generates harmful effects, by transforming the value of cultural heritage into a purely economic one. In turn, this raises crucial questions about the direction of architectural works, the future of cities and the preservation of its memory.

## Methodological aspects

This study addressed the social representation of children about the Historic Center of Cuiabá as its object of analysis. The methodological design has aspects of a single case study (Marková, 2017), as it considers the relationship between children and places of social memory, with the dialogical epistemology Ego-Alter-Object interdependent in the sociocultural context as its main characteristic.

Thus, this study assumes a psychosocial perspective with a qualitative emphasis, which is characterized by the understanding of socio-historical phenomena in the context in which social relations occur, according to Günther (2006). To this end, the efforts undertaken in this study were aimed at analyzing the *perezhivaniya* of children in the Historic Center of Cuiabá, considering the physical space as a memory site, affections and cultural identity, supported by a representational project associated with different and contradictory values historically constituted.

As for the research participants, five children were selected. One girl and four boys, aged between 7 and 11 years old. They were chosen through the “Colecionadores de Memórias [Memory Collectors]” workshop, developed in the cultural project “*Cribiás 300+: por uma educação patrimonial toda nossa [Cribiás 300+: for a heritage education that’s all ours]*” (Andrade, 2021).

The workshop took place in the form of a tour of the Historic Center of Cuiabá, held on March 13, 2021, lasting approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes. It is worth noting that this event happened amidst strict health restrictions, due to the Covid-19 global pandemic, which limited the number of research participants.

Given this scenario, a protocol was implemented, aiming to minimize the risks of contagion and guarantee the safety of the children and the research team, which considered the following criteria: a) creation of groups of children from the same family; b) maintenance of similar quarantine practices; c) selection of children aged between 7 and 11; d) use of surgical masks and e) application of alcohol gel in each interaction with objects.

The workshop was mediated by researchers linked to the Grupo de Pesquisa em Psicologia da Infância [Child Psychology Research Group] (GPPIN/UFMT), who were also responsible for producing the information, which allowed the creation of a comprehensive and specific database, composed of two main sources. The first consisted of using an Action Cam<sup>1</sup> camera, attached to the cap of one of the children, which they decided the order of alternation between them by their own free choice. The second source included photographic records and field notes made by assistant researchers who followed the research process.

The children walked through the streets and sites of the Historic Center, visiting the most emblematic historical landmarks, guided by a narrative itinerary (Andrade, 2017), which brought a brief history of the memory sites, interspersed with literary narratives, offering children an invitation for debate, curiosity and reflection, in order to value their meaning-making process and their childhood authorship.

The choice of the narrative script is justified by the emphasis on mediation with children, inviting them to be curious and creative, in addition to taking advantage of the unexpected and improvisation to stimulate socio-cognitive opportunities. In this dynamic, children are the co-authors of the script, whose actions are considered and validated in the interpretation of reality, promoting the creation of new narratives in the scene experienced.

Thus, the narrative script was presented to the children through the mediation of researcher Jeysson Cunha, who assumed an anchor character called Bugrinho, in reference to the poet from Cuiabá, Silva Freire, immortalized by the *Academia Mato-Grossense de Letras*. Along the way, two more anchor characters were introduced to the children: Luciene Carvalho<sup>2</sup> (played by teacher and

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<sup>1</sup> An Action Cam is a digital camera that captures moving images and videos.

<sup>2</sup> A poet from Mato Grosso and the first black woman to assume the presidency of an Academy of Letters in Brazil, the Matogrossense Academy of Letters.

psychologist, Naiana Gonçalves Marinho) and Zé Bolo Flô<sup>3</sup> (played by civil engineer Mateus Elias Cruz Antunes).

