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# Architecture with childhood Rethinking and reflecting on public spaces seen through the 8-80 lens

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**Abstract:** Bringing children closer to the issues of culture and civic education in architecture and critical thinking is essential because only by knowing and enhancing their respective heritages is it possible to appreciate the present and build the future of cities with them and for them, where a city is a place of construction of collective knowledge that encompasses the challenges of sustainability and the objectives of the 2030 Agenda of the United Nations. From SUJ (Jesuit University System) we have a strong commitment to the protection and care of minors and vulnerable people. In recent years, a great effort has been made to move from a culture of protection and care to ensure access to culture to safe environments. The concept of Friendly Cities 8-80 is taken up again, based on the premise: If we design the city for an 8-year-old and an 80-year-old, we will have a city that allows coexistence and harmony in a way that fosters equity, stimulates healthy lifestyles, and promotes sustainability for more diverse users. Good public space design including beauty, sustainability, and accessibility are keywords of the new Bauhaus, capable of astonishing, reflecting culture and the values of a community, influencing, or “forcing” people to engage with their daily environment to address the new global challenges of climate change, pollution, and resource scarcity.

**Keywords:** RWYC (Reconnecting with your culture); Architecture and childhood; Pedagogical method; Collective public space; Universal accessibility.

## 1. Introduction

In the Bauhaus had a social and creative panorama of the moment headed by Walter Gropius, one of its members Schlemmer, said: *“These four years of the life of the Bauhaus reflect, not only a period in the history of art but in history itself, also because the disintegration of a nation and an era is reflected in it.”*

And that is how this project begins, of the history, culture, and heritage of cities studied from the hermeneutics of cities.

The term ‘hermeneutics’. Hermeneutics comes from the Greek ‘hermeneutic which means to express, explain, translate, clarify or interpret. Hermeneut means interpretation, the meaning of “art of interpretation”, it seems to have appeared for the first time in 1654 in the work of J.C. Dann Hauer Hermeneutical sacra save methods *exponendarum sacrarium litterarum*.

At the end of 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was signed at the UN headquarters; representatives of different nations agreed on some points for the protection, provision, and participation of children. The agreements that make up this document aspire to improve the life of the child, in general, it is specified as an obligation of adults to think very well about the future of the child and respect their opinions. Eleven years after the meeting, these agreements have been partially fulfilled. In the field of architecture, children must be considered a demanding being and a user of cities.

The International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was signed on December 13, 2006, in New York City, United States, ratified by Spain in 2007 and by Chile in 2008.

Under (f) Universal Accessibility it states:

To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and to participate in all aspects of life, states shall take appropriate measures to ensure equal access for persons with disabilities to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, and other facilities and services open or provided to the public or for public use.

Art 9 obliges to take appropriate measures to ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to the physical environment, transportation, information, and communication [1].

Likewise, this Convention declares the following articles in favour of children with disabilities: Art. 7 1:

Art. 7 1. States Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure that all children with disabilities fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.

2. In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the primary consideration shall be the protection of the best interests of the child.

3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight by their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to receive assistance appropriate to their disability and age in exercising that right.

The present research pursues the objectives of Quality Education of the United Nations Agenda 2030 [2]. Bringing young generations closer to the values and contents of local cultures, strengthening local identities, knowledge of local traditions, and building a strong awareness and knowledge of their cultural heritage (tangible and intangible or living heritage) because only by knowing, observing, and appropriating their respective cultural heritages, is it possible to build future cities that are better for children.

It is based on the pedagogical method RWYC (Reconnecting with your Culture) and the qualitative method through interviews with children from 8-12 years old, the realization of two workshops, a panel where interdisciplinarity is promoted, and inviting all disciplines to question the value of culture, the city and people; in this way, it is intended to propose the teaching of “Cultural Heritage” and promote “Universal Accessibility” and build strong awareness and knowledge of their cultural heritage.

*“Girls and boys have a great deal to say in the architectural design and planning of the cities of the present and future.”*

The document entitled “Global Cities Friendly to Older Adults: A Guide”, published in 2007, states that these cities should have outdoor spaces and accessible buildings; housing that facilitates the autonomy and independence of older adults; safe, respectful, and accessible transportation services; training and employment options; health services, planning, and emergency care; and communication strategies that take this sector of the population into account.

