



Representations of the Peripheral Urban Landscape from the Perspective of the Educating City

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Representação da paisagem urbana periférica na perspectiva da Cidade Educadora

RESUMO

Objetivo – Aprofundar e discutir as bases teóricas de uma atividade de extensão universitária realizada no âmbito de um programa de pós-graduação com escola pública estadual de ensinos fundamental e médio, que consistiu na representação da paisagem urbana periférica em murais de grandes dimensões em conjunto habitacional na zona leste de São Paulo, relacionando a atividade aos temas da identidade periférica e meio ambiente, à luz do conceito de Cidade Educadora e dos Objetivos do Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ODS) da Agenda 2030 da ONU.

Metodologia – A atividade de extensão ocorreu por meio de visitas ao local, palestras com pesquisadores sobre os temas da representação e da paisagem, oficinas realizadas em escolas públicas e em parcerias com museus de arte, finalizando com a elaboração de painel artístico com a escola pública e grafiteiros locais. Para fundamentar as ações, foi realizada uma revisão bibliográfica explorando os conceitos de Representação da Paisagem, Identidade e Diferença, Cidade Educadora e ODS. Para cumprir com o objetivo de aprofundar as bases teóricas da ação extensionista, fez-se a correlação entre teoria e prática por meio do cruzamento do referencial teórico com as ações realizadas de pintura mural em escola pública situada em área periférica da cidade de São Paulo.

Originalidade/relevância – Ações extensionistas tornaram-se parte importante do currículo formativo universitário e representam oportunidades de trocas de conhecimento entre a universidade e a sociedade, a partir das quais todos aprendem. O trabalho com escolas públicas de Ensino Fundamental e Médio situadas em áreas vulneráveis amplifica a relevância e abrangência das ações, pois envolve as novas gerações no exercício de caracterizar e refletir criticamente sobre a paisagem periférica, além de viabilizar ações para a transformação efetiva do espaço urbano. São beneficiados: os estudantes de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, ao terem contato com problemas concretos dos territórios estudantes da escola pública, que têm suas práticas, saberes e experiências valorizados e incorporados em atividades de ensino informal; a comunidade do entorno, por meio da transformação dos espaços públicos.

Resultados – A transformação das áreas livres da escola pública com participação de diversos atores (comunidade escolar, artistas convidados e universidade) permite o engajamento e o fortalecimento de vínculos entre a escola e o território, incentivando-a na problematização e significação de temas trabalhados pelo currículo escolar e contribuindo com a formação cidadã, ao envolver os jovens nos problemas da comunidade, em alinhamento aos ODS 4 e 11.

Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas – A revisão bibliográfica aproxima conceitos complementares nos campos da paisagem, representação, identidade e educação, constituindo uma transdisciplinaridade favorável ao fortalecimento da escola e da comunidade para atuarem na transformação do espaço periférico. A transdisciplinaridade vem de encontro à intersectorialidade presente na ideia da Cidade Educadora, que se viabiliza no território por meio de uma rede viva de equipamentos e agentes, abrangendo diferentes frentes de atuação previstas nos ODS. A correlação entre teoria e prática mostra-se importante para sedimentar a compreensão das ações pelo grupo extensionista e contribui com a reflexão sobre as metodologias praticadas, visando o aperfeiçoamento das práticas.

Contribuições sociais e ambientais – As ações extensionistas ligadas ao conceito de Cidade Educadora, ao proporem uma relação com a cidade por meio de uma intencionalidade educativa, problematizam a paisagem periférica e fortalecem a identidade local, abordando temas sociais, urbanos e ambientais. Essas ações trabalham o engajamento da comunidade na transformação da paisagem, convidando à participação cidadã. Ao reforçar a inserção da escola na sua comunidade, as ações extensionistas auxiliam na aplicação de práticas educacionais diversas em uma realidade concreta de vulnerabilidade, propiciando transformações efetivas naquele local.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Território educativo. Educação ambiental e patrimonial. Paisagem e identidade.

Representations of the Peripheral Urban Landscape from the Perspective of the Educating City

ABSTRACT

Objective – The main objective is to deepen and discuss the theoretical bases of a university outreach activity carried out within the scope of a postgraduate program with a state public elementary and secondary school, which consisted of the representation of the peripheral urban landscape in large-scale murals in a housing complex in the east zone



of São Paulo, relating the activity to the themes of peripheral identity and the environment, in light of the concept of Educating City and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda.