Furthermore, the narrative script was constructed based on the encouraging narrative technique (Andrade, 2017), which values the participation of children as historical subjects and co-participants in the action, as well as stimulates imagination, creativity and the strengthening of intergenerational dialogues. To this end, the narrative script was developed based on the following indicators: a) storytelling about memory sites; b) consideration of the architecture and style of buildings; c) reading poems written by poets from Cuiabá that make reference to belonging and the identity of the place and d) openness to children's innovation and creativity.

The delimitation of the choices of what was narrated was based on four main axes: 1) recognizing children as active social actors in the study; 2) promote open and respectful communication with them, encouraging the dialogue and assuming an atypical adult attitude; 3) emphasize the use of narratives to stimulate children's imagination, creativity and intergenerational dialogue and 4) consider the city as a space that contains social memory, contributing to a more complete vision of urban life from the perspective of children.

For this purpose, the itinerary was divided into two stages: "Pelos Minas do Cuiabá [Through Cuiabá's Mines]", which covered the oldest historical landmarks, such as churches and mansions from the 18th and 19th centuries, and "Entre a tradição e a modernidade [Between tradition and modernity]", which explored both historic mansions and more contemporary architectural structures built in the 20th century.

Some cultural artifacts, such as a magnifying glass and a bag of pebbles simulating gold, were made available to children with the purpose of promoting a participatory approach, encouraging children's curiosity and creativity, as well as broadening their perspectives and learning opportunities.

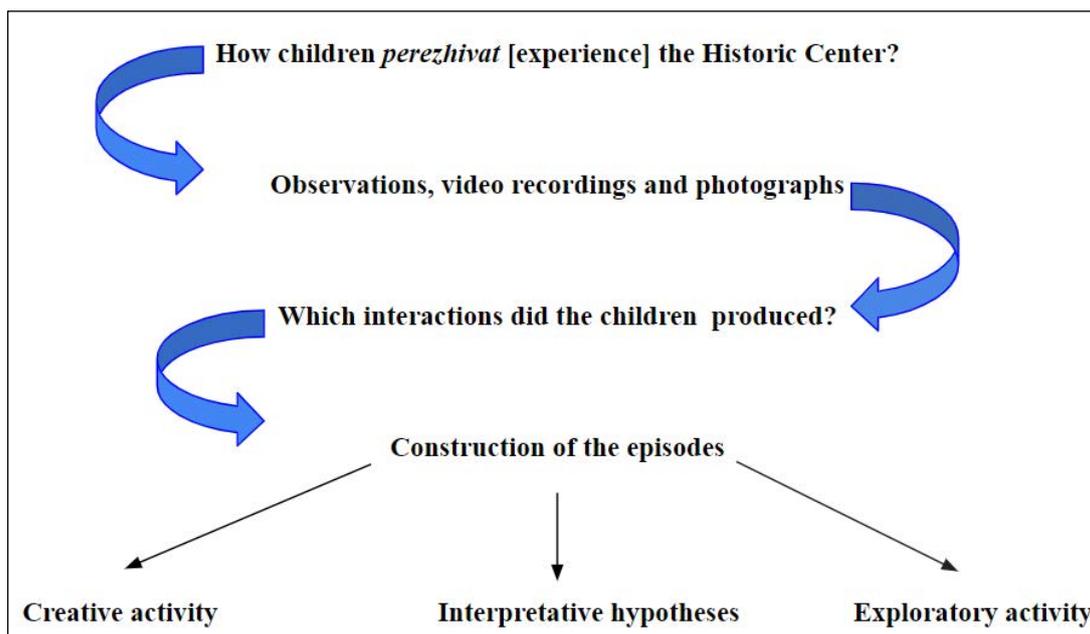
When visiting each historical landmark, the children interacted with the site in various ways, demonstrating curiosity, attention and, at times, shyness. They also expressed their observations and launched hypotheses about the Historic Center, seeking to understand the meaning of the place. As shown in Figure 1, from the observations and video recordings of the tour through the Historic Center, a central question emerged: what interactions did the children produce?