The elements of urban facilities have as their user population-specific age groups that take advantage or can take advantage of the services they provide on a

regular or eventual basis and that constitute the potential demand [3].

One of the great challenges of urban planning lies in managing the growth of cities. Year after year, large cities are increasing their populations and it is estimated that by 2050 70% of the population will be living in them. But how can we build sustainable, healthy, and equitable cities that encourage urban diversity? [4].

The concept of the 8-80 City seeks to modify the ways of making and designing cities to achieve people's well-being and happiness. The idea is to think from 8-year-old children and 80-year-old adults to generate a safe and comfortable environment that provides spaces from walks, parks, bike paths, buildings, and others that can meet the needs of these most vulnerable groups of society. By including children, the elderly, people living in poverty, with physical or mental disabilities, or belonging to different ethnic groups, the aim is to build cities that work for them and therefore for everyone.

*"If everything we do in our public spaces is excellent for an 8-year-old child and an 80-year-old adult, then it will be excellent for people of all ages" [5].*

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines age-friendly cities as those in which policies, services, and structures, as well as the physical and social environment, are designed to support and enable older people to remain active, i.e. to live safely, enjoy good health and participate fully in community life.

An age-friendly city encourages active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation, and safety to improve the quality of life for people as they age.

Ways to design for all according to Cities 8-80 include:

- CREATING COMFORTABLE PLACES. Even the most active park user needs a place to sit from time to time. Well-placed, welcoming park seating is especially important for seniors. Quality seating encourages people to use parks more often and for longer.

- PROVIDE AMENITIES. Minor elements, such as water fountains, clean and safe restrooms, informative signage, and informational signage speak volumes about the quality of a park and its community. Signage should be legible, attractive, and consistent. While litter garbage cans may be a good idea, they can also

- SUPPORT PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES. Structures and equipment in parks and public spaces should public spaces should appeal to users of

diverse ages, abilities, and interests. Playgrounds should be available and have equipment suitable for young children, school-age children (including adolescents), and even adults.

Natural design elements, such as gardens, can encourage outdoor activities, local pride, and intergenerational projects.

The flexible design allows spaces to be customized for different uses.

Large parks offer spaces for active, passive, and contemplative leisure. A mix of sports facilities, public art, open spaces, quiet nooks and crannies, jogging trails, and seating areas create a park that has something for everyone [6].

## 2. From the city to the public space

The city can be defined as a multipurpose space, as a social product resulting from historical processes that have left their mark on the urban landscape; it presents, in turn, a great social and cultural diversity with its conflicts and regulatory norms [7].

The city is a very valuable resource since it has been shaped by the different political, social, economic, and cultural situations that have shaped the history of a place; heritage is the visible part of history that allows a scientific approach to the past.

The didactic itineraries, due to their great educational advantages, are one of the most used strategies in the teaching and learning of cultural heritage. They enable the integration of the individual in the realization of active practice and direct contact with the environment and, therefore, with reality. Likewise, they allow deepening the knowledge and contrast in an experimental way, events, cultural and historical-artistic facts, and to acquire effective feelings towards their city and its inhabitants.

The use of the city as a didactic resource implies developing strategies in which the citizen is more than a mere spectator and becomes involved in the construction of knowledge, becoming the protagonist of his or her learning. This attitude of responsibility will depend to a large extent on their motivation to learn significantly, but also on whether the intervention carried out allows citizens to develop their observation and perception skills, as well as their intellectual maturity to value their environment and their community, feeling part of it [8].

Within the dimensions of public space is the cultural dimension, which consists of a space of history, identification with the city's past expresses identities and origins. This dimension becomes a space of social relationship, of daily symbolic identification, of cultural expression and integration, physically representing the idea of the collective in the territory of the city as a fact of everyday life. Therefore, the intervention actions in this area must first of all concentrate on knowing and understanding the people as an inherent issue of the territory. Finally, understanding the environment around the people, being at the same time the space of the city space for the construction and consolidation of citizenship [9].