Methodology – The outreach activity was structured as site visits, lectures with researchers on representation and landscape, and workshops held in public schools and art museums, culminating in the creation of an artistic panel in partnership with a public school and local graffiti artists. To support those actions, a bibliographic review was carried out exploring the concepts of Landscape Representation, Identity and Difference, Educating City and the SDGs. In order to fulfill the objective of deepening the theoretical foundations of the outreach action, a correlation between theory and practice was established by cross-referencing the theoretical framework with the mural painting actions carried out in a public school located in a peripheral area of the city of São Paulo.

Originality/Relevance – Outreach initiatives have become an important part of the university academic curriculum and represent opportunities for knowledge exchange between the university and society, from which everyone learns. The work with public elementary and high schools located in vulnerable areas amplifies the relevance and scope of these initiatives, as it engages younger generations in the exercise of characterizing and critically reflecting on the peripheral landscape, in addition to enabling actions for the effective transformation of urban space. Those who benefit include: Architecture and Urbanism students, through contact with concrete territorial problems; public school students, whose practices, knowledge and experiences are valued and incorporated into informal educational activities; and the surrounding community, through the transformation of public spaces.

Results – The transformation of public school open spaces with the participation of diverse stakeholders (school community, guest artists, and university) allows for engagement and strengthening of ties between the school and the territory, encouraging the problematization and meaning of themes covered by the school curriculum and contributing to civic development by involving young people in community issues in alignment with the SDGs.

Theoretical/Methodological Contributions – The bibliographic review brings together complementary concepts in the fields of landscape, representation, identity and education, constituting a transdisciplinarity that favors the strengthening of the school and the community to act in the transformation of the peripheral space. Transdisciplinarity aligns with the intersectoriality contained in the idea of the Educating City, which materializes in the territory through a living network of facilities and agents, encompassing different areas of action foreseen in the SDGs. The correlation between theory and practice proves to be important for consolidating the understanding of the actions by the outreach group and contributes to the reflection on the methodologies practiced, aiming at the improvement of practices.

Social and Environmental Contributions – Outreach initiatives linked to the Educating City concept, by proposing a relationship with the city through an educational approach, problematize the peripheral landscape and strengthen local identity, addressing social, urban, and environmental issues. These initiatives foster community engagement in landscape transformation, encouraging citizen participation. By strengthening the school's integration into its community, outreach initiatives assist in the implementation of comprehensive educational policies in a concrete reality of vulnerability.

KEYWORDS: Educational territory. Environmental and heritage education. Landscape and Identity.

La representación del paisaje urbano periférico desde la perspectiva de la Ciudad Educadora

RESUMEN

Objetivo – Profundizar y discutir las bases teóricas de una actividad de extensión universitaria realizada en el ámbito de un programa de posgrado con una escuela pública estatal de enseñanza fundamental y secundaria, que consistió en la representación del paisaje urbano periférico en murales de gran formato en un conjunto habitacional de la zona este de São Paulo, relacionando la actividad a los temas de la identidad periférica y el medio ambiente, a la luz del concepto de Ciudad Educadora y de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) de la Agenda 2030 de la ONU.

Metodología – La actividad de extensión se desarrolló a través de visitas al lugar, conferencias con investigadores sobre los temas de la representación y el paisaje, y talleres realizados en escuelas públicas y museos de arte, culminando con la elaboración de un panel artístico en colaboración con una escuela pública y grafiteros locales. Para fundamentar las acciones, se realizó una revisión bibliográfica explorando los conceptos de Representación del Paisaje, Identidad y Diferencia, Ciudad Educadora y ODS. Para cumplir con el objetivo de profundizar las bases teóricas de la acción extensionista, se estableció una correlación entre teoría y práctica mediante el cruce del marco teórico con las acciones de pintura mural realizadas en una escuela pública situada en un área periférica de la ciudad de São



Paulo.

Originalidad/Relevancia – Las acciones extensionistas se han convertido en una parte importante del currículo formativo universitario y representan oportunidades de intercambio de conocimientos entre la universidad y la sociedad, de las cuales todos aprenden. El trabajo con escuelas públicas de enseñanza fundamental y media situadas en áreas vulnerables amplifica la relevancia y el alcance de las acciones, pues involucra a las generaciones más jóvenes en el ejercicio de caracterizar y reflexionar críticamente sobre el paisaje periférico, además de viabilizar acciones para la transformación efectiva del espacio urbano. Son beneficiados: los estudiantes de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, al tener contacto con problemas concretos de los territorios; los estudiantes de la escuela pública, cuyas prácticas, saberes y experiencias son valorados e incorporados en actividades de enseñanza informal; y la comunidad del entorno, por medio de la transformación de los espacios públicos.