Based on this question, the episodes were described and detailed, comprising of 103 photographs and 9 videos with a total of 3 hours and 35 minutes of recording. The data were subjected to qualitative analysis, using the interaction episodes procedure (Pedrosa; Carvalho, 2005), in which an "episode" was defined as a specific social interaction, in the context of the Historic Center, which was selected for analysis. In other words, the episodes are considered as a set of actions that encompass gestures, speech, vocalizations, noises and expressions, allowing the understanding of meanings, which reflect children's interactions with the Historic Center.

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<sup>3</sup> A wandering poet, icon of Cuiabá's culture and known for selling cakes around the city center. According to stories told by Cuiabá residents, Zé Bolo Flô composed poems in exchange for food.

**Figure 1:** Logic of the investigation



**Source:** Research collection [translated to this article].

The selection of episodes took into account the outcome of the scene presented by the children, as well as the quality of their participation and involvement in the activity, whether it occurred individually or shared with a group of children's peers.

The episodes were subjected to comprehensive analysis (Mendes Junior; Ferreira, 2010), which is characterized by the identification of the contexts expressed by the subjects. Thus, considering that the corpus contains videographic and photographic elements, the procedure adopted was to understand the attitudes, the creative activity, the meaning-making process, the interpretative hypotheses and the ongoing exploratory activity about the Historic Center produced by the children throughout the route (see Figure 1).

It is noteworthy that the construction of the episodes was a strategy to identify the children's interaction with the Historic Center in each place visited, whose established relationships allowed the understanding of the potential of the narrative script to produce debate, curiosity and reflection, in order to value the meaning-making process and children's authorship.

In this way, the episodes invite readers to think about the urgency of developing heritage education actions with children, aiming at the construction of subjective policies (Tedesco, 2004), with efforts by public authorities to recognize their importance through laws, ordinances, decrees and practical actions, aimed at strengthening, in a qualitative way, the population's participation in the public scene, to face the emptying and silencing of the Historic Center and to interrupt the rupture of intergenerational dialogue, which has prevented the restitution of social memory.

## Results and discussions

### *Episode 1 – The population decline of the Historic Center*

This episode inaugurates the beginning of the tour through the Historic Center, in which they first visited the Nossa Senhora do Rosário Church and the São Benedito Church, then continued to the Senhor dos Passos Church, the Museum of Image and Sound of Cuiabá until reaching Iphan. On this route, the children were able to see the urban layouts, which give signs of other times, and the architecture of the mansions and establishments, which contain colonial evidence from the 18th and 19th centuries and examples from the 50s and 60s.

During the tour, the children attributed meanings both based on their immediate experiences and in connection with the symbolic values created in the subject-territory interaction, in addition to developing an exploratory activity, whose action is linked to the dialogical relationship between individuals and their environments. It is also worth highlighting that, by exploring the city and interacting with its historical architecture, they are, in a way, participating in this process of constructing sense and meaning in relation to urban space (Alba; Dargentas, 2015).

This context could be highlighted when the children were in front of Iphan (see Figure 2), a typical mansion from Cuiabá, which is temporarily closed for renovations, where they were able to learn about the function of this institute, which is mainly focused on preserving history and memory. When considering the dimension of the past of places, Jodelet (2017, p. 184, [translated to this article]) highlights that “the city’s past has repercussions on the sense of identity manifested in the present of urban existence”, in which psychological processes act in the symbolic construction of the city.

Thus, the children interacted with material and immaterial forms, which dialogue with social memories and are activated by them. In this context, the children also explored the Historic Center of Cuiabá, seeking to understand reality. In a procedural way (Jodelet, 2001), they felt the doors and tried to look through cracks, trying to find signs of the presence of residents. Given the negative result, the closed mansions without human presence were seen as a forgotten and abandoned place, and the children were able to perceive the phenomenon that affects the Historic Center of Cuiabá: historical and cultural silencing.