## 2.1 Barriers to public space

According to the evaluation of the space, there are different types of barriers that prevent the full participation of all Persons with Particular Accessibility Needs (PENPA), in their respective scales:

1. Spatial barriers:
  - a. Urbanistic.
  - b. Architectural.
2. Communicative barriers: Visual, auditory and tactile systemic signage.
3. Object barriers: street furniture.
4. Operational barriers: those that are the responsibility of social protocols and the functioning of the city. It also includes those derived from citizen service protocols.
5. Attitudinal barriers [9].

## 3. The 7 principles of Universal Design

According to [10] in his thesis entitled: "Design criteria in public spaces and buildings for children with physical disabilities" he points out that there are 7 basic and fundamental principles of universal design.

1. Equitable use: The design is useful and marketable to people of varying abilities. 1a. Provide the same means of use for all users: identical where possible; equivalent was not. 1b. Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any user. 1c. Privacy, security, and safety provisions should be equally available to all users. 1d. Make the design appealing to all users.

The flexibility of use: The design adapts to a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

2. 2a. Provide options in methods of use. 2b. Accommodate right-handed or left-handed access and use. 2c. Facilitate user accuracy and precision. 2d. Provide adaptability to the user's pace.
3. Simple and intuitive use: The use of design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current level of concentration. 3a. Eliminate unnecessary complexity. 3b. Be consistent with user expectations and intuition. 3c. Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills. 3d. Organize information according to its importance. 3e. Provide effective prompts and feedback during and after task completion.
4. Perceptible Information: The design communicates the necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of environmental conditions or the user's sensory capabilities. 4a. Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information. 4b. Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its environment. 4c. Maximize the "readability" of essential information. 4d. Distinguish elements so that they can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions). 4e. Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by persons with sensory limitations.
5. Tolerance for error: The design minimizes risks and adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions. 5a. Organize elements to minimize risks and errors: most used, most accessible elements; Hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or protected. 5b. Provide warnings of hazards and errors. 5c. Provide fail-safe functions. 5d. Discourage unconscious action in tasks requiring vigilance.
6. Low physical strain: The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue. 6a. Enable the user to maintain a neutral body position. 6b. Use reasonable operating forces. 6c. Minimize repetitive actions. 6d. Minimize sustained physical exertion.
7. Size and space for approach and use: Adequate size and space are provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use, regardless of the user's body size, posture, or mobility. 7a. Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user. 7b. Make all components comfortable for any seated or standing user. 7c. Accommodate variations in hand and grip size. 7d. Provide adequate space for

the use of assistive devices or personal assistance [11].

## 4. Methodology

The word culture, according to the RAE, comes from “to cultivate”. For [12] the concept comes from the Latin root *collar*, which is associated with activities of preservation, attention, and care. Over time, the concept was modified and altered by the effect of Western modernity and scientific thought, adjusting to denominations coming from German romanticism, through which *kultur* was called a representation of “values, meanings, linguistic signs, and symbols shared by a group of people.

Jordán [13] synthesized the concept as a set of meanings that give a sense in the way of understanding the physical, social and spiritual reality of a context where it is inserted.

Luis Herrera [14] in his text “Culture as Praxis” mentions that: In the first meaning, culture is clarified as a social result, therefore, as a product about the strength or position of the actors within a scenario in society. The hierarchy, then, contains visions of diverse nature concerning the social role that the actors perform.

The methodology used in this article is based on the pedagogical method and the qualitative method, through the application of interviews and a panel with children from Latin America and France.

The pedagogical method “Reconnect with your culture” brings children and young people closer to the issues of culture and civic formation of their respective heritages, based on culture and thus favoring dialogue and interaction between the different disciplines with an ethical and moral approach to build a good society and, therefore, the development of the nations of the world. The method has the following objectives:

- Bringing the younger generations closer to the values and contents of local cultures.
- Strengthen local identities, knowledge of local traditions and build strong awareness and knowledge of their cultural heritage (tangible and intangible or living heritage).
- To foster intergenerational and intercultural dialogue between different nations.