Resultados – A transformação das áreas livres da escola pública com participação de diversos atores (comunidade escolar, artistas convidados e universidade) permite o engajamento e o fortalecimento de vínculos entre a escola e o território, incentivando-a na problematização e significação de temas trabalhados pelo currículo escolar e contribuindo com a formação cidadã, ao envolver os jovens nos problemas da comunidade em alinhamento aos ODS.

Contribuciones Teóricas/Metodológicas – La revisión bibliográfica aproxima conceptos complementarios en los campos del paisaje, la representación, la identidad y la educación, constituyendo una transdisciplinariedad favorable al fortalecimiento de la escuela y la comunidad para actuar en la transformación del espacio periférico. La transdisciplinariedad converge con la intersectorialidad contenida en la idea de la Ciudad Educadora, que se viabiliza en el territorio a través de una red viva de equipamientos y agentes, abarcando diferentes frentes de actuación previstos en los ODS. La correlación entre teoría y práctica se muestra importante para sedimentar la comprensión de las acciones por parte del grupo extensionista y contribuye a la reflexión sobre las metodologías practicadas, visando el perfeccionamiento de las prácticas.

Contribuciones Sociales y Ambientales – Las iniciativas de extensión vinculadas al concepto de Ciudad Educadora, al proponer una relación con la ciudad a través de un enfoque educativo, problematizan el paisaje periférico y fortalecen la identidad local, abordando problemáticas sociales, urbanas y ambientales. Estas iniciativas fomentan la participación comunitaria en la transformación del paisaje, fomentando la participación ciudadana. Al fortalecer la integración de la escuela en su comunidad, las iniciativas de extensión contribuyen a la implementación de políticas educativas integrales en una realidad concreta de vulnerabilidad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Territorio educativo. Educación ambiental y patrimonial. Paisaje e Identidad.

GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT





1 INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the school and the territory in which it is located is a fundamental point for the construction of a meaningful and emancipatory education. In light of the concept of the Educating City, which understands urban space and its relations as object, field, and agent of the pedagogical process, it is assumed that integral education is one that transcends the school walls and intertwines with the environment and everyday life, embracing the world as a classroom (Freire, 1987). The school is a highly widespread facility, present in the most diverse territories (Sanchez, 2013). It is understood that broad, generalist educational policy, upon landing in each school with its specific community and place, may develop pedagogical work that is appropriate to that reality and that makes sense to the students. Strengthening the bond between school and territory is, therefore, a way to enhance the school's social function and its educational role. By integrating the school into the reality to which it belongs, the territory becomes a powerful tool and the very objective of the pedagogical process, constructing, together with the community, ways to implement changes that impact the quality of life of that population.

In this context, this article reports on an University outreach project that sought to reflect upon and work on the relationship between school and territory through the valorization and representation of the peripheral landscape. The project is based on the understanding that the success of pedagogical work and the strengthening of the local social fabric are enhanced when the community sees itself represented and participating in what is conceived and produced by the school. By employing modes of representation that are locally recognized and legitimized, such as graffiti, the outreach project gives visibility and voice to local narratives, building bridges between the school and the community.

2 OBJECTIVES

The objective is to report on an activity of representing the peripheral landscape on large-scale murals carried out by a state public elementary and high school in a housing complex in the eastern zone of São Paulo, relating the activity to the themes of landscape representation, peripheral identity, and the Educating City, also bringing to the fore the environmental discussion and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda. The secondary objectives are: to deepen the bibliographic review on the Educating City, landscape representation, and identity; to transform the environment surrounding the school through mural paintings; and to involve the school community in matters related to the territory, strengthening the bond between the school and the community.

3 METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the university outreach project "The public school and the educating city: exploring and intervening in the school environment and its surroundings" was structured in complementary phases, articulating the immersion of Architecture and Urbanism students in a peripheral territory and critical training on the relationships between art, landscape, and representation.