**Figure 2:** A house from Cuiabá without residents



**Source:** Researcher's database (2021).

- There is the house, let's go to see the house! (Child 1)
- Let's try to get in there! You can even find gold there! (Child 1)
- [Knock-Knock] Is anyone there? (Child 2)

It is worth recalling Marková's (2017) reflections that human presence is the mainstay of social relations and enhances the emergence and sharing of knowledge. In this episode, two objectifications are highlighted by the children: 1) a place emptied of human presence and 2) a place potentially rich in educational elements. The gesture of knocking on the door and the question "Is anyone there?" reveal the phenomenon of emptying of residences and the abandonment of houses in the Historic Center. At the same time, the children, inserted in the narrative about the origin of the city, based on gold exploration, assume an attitude of explorers, announcing an openness to the active search for wealth, even if imaginatively.

When identifying the emptying of human presence in the Historic Center, they feel the rupture of dialogue due to the absence of collective meaning, that is, devoid of importance in the public sphere (Jovchelovitch, 2013).

### ***Episode 2 – Cuiabá's house rubble: explorers and critics***

Through this tour, the children were able to visit the first square in Cuiabá, currently called Praça da Mandioca, but which previously, around 1727, was called Praça Real. At the time, travelers who were looking for gold passed through it, in addition to being a space where the torture of enslaved people was practiced.

Still on this route, they walked by an old residence, which had remnants of constructions made using earth-based structure. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the house is in ruins (see Figure 3), making it possible to demonstrate the phenomenon that occurs due to the abandonment of the site's historical heritage. Thus, when the children saw the building in ruins, they interpreted the public management problems of the place as a lack of care, that is, an absence of preservation awareness.

**Figure 3:** Ruined house



**Source:** Researcher's database (2021).

- Look at this old house. It's destroyed! (Child 4).
- They don't take care of the city! (Child 2).

At another point, a child identified a calculator on the floor and asked: *“Did the person who lived here do the math?”*. Faced with the duality between curiosity about the house's previous inhabitants and the desire to explore the rubble, the group split up. One part took on the role of imaginary explorers, throwing stones into the house, while the other part focused on denouncing the abandonment, revealing different points of view.

This episode exemplifies how knowledge is constructed by subjects and groups through a dialogue process that involves three elements of the social scene: Ego-Alter-Object. Therefore, realities are shaped by the ethics of social relations and interaction (Marková, 2017).

The image of the destroyed house presented itself as a clear representation of the poor management of public authorities in preserving the city's material heritage. Gradually, the children expressed the representational project of the Historic Center through the images of emptying and abandonment that they identified.

It is important to note that the analysis of social representations requires the consideration of meaning-making processes in both the synchronic and diachronic spheres (Bauer; Gaskell, 2008). This implies the importance of social exchanges throughout history, in which social memory plays a fundamental role in understanding the formation of these processes in the present.

### ***Episode 3: New anchors for the term academia and the identification with the immortal being***

At the *Academia Mato-Grossense de Letras* [Mato Grosso's Academy of Letters], the children soon began exploring the space, whose architecture brings the symbolism of a typical Cuiabá's house built in rammed earth and ancient adobe, with a traditional Brazilian roof called *“tribeira”*, a hydraulic tile floor and windows with access to the street, having been the residence of the Baron of Melgaço.

On the walls, there were photos of men and a very few women, both icons of Mato Grosso literature and those who were immortalized by their works. As a way of appropriating the space, the children sat in the academics' chairs and interacted with the instruments available there. One of them was willing to play the piano (see Figure 4), seeking to leave her mark.

**Figure 4:** Mato-Grossense Academy of Letters



**Source:** Researcher's database (2021).

- But, is this an *academia* [academy/gym]? (Child 2).
- Yes, but for studies. Here people “work out” their minds (Researcher).
- And how do you become immortal? (Child 3).