MISSION to put the PEOPLE and their CREATIVITY back at the center. Analysing the realities of the different

countries of the world, from the Far East to the Far West, to activate a new “HUMANISM” starting with the younger generations for the near future.

This pedagogical method is aimed at elementary and high schools around the world and students between the ages of 5 and 17. Children, assisted by their teachers, are invited to take an exploratory journey within the cultural heritage of their community, city, and country, to draw and share their own experience of knowledge in contact with historical, artistic, and cultural heritage. The international project aims to analyse the different cultural approaches and methods of analysis prepared in the different communities of the world to create a network and allow the exchange of experiences and initiatives. This project is also intended to apply a new educational method to introduce schools, colleges, and universities, the study of history and cultural heritage, two fundamental themes to achieve an ethically better world.

The project is based on the UN-issued 2030 Agenda, a program to generate sustainable development.

For this initiative, a particular emphasis is placed on point number 4 on “Quality education”, supplemented by the principles of inclusion and equity. This item of 2030 Agenda aims to achieve important and equitable quality education, promoting the opportunity for lifelong learning for all. That is why the project “Reconnecting with your Culture” is aimed at all school students around the world and aims to generate personalized activities, which require special supports [15].

The quality of education, inclusive and equitable, must be accompanied by the cultural factor, understand that within the pillars of human life culture must always be present as an essential element from which a future is projected where tolerance, utility, respect, among others, are key pieces for proper growth as humanity.

The qualitative methodology carried out through interviews arises from the need to inquire individually to each child, how he or she perceives the collective public space of the world with the pedagogical method “Reconnect with your culture”, in this way it is intended to propose the teaching of “Local Cultural Heritage” and promote “Universal Accessibility”, for real participation of children with disabilities in public spaces, to strengthen local identities, build strong awareness and knowledge of their cultural heritage (tangible, intangible and value-based heritage). We are convinced that it is only through this method that children with disabilities can truly participate in public spaces to strengthen local identities and build strong awareness and knowledge of

their cultural heritage (tangible, intangible, and value-based heritage).

We are convinced that only through culture-based training can we achieve a conscious, responsible, and empathetic society in community and intercultural dialogue.

The workshops focuses on the right of all people to make use and enjoy public spaces and buildings, for this reason, the following questions are proposed: Are children with disabilities considered when designing cities? Is there a Universal Design where all people are included?

Universal design is a design guide for products, environments, programs, and services that can be used by all people, where we will include children, people with disabilities, women, etc. without the need for adaptation, it is conceived from the beginning usable and applicable to all.

The workshop arises from the need to know how the collective public space is perceived from the vision of the children of the world with the pedagogical method "Reconnect with your culture". In this way, we intend to propose the teaching of "local cultural heritage" and free access to children with disabilities to be included in their environment to strengthen local identities and build strong awareness and knowledge of their cultural heritage (tangible and intangible or living heritage). We are convinced that only through culture-based training can we achieve a society that is aware, responsible, and respectful of community and intercultural dialogue.

This workshop is oriented to reveal the child's perception of his/her city and explore the value of the heritage that it may have; the child will be guided to explore his/her memories of walking through the city and find his/her public space; for this, the children will make a drawing with the free technique of "how they perceive the city from the interculturality and its local cultural heritage".

For this reason, the concept of Cultural Heritage is much broader with respect to what is generally understood by these words. Understanding cultural heritage means approaching the knowledge and valuation of communities, their history, traditions and then, the symbolic, territorial, ancestral, landscape and cultural heritage of each nation. Thus, the new way of conceiving and interpreting Cultural Heritage encompasses the social sectors because it is from there that the process of creativity begins and from the communities, we must start research on our heritage [16].

#### 4.1 Educational strategies

##### *Workshop #1 Architecture with children... to rethink and reflect on public spaces in cities*

#socialimaginaries #citiesforchildhood  
#childhood #collectiverepresentations #iconology  
#reconstructionofheritance



Figure 1 | Gulliver Park in Valencia, Spain. Photo: @primetones 2021.