In the first stage, the Architecture students worked directly with public school students in an affective mapping workshop on the territory, in which points of interest and memory of the local landscape were identified. In the second stage, aimed at expanding the students' repertoire on the relationships between art, landscape, and the periphery, guided visits were held at cultural institutions — the Maria Antônia Center and the Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC), aiming to provide direct contact with peripheral artistic practices and their modes of representation. The final intervention consisted of the collaborative execution of a mural painting at the partner public school, carried out jointly by invited graffiti artists, young people from the school, and university participants, consolidating the process as a collective experience of production and resignification of space.

To support the account of the outreach activity, a narrative bibliographic review was carried out, addressing important concepts about landscape representation and the construction of identity, deepening the idea of the Educating City and its dialogue with the Sustainable Development Goals. Next, the results of the activities carried out are presented, which consist of the joint elaboration of artistic panels with elementary school students. Action research was adopted, an approach in which researchers and participants learn together in facing concrete problems. For the reporting of the results, a descriptive procedure was used that characterizes the research as qualitative. The conclusion brings reflections that unfolded from the application of the research, in light of the theoretical concepts presented, correlating the bibliographic references and the practical actions undertaken.

4 RESULTS

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4.1 Theoretical framework: the representation of landscape

Landscape, as a complex and dynamic product of the interaction between humans and nature, consists of multiple situations in which different visions and relationships present themselves in an overlapping manner. Even though it is the result of a set of actions and relationships previously practiced and lived in a given location, landscape does not manifest itself as a static and consolidated given; it may be more adequately considered a process under construction (Bender apud Tilley, 2006, p.7). In line with this definition, Milton Santos formulates the concept of landscape as the material set of visible forms, resulting from the historical relationship between society and nature, which "is not formed only by volumes, but also by colors, movements, odors, sounds, etc." (Santos, 1988). Santos reminds us that landscape is not to be confused with space, for the latter also includes social practices, movement, and the life that animates materiality. From this perspective, landscape is a material system in transformation that offers itself to appreciation and is subject to the actions of the individual and the collective. The author also notes that "the dimension of landscape is the dimension of perception," so that each person sees landscape differently, emphasizing the importance of the human cognitive apparatus, education, and culture.

Thus, in addition to its physical dimension, landscape also carries a subjective dimension, which can be understood and communicated individually or collectively. This dimension means that landscape is susceptible to different interpretations, made visible to one's own and others' recognition and thought through its representation. "Representation becomes



a key tool for interpreting landscape, capable of revealing its complexities, dynamics, and latent potentialities" (Cianci, 2024, p.11, our translation). Maria Grazia Cianci emphasizes that, by revealing these potentialities and latencies, the representation of landscape ceases to be merely a mode of understanding and becomes a means to intervene, imagine, and construct the landscape itself. The author argues that the map of a territory is made to understand it, so that it may then be transformed. Understood in this way, the representation of landscape becomes a tool of knowledge and design, more than an end in itself, capable of overlaying historical times and opening paths to resignify the past and the present and to imagine new possibilities that will impact the future.

For the author, we must consider that the very act of "representing" is, in itself, already a "transforming," since the representation of landscape is not the mere transposition, direct and unbiased, of elements of reality into the means and forms of representation. Any representations will depend on who elaborates them, who will select elements considered important according to their experiences and values, while others will be discarded. The creator of the representation will present the elements of the landscape according to their point of view and experience and, for this purpose, will use the language and means at their disposal that they consider appropriate. This process establishes a unique and specular relationship between the author of the representation and the object represented, which not only is guided by critical reflection on the subject itself and on the landscape, but also redefines, in this process, the way of perceiving and experiencing reality and the desire to transform it.

Still on the representation of landscape, another layer of understanding opens up that seems fundamental to us. The representation of landscape encompasses non-visible elements, such as power relations or the symbolic role of certain elements (Cianci, 2024, p.11; Magalhães, 2025, p.182), and can translate deeper identities and reach aspects that go far beyond mere appearance. Thus, in addition to exposing visible reality, the process of landscape representation encompasses intangible aspects that were part of its formation and that continue to determine relationships and ways of life that develop within it. By containing this layer of relations, it is noted that the representation of landscape (just as the very construction of landscape) becomes a dispute, centered on the possibilities of languages and different narrative constructions that may feed back into reality itself.