The question asked by child 3 reveals their attempt to appropriate elements of social memory, anchoring them in their current *perezhivaniya*. The polysemy of the term *academia* [academy/gym] highlighted new meanings to be explored by children, as it provoked an understanding of what the Academy of Letters is, what it means and how it brings together great social actors to the point of immortalizing them.

In this context, the child imagined a sports gym and was able to recognize a new concept while interacting with the site, contributing to the emergence of new elements anchored in another representational project, according to the scheme suggested by Bauer & Gaskell (2008) in the representational triangle Ego-Alter-Object.

This time, the cultural dimension is represented by the *Academia Mato-Grossense de Letras*, pressuring the representational field over the Historic Center. Thus, another meaning is announced for the representational project according to the children's understanding, which gives contours to this place. In this way, the cultural dimension, anchored in social memory, begins to compete with images of emptying and abandonment.

On the other hand, it is important to emphasize the identity potential inherent to this place, since children show great interest in immortality and in the active and authorial exploration of the cultural elements on display, such as the piano. This context stresses the need to develop educational processes, with the aim of reviving the production of knowledge and social memory, which means

bringing new meanings and new forms of occupation of the Historic Center by children, removing arbitrary practices that sectorize the spaces frequented by children, in addition to promoting a more inclusive approach (Tonucci, 1997).

#### **Episode 4: The female place in social memory**

The fourth episode is an unfolding of the children's interaction at the *Academia Mato-Grossense de Letras* and *Praça Alencastro*, in which the absence of the female place in social memory was perceived by them in these spaces. Gender is a historical category that refers to power relations, thus, social representations which act as broader systems of thought also forges the relationship between subjects and the world (Jodelet, 2001).

This context was identified by the child when realizing the female place in social memory at the *Academia Mato-Grossense de Letras*. In this scenario, the child saw a painting of a woman with a full folkloric dance skirt of *Siriri*, which is a local cultural manifestation, displayed on the wall (see Figure 4). This seemed to alternatively dialogue with the image, in order to seek references to the woman's identity in this space. Next, the child danced expressing an imaginary make-believe in order to represent the woman in the painting and, finally, came across a wall of male busts, revealing the woman's challenge in seeing herself represented in these spaces, for account of the tradition of patriarchy, which aims to mark who should be remembered in the territory.

**Figure 5:** The female place in social memory



**Source:** Researcher's database (2021).

- You know that woman in a skirt like that? What spins like that? (Child 1)
- Where did you see her? (Researcher)
- There, in that place right there (Academia Mato-Grossense de Letras) (Child 1).
- Oh, true! (Researcher)
- Look how nice it is! [The child gets on the stage and spins] (Child 1).

Thus, the child, moved by the observation of female absence in the social memory of the Historic Center, produced a manifesto in the form of a dance, inspired by the image of the dancer in a flared skirt, in a movement that, in itself, can be considered the objectification of feminine social

visibility on the stage at Praça Alencastro, given the absence of female references in narratives about the city's social memory.

Within the Historic Center, whether in Episode 3 or Episode 4, the children questioned the immortality and visibility of counter-hegemonic narratives of children, women and other invisible social groups, such as black people and indigenous people. Furthermore, they reveal the bases of a representational project (Bauer; Gaskell, 2008), according to which the places of social memory in the city dialogue with the idea of colonization carried out by men of European origin.

### **Episode 5: The creative act in dialogue with tradition**

Finally, the children arrived at the Governors' Residence, which housed the governors' official residence around 1940, and presents the neocolonial model as an architectural feature and also was in the city's modernization plan trail. It has a large garden and was the first house in Cuiabá to have a gas stove and a swimming pool.

However, the characteristics of this memory site refers to a contemporary private space: fences that surround the environment, guards for security and a garden (see Figure 6). In a spontaneous and authorial way, the children developed games among themselves, in which the spatial conditions of the garden (with vertical plants) allowed free entertainment. In this analysis, the potential of children's authorship stands out, aiming and anchoring their knowledge already constituted in the occupation of space.