##### *Gulliver's Travels on his arrival in Lilliput*

Based on the story Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift, this Gulliver's parquet is located in the old Turia riverbed, and very close to the City of Arts and Sciences. Here is represented the figure of the giant Gulliver lying on the ground and immobilized with ropes. The children playing around him emulate the Lilliputians of Swift's story.

Activity: In this workshop, the children made a mixed media drawing of "how they perceive the city from an intercultural perspective and their local cultural heritage" through their imagination we transported them virtually to the city of Valencia, Spain, where they met Gulliver and redesigned the park to fit all the children.



Figure 2 | Interpretation of the collective imagination of children from Spain, Mexico, Italy, and France towards Gulliver Park in Valencia, Spain. Source: Own elaboration, 2021.

*Workshop #2 Architecture for Children Workshop... rethinking and reflecting on public spaces in cities.*

#socialimaginaries #citiesforchildhood  
 to #collectiverepresentations #iconology  
 #reconstructionofheritage.

The workshop arose from the need to know how the collective public space is perceived from the children's vision of the world with the pedagogical method "Reconnect with your culture".



Figure 3 | Interpretation of the collective imagination of children from the Central-West region of Mexico towards Gulliver Park in Valencia, Spain. Source: Own elaboration, 2021.



Figure 4 | Poster design and activities for the Architecture for Children workshop. Source: Own elaboration, 2021.

It was oriented to reveal the child's perception of his/her city and explore the value of the heritage that it may have; the child will be guided to explore his/her memories of walking through the city and find his/her public space; for this, the children will make a drawing with the free technique of "how they perceive the city from the interculturality and their local cultural heritage".

**Practical Activity: “A Question of Approaches”**

The children will use their camera (a drawing of the camera was previously sent via e-mail plus a sheet of paper where they will have to draw the pictures). The children will fly over their city with Peter Pan’s pixie dust. In this way, they will be able to imagine and remember the places and public spaces of their city. The idea is that through this reflection and introspection they will be able to capture their city’s heritage in drawings.

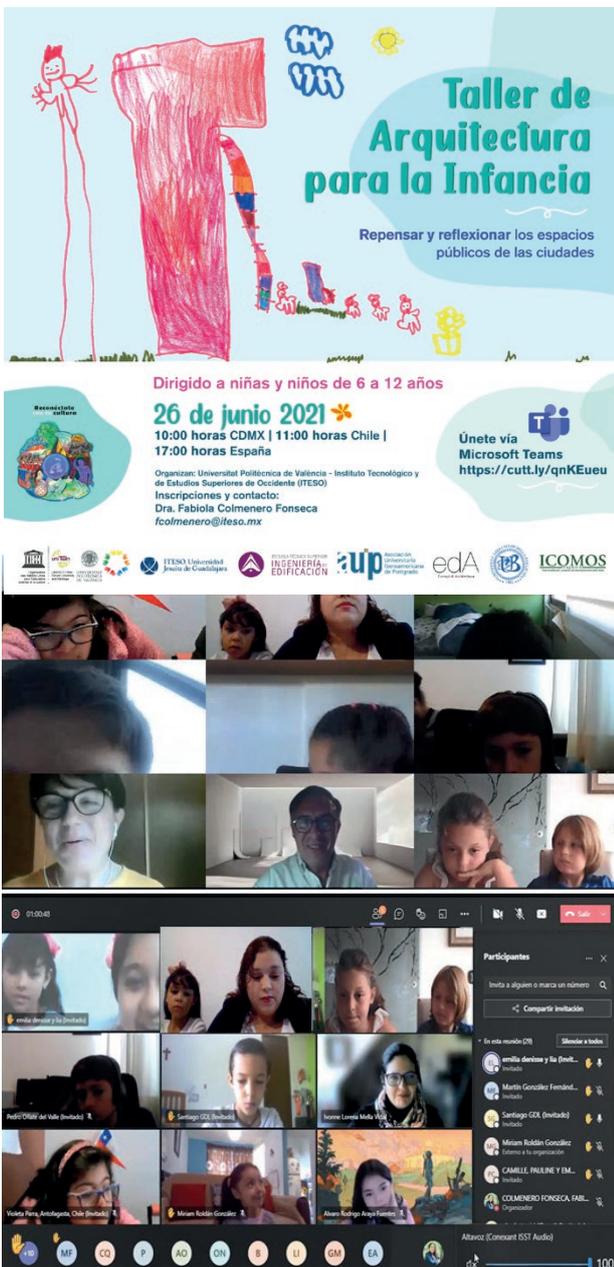


Figure 5 | Exercise of reflection and introspection of local heritage. Source: Own elaboration, 2021.