Finally, and not least importantly, just as the appreciation and experience of landscape are an aesthetic experience, so too is its representation. This duality, composed of the concrete and simultaneous existence of both landscape and its representation, stimulates a new look at both, contributing to a complex experience that intertwines art and life. Jacques Rancière, when referring to the relationship between art and life, especially in literature, argues that the romantic aesthetic revolution eliminated the antagonism between reality and fiction, contributing to the indefinition of a clear boundary between the reason of facts and the reason of fiction (Rancière, 2009, p.54). The author states that what we call fiction, in the field of art, is a powerful rearrangement of the signs of language that has legitimate ties with reality, being capable of penetrating it and giving new approaches of meaning to the empirical universe of things. Thus, even though it is an autonomous field, art does not detach itself from the world, but presents itself as a sophisticated device for enhancing discourse and perception, by attributing significations and meanings to the things of the world. For Rancière, "the real must be fictionalized in order to be thought" (Ibidem, p.59). Thus, art is an instrument of intelligibility



that has a reverse effect on the real, capable of defining variations of sensibility that "reconfigure the map of the sensible, confounding the functionality of gestures and rhythms adapted to the naturalized cycles of production, reproduction, and submission," in order to attribute to them a revolutionary dimension. This dimension will point toward the "formation of statements that call into question the distribution of roles, territories, and languages" (Ibidem, p.59), summoning political subjects to challenge the previously given and established sharing of the world.

4.2 Theoretical framework: identity and difference

Analogously to the way landscape and its representation are dynamic, constructed, and contested according to a system of spatial, social, symbolic, and power relations, identities are also not natural givens, but social constructions. Being the result of acts of linguistic creation, identities cannot be understood outside the systems of relations and signification that forged them and that seek to establish their meaning.

Tomaz Tadeu da Silva argues that identities and differences, like the language on which they depend, are marked by instability and indeterminacy (Silva, 2014, p.78). According to this author, identity and difference are inversely complementary, much like a figure-ground relationship. Both are produced within the same process, according to which identity is affirmed as a self-referential and self-sufficient positivity, while difference is associated with the other, in opposition to that identity.

For the author, statements about identity and difference become a dispute between unequal forces (Ibidem, p.81), marked by the power to include or exclude people and groups from the socially valued core (Ibidem, p.82). The segregation of populations that results from this not only classifies but hierarchizes individuals and groups, determining their acceptance, participation, and access to the city in the social, political, spatial, educational, economic, health, and quality-of-life spheres, among others.

In dialogue with the school, Silva proposes the implementation of a pedagogy that works with identity and difference through the questioning of the very system of representation that supports these constructions. According to the author, pedagogy and the school curriculum should offer opportunities for children and young people to develop "critical capacity and the questioning of dominant systems and forms of representation of identities and differences" (Ibidem, p.91). It is considered that, alongside the development of analytical capacity that seeks to understand the motivations and power dynamics that determine social hierarchies, one should combine the exercise of means of representation, bringing together languages and artistic expressions that are adherent to the culture and experience of children and young people belonging to non-hegemonic groups.

In dialogue with Silva's position, which suggests questioning the very system of identity construction, Judith Butler (2018) calls for the questioning of the political, economic, social, and cultural structures that differentially value human lives, rather than simply accepting the differential value attributed by these structures. The author questions the impossibility of building a dignified life for oneself when immersed in an unequal context, structured by distinct layers of exploitation and erasure strategies—a context capable of exerting, upon individuals and groups, forces over which one has no control. For the author, through these mechanisms



established in society, lives that matter are differentiated from those that do not. The author makes use of the concept of biopolitics, understood as

powers that organize life, including those that differentially expose lives to precarious conditions as part of a broader administration of populations by governmental and non-governmental means, and that establish a set of measures for the differential valuation of life itself (Butler, 2018, p.216).

According to the author, in order to confront the world constructed by these mechanisms, it is necessary to adopt a critical view of the categories and structures that produce these forms of inequality (Ibidem, p.219).

Butler and Silva understand the system of identity representation not merely as a fixed translation of groups and social dynamics, but call for its questioning and for the exercise of other possibilities of meaning and forms of existence, whether by exploring the instability that is inherent to language itself (Silva, 2014), or by enhancing performativity strategies, which destabilize and activate the construction of identities through the presence of the body and political action. According to Butler,

the concept of performativity shifts the emphasis from identity as description, as what it is — an emphasis that is, in a way, maintained by the concept of representation — to the idea of 'becoming,' to a conception of identity as movement and transformation (Butler, 2018).