- Let's play hide and seek! (Child 5)
- We can hide there! (Child 3)

**Figure 6:** Governors' Residence



**Source:** Researcher's database (2021).

The children's creative potential was stressed when they interacted with the swimming pool at the Governors' Residence. In this location (see Figure 7), the interaction happened with playful and spontaneous demonstrations, making the space a possible place for children. Therefore, they

assumed a subjective occupation of the environment, expressing their authorship as children in the appropriation of the place (Jodelet, 2017).

**Figure 7:** Governors' Residence – Swimming pool



**Source:** Researcher's database (2021).

- Hey, let's go see the pool? (Child 2)
- It looks like a cave inside the pool! (Child 2)
- There's even a waterfall! (Child 3)
- They could get the hose to fill it here! (Child 2)

In general, the meaning-making process of reality by children can be identified, considering both their reproductive dimension of assimilation of historical information announced by adults, and the creative dimension, from which children develop their hypotheses about social knowledge (Jodelet, 2017).

Furthermore, when thinking about heritage education with children, it is possible to identify clues of what they announce as new possibilities for establishing educational approaches and how such experiences mobilize their identity processes.

## Final considerations

In developing this study, the theoretical foundation was sought in the Theory of Social Representations, together with the principles of studies on social memory and the urban context of the city. The goal was to analyze the *perezhvaniya* of children in the Historic Center of Cuiabá, considering the physical space a memory site, affections and cultural identity, supported by a representational project associated with different and contradictory historically constituted values.

The narrative script was designed based on cultural references and conceived to offer children a *perezhvanie* that promotes authorship, creativity and active participation. Thus, in this context, it proved to be a valuable tool for conducting heritage education actions with children.

The analysis carried out, by enabling children's *perezhivanie* in the Historic Center, demonstrated the potential for their participation as social actors engaged in reflection on the city. However, they identified signs of a representational project guided by the tension between the abandonment and silencing of minority groups and the richness of the cultural dimension found in the site.

Such context revealed how children are affected by the erasure of the city's social memory, mainly due to the loss of historical references and the rupture of intergenerational dialogue, which has prevented the replacement of social memory, having the Historic Center of Cuiabá as a witness.

In this way, children's subjective marks in relation to the city can be highlighted, establishing a dialogue with their own *perezhivaniya*. This issue became particularly evident when children used creative resources to express concerns about the abandonment and emptying of the city, in addition to recognizing signs of a historical narrative that emphasizes male hegemony. Finally, they attributed meanings to the Historic Center of Cuiabá, expressing a sense of belonging and exploring the identity potential of this place.

Thus, the narrative script with children in the Historic Center revealed important perspectives for thinking about heritage education, aiming to establish intergenerational dialogue in the dialogical conception. The children's interaction with memory sites stimulates children's creativity and curiosity to try to unravel the past and understand the present, even when they are in a precarious situation, empty and in ruins. This perspective provides clues for (re)thinking the representational projects aimed at in the city with the children, inserting them as co-authors of the educational scene, with due recognition of their condition as legal subjects.

Therefore, it is essential to build subjective policies (Tedesco, 2004) that enhance educational actions aimed at intergenerational dialogue, for the development of preservationist awareness and the construction of social memories, enabling the Historic Center to be recognized in its structuring dimension of Cuiabá's history.

Children cannot remain unaware of these actions, as this memory sites houses rich educational and playful materials, which can become encouraging narratives of new ways of occupying and thinking about the Historic Center and other places of memory.

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Author 1 – conception and design of the research; construction and processing of data; analysis and interpretation of data; systematization of final data; Improvement of the final draft.

Author 2 – conception and design of the research; analysis and interpretation of data; review and refinement of the final text; articulation of research findings in a reflective and integrative way.

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