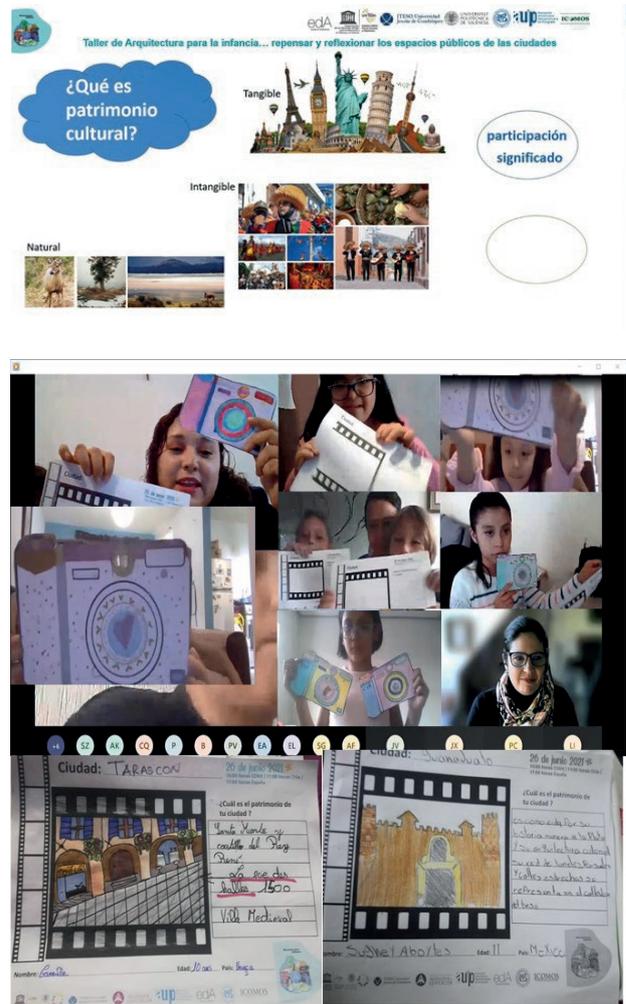


Figure 6 | Work with children with the purpose of recognizing the heritage and culture of their city, spatial and social aspects that characterize their environment. Source: Own elaboration, 2021

**Panel and Architecture Workshop #3 Universal Accessibility to Cultural Heritage**

#socialimaginaries #citiesforchildren  
#collectiverepresentations #iconology  
#reconstructionofheritage #usability #cities8-80

The Panel and Workshop “Universal Accessibility to World Heritage: A City Designed by Children” was conducted online through the Microsoft Teams platform under the authorization and informed consent of the children’s parents, during the month of August 2021.



Figure 7 | Heritage and accessibility panel of their hometown through the presentation of a collage/video. Source: Own elaboration, 2021.

We had the registration of children from 6 to 17 years of age from all over the world, with a total of 34 workshop attendees from Canada, the United States, Mexico, Colombia, Chile, Spain, and Italy.

This panel workshop is aimed at revealing the child's perception of his or her city and exploring the value of the heritage it may have.

Diego (9 years old) and Andrea (6 years old) present a capsule where they explain what is Architecture and Heritage and how it is presented in their city, Guadalajara Mexico.



Figure 8 | 3D representations of identity elements of their city of origin. Source: Own elaboration, 2021.

In the following video: A city designed by the RWYCMexico children we can learn about the heritage of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico from Andrea and Diego. Let's learn from the children, so we can build an intergenerational dialogue and build a better society together.

Then each child on the panel presents and talks about the heritage of his or her city through a collage presentation and answers the following 3 questions:

1. What do they understand by accessibility?
2. What can be done so that children can have access to heritage as well as adults?
3. How would you make sure that all children are included?