Performativity demands the participation of embodied subjects and in collaborative association, occupying public space to render their existence visible and to stake a claim to it, which aligns with the outreach and education practices we will describe below.

4.3 Theoretical framework: Educating City, the importance of territory, and the SDGs

Formalized in the Charter of Educating Cities in 1990, the concept of the Educating City recognizes in cities a comprehensive and continuous educational role. In doing so, it advocates for the necessary rapprochement between school and territory, and the coordination of various sectors, as well as public policies, to expand education beyond formal teaching and beyond school walls.

The daily life of the public school already extends beyond the limits of its walls in the very coming and going of children, when they turn the urban journey to school into an opportunity to experience the city (Bernet, 2004). Through this and other experiences, formal education ceases to be the only prevailing educational paradigm. In an Educating City, different agents and aspects of the territory interact in educational processes. The shift in scope that comes from inserting the school into the territory necessarily implies expanding the traditional pedagogical curriculum, often abstract, anachronistic, atopic, and exogenous, so that it incorporates the concrete reality of the student (social, temporal, spatial), bringing current themes and pedagogical practices not found in formal education (Zuim and Dias, 2020). Outdated curricula disregard situated learning, overestimating the power of formal education and ignoring that young people learn about democracy and citizenship from all their life experiences (Biesta & Lawy, 2006).



The idea of the Educating City presupposes that the school takes the city as support, object, and agent of its interest and action, altering pedagogical practices. As support, it is understood that educational action can occur in any urban space. As object, it is understood that the city presents themes that align with the school curriculum and suggests content to be developed in pedagogical actions. As an agent, the city is seen as an organism that teaches, transmits values, and shapes citizens (Bernet apud Zuim and Dias, 2020, p.465).

Educational practices grounded in the concept of the Educating City should appropriate the distinctions that characterize peripheral space, with its specific challenges (economic, spatial, environmental), as well as the potentialities arising from the dynamism of daily life, culture, local knowledge, and survival strategies that permeate these territories (Santos, 2004). In this sense, it is the school's role, aligned with the principles of the Educating City, to articulate with various sectors and agents to problematize and reveal the structural differences and potentialities of the territory, helping subjects in the construction of their worldview. Zuim and Dias (2020, p.463) argue that the Educating City is precisely this network—collectively constructed and agreed upon—of committed agents for whom the educational role of the city becomes clear.

Permeating the agents of this network, intersectorality—one of the pillars of the Educating City—brings together the fields of education, culture, health, environment, politics, justice, human rights, and citizenship, among others, with emphasis on urbanism, which addresses themes such as the right to the city, sustainable cities, urban mobility, housing, public facilities, basic sanitation, water supply, waste collection, urban drainage, parks and green areas, etc. Within this intertwining of themes, agents and facilities, the Sustainable Development Goals are broadly contemplated: 1. No Poverty; 2. Zero Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture; 3. Good Health and Well-being; 4. Quality Education; 5. Gender Equality; 6. Clean Water and Sanitation; 7. Affordable and Clean Energy; 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth; 9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure; 10. Reduced Inequalities; 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities; 12. Responsible Consumption and Production; 13. Climate Action; 14. Life Below Water; 15. Life on Land; 16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions; and 17. Partnerships for the Goals.

The outreach actions carried out at the partner public school focus on goals 4, 11, 13, 14, and 15.

Once committed to themes and problems at the local scale, educational practices can unfold into concrete actions for improving daily life. Citizen participation is thus stimulated, by involving the school community and the broader community in the joint construction of possibilities for these territories. For young people, involvement in these processes assumes a formative and political character: by participating in the diagnosis, discussion, and transformation of their own territory, they not only develop a critical gaze on the inequalities that cross it, but also recognize themselves as agents capable of intervening collectively in reality.

4.4 Results of the outreach activity

The following report covers the final stage of the outreach activity that explored representation through interventions in the landscape surrounding the school, by means of mural painting at a partner state public school with elementary and high school classes. This is

a state school located in the Encosta Norte Housing Complex, in the eastern zone of São Paulo. The complex contains single-family homes and multi-family residential buildings, as well as eleven schools and various health, cultural, and citizenship facilities (Imbroni, Pinheiro, 2023). The report presents two moments: the first intervention, carried out on the school's external walls, conducted by the school's teachers; the second intervention, on the wall of the shed/sports court, next to a large open area, executed collectively by graffiti artists, elementary school students, and outreach project participants.

The first painting (PANEL 1) took place on the large external walls that surround the school's sports court. This action addresses the school administration's ongoing struggle against irregular waste disposal on the adjacent sidewalks and within the school grounds. In addition to solid waste dumping, the setting of garbage on fire poses a risk to the school community and the building's physical integrity. To address the problem, at the administration's initiative, the theme of waste was incorporated into the school's pedagogical curriculum across various subjects. Complementary to the waste issue is the presence of a spring and the Tijuco Preto Creek within the Jagatá community, located in front of the school. The creek, which is part of the daily reality of many students who live in the community, continually receives household sewage and solid waste disposal.

Figure 1 – Panel No. 1. School wall before and after graffiti at Rua Teodomiro Pereira.



Source: Lanna Arantes, Apr. 19, 2024, and Mariana Oliveira, Feb. 2025.

Figure 2 – Waste accumulation at the corner of Rua Vinte and Rua Ary Cordovil; cleaning, installation of dumpsters, and intervention on the Rua Vinte sidewalk with painting and installation of a flowerbed.



Source: Mariana Oliveira, 2021.

The school administration's first action to address the problem took place in 2021, when the administration requested that the city hall clean Rua Vinte, at the corner with Rua Ary



Cordovil, and install dumpsters for proper debris disposal (Figure 2). Subsequently, a flowerbed was built next to the wall, receiving vegetation to discourage irregular dumping. In a second moment, in an attempt to bring accessibility, water, and basic sanitation to the Jagatá community, the school administration sought to bring the community and the city hall closer together. Even though it did not result in effective works in Jagatá, issues related to water and pollution of the Tijuco Preto Creek were embraced by the school and, together with waste disposal, were represented in the graffiti on its external walls.

The mural painting was an action that represented advances in different fields:

- In the identification and recognition of the school facility, strengthening its presence in the neighborhood, by demarcating that the extensive wall surrounding the sports court and the grounds delimited by it belong to the school;
- In the appreciation of local identity, highlighting, in the representation, the territory and the social groups and themes linked to them;
- In citizen conduct, by curbing irregular dumping and burning of solid waste, whether within the school grounds or on the sidewalk limits, keeping the students' route and stay clean and safe;
- In popular education, by informing about environmental care, water, and living beings, transforming the wall into an educational panel;
- In the construction of everyday landscape, intervening directly in the quality of the environment through an artistic panel.

The second painting (PANEL 2), developed during the outreach activity, had as its theme the history of the housing complex in which the school is located. The complex was built through self-help housing (*mutirão*) and results from a process of popular struggle for housing. Based on research on social movements and self-help housing in the eastern zone of São Paulo, the Architecture and Urbanism undergraduate students sketched ideas that were presented to the school (Figure 3) and subsequently adapted to compose a graffiti piece on the external wall of the shed. The graffiti was carried out collectively, in an action coordinated by collaborating artists Waldir Grisolia Junior (Age) and Ednaldo Otoni (Kombo), with the participation of public school students and outreach participants, resulting in a large-scale mural.

The inclusion of the artists in the making of the panel enhanced student participation and transformed the initial drawings into a colorful panel that intersperses fragments of the landscape with symbolic elements. On the left side, the panel shows the existing landscape of buildings surrounding the green area with the main spring of the Encosta Norte Complex. On the right side, it depicts the self-help builders constructing their homes. In the center, students are represented, motivated by knowledge and care for the planet, looking after the past and the future.

The literalness of the panel (Figure 4) leaves no doubt as to its message. It is possible to perceive:

- A look at the local landscape that reveals its historical dimension and resignifies the notion of heritage. The represented landscape, whose physical support organizes daily life, is presented positively;
- The importance of participation and collective struggle for the transformation of place, represented in the image by self-help construction;

- The presence of the school, which places educational intentionality upon local reality.

Figure 3 – Drawings by Matheus Santos Oliveira and Mariana Santos Oliveira, Architecture students (USJT), resulting from the immersion and landscape representation workshops in the territory. The sketches refer to the housing complex buildings and the self-help construction of homes.



Source: Authors' archive.

Figure 4 – Panel No. 2 under development. Architecture students' drawings reinterpreted for the school shed wall. Color filling carried out by public school students.



Source: Authors' archive, Dec. 7, 2024.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

From the cases presented, it is possible to develop reflections and establish articulations with the theoretical framework of the research, highlighting points raised by the authors studied that are evident in the practical actions and that enrich both the analysis of the actions and the understanding of the concepts addressed.

The most immediate consequence of the outreach practice was the tangible transformation of the urban environment surrounding the school. To make it viable, a plural group was formed, integrated by the school administration, coordinators, teachers, and students, together with local artists and the university. Collectively, the participants committed themselves to improving the common space, incorporating local themes and aligning with the institution's pedagogical direction. Beyond exercising the representation of landscape and



promoting a direct intervention in it, such actions materialize the concept of the Educating City, by assuming urban space simultaneously as field, object, and agent of the educational process, involving and positively impacting the community.

Figure 5 – Students participate in the elaboration of Panel 1, with environmental themes: water, waste, and planet preservation.



Source: Mariana Oliveira, Feb. 2025.

In this context, the city presents itself as a field of action, since the paintings are carried out in public sidewalk space or in areas of community use. It also presents itself as a theme, by providing environmental, historical, urban planning, public health, and citizen participation arguments. Finally, the city acts as an educational agent, insofar as it induces, directly or indirectly, new conduct in urban space and various reflections on themes such as the environment, waste disposal, urban cleanliness, and community participation.

Regarding this last aspect, it should be emphasized that citizen participation demands the formation of the subject and continuous engagement to exercise it. Beyond the development of a historical consciousness, such formation aims to expand dialogical processes at the interface between the individual and the collective. By engaging children and young people in activities that problematize, value, or transform the life of the community, conditions are created for students to grow civically involved with the issues of their territory, which suggests the potential for a trajectory of more active citizen participation in adult life (Fernandes, 2024, p.68).

The concrete results of the action demonstrate that engagement in collective practices is capable of modifying urban space, promoting tangible improvements in vulnerable areas. Panel 2 illustrates this, by evoking the memory of the population engaged in the process of constructing that housing complex. It is crucial to note, however, that there are no guarantees of perpetuity for such initiatives, since decisions and the involvement of participants are constructed and validated at each initiative and at each stage of the process. The school's very commitment to activities engaged with the territory may fluctuate over time, depending on the current administration. The action carried out in 2024 took place at a favorable moment, in which the school administration enabled and fostered collective work, opening itself to dialogues and partnerships with the community, the University, artists, etc. A latent concern is thus outlined with adverse scenarios that may not only fail to implement but even hinder collaborative and transformative initiatives.

Figure 6 – Panel No.2 completed, whose theme strengthens memory and the bond with the territory; the green area among the residential buildings is highlighted.



Source: Authors' archive.

Another point of convergence between the mural paintings and the theoretical framework lies in the use of representation languages appropriate to the students' realities. The partner school has long maintained a history of extracurricular activities aligned with the community's expectations. Whether cultural (music, dance) or sports-related, such practices continuously offer students opportunities for improvement and sociability, based on a repertoire and values specific to the periphery, which positively encourages the identity construction of the peripheral subject.

In both reported cases, graffiti was chosen—a counter-hegemonic urban art expression with great resonance in the peripheries. As an integral part of hip hop culture, together with urban dances (such as breakdancing) and rap, graffiti translates social struggles and reaffirms peripheral identities. It is noted in the panel a concern to represent racial issues, although gender issues were overlooked, which underscores the importance of involving women artists to intervene in public space.

Finally, it is worth highlighting that the actions establish a fruitful dialogue with various sectors and fields of knowledge, emphasizing language and the arts, education, history, urbanism, health, and ecology. This transdisciplinary approach reinforces the school's role in the



integral formation of subjects, thus articulating with a consistent range of points listed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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STATEMENTS

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- **Review & Final Editing:** Maria Isabel Imbrunito.
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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

We, Maria Isabel Imbrunito and Franklin Roberto Ferreira de Paula, declare that the manuscript entitled "Representations of the Peripheral Urban Landscape from the Perspective of the Educating City":

1. **Financial Relationships:** There are no financial relationships that could influence the results or interpretation of the work.
 2. **Financial Relationships:** There are no financial relationships that could influence the results or interpretation of the work.
 3. **Personal Conflicts:** There are no personal conflicts of interest related to the content of the manuscript.
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