Afterward, we carried out a workshop with the other registered children where they were guided to remember



Figure 9 | 3D representations of tangible and intangible and natural heritage in their city of origin. Source: Own elaboration, 2021.

what heritage there is in their city, to then make a model with recycled materials that they can find at home.

In this way, they projected in a 3D figure, the most significant for the child of his or her city, which could be tangible, intangible, or natural cultural heritage.

After the workshops, we obtained a better understanding of the perception of public space in university students and children.

To introduce them to their experiences, it is important to mention that the city model that was developed a few years ago gave priority to vehicles, reducing public space for people and green areas, destroying natural ecosystems and the landscape. As well as, the historical heritage, and creating conditions of social, spatial, and economic segregation of some of its inhabitants.

Associated with this idea of more human cities, it is necessary to reflect on the need to design cities for people of all ages. This is when the concept of 8-80 cities arises. The 8-80 cities are those cities that are more sustainable, healthy, equitable, and that encourage urban diversity, to achieve people's well-being and happiness. Thus arises the need to think that public space and urban life should generate a safe and comfortable environment that provides adequate spaces for children from 8 years old



Figure 10 | Photographic record and design proposals in a heritage public space in the city of Guanajuato, Mexico, based on the empirical experience of the architectural gaze of ITESO University students.

to adults over 80 years old. Through the design of public spaces that meet the needs of this vulnerable population group, including children, the elderly, people living in poverty or with physical or mental disabilities, and all ethnic groups.

The study or analysis of public spaces and historical heritage centres is based on creating elements that put the user in the foreground, since they are spaces that are lived for people and that must be understood as part of the daily coexistence and that are part of history and collective memory, where all people can access the space

without any difficulty in the environment, called architectural barriers, and that in turn can be autonomous within the coexistence of space. In the case of the university students, a study of the problem that the current square presents was carried out, later an analysis and diagnosis was made where different solutions to the existing problems in the San Fernando square could be proposed, the main challenges were included which is through the integration of new elements that give solutions to these problems, hence why the project is intervened by the subject of the Public Space and Landscape Workshop for the rehabilitation of the square.

A study of the problems presented by the current square was carried out, then analysis and diagnosis were made where different solutions to the existing problems in the San Fernando square could be proposed, the main challenges were included which is through the integration of new elements that provide solutions to these problems, hence why the project is intervened by the ITESO students of the Autumn 2020 Public Space and Landscape Workshop for the rehabilitation of the square. The project of revitalization of the space was carried out, leaving us with a completely adapted urban-architectural space and how it can be intervened to create a universal, inclusive and accessible tourism [9].

## 4.2 Experience

Human cities must prioritize people over mobility systems, promoting the design of more compact cities (the famous 15-minute city), the connectivity and intermodally that the Sustainable Mobility pyramid has been suggesting for some years now, we must prioritize the pedestrian over other mobility methods, making cities more walkable and greener, which require improving safety conditions and the quality of the air we breathe. These more humane cities, in addition to solving mobility issues, should help foster interaction between people in public space, strengthen social cohesion and citizen participation in decision-making processes, and make them more active cities, without borders and connected 24/365.

Universal design is born as a transformative concept for inclusive societies and its fundamental purpose is to simplify life for all. is to simplify life for all. Good design focuses on the creation of accessible spaces, accessible spaces, communications, objects, services and programs that can be used by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without facilities or specialized design. to the greatest extent possible, without facilities and without specialized design. This is the concept of universal design. Above all, tourism is an experience

**Student 1:** "I have always been of the idea that practice is the best option to understand and know in depth the subject that you want to carry out. Our visit to Guanajuato was very helpful to be able to put ourselves in the place of people with some kind of disability, by facing the challenges in person is easier to develop and complete the desired project and you realize what is needed for each of the spaces, and not only helps in that specific project, but to live it once you take it into account forever and somehow cover those requirements to think and take into account all types of people and not just those who are like you or me.

To be able to develop a project with these qualities in such an irregular space was a challenge but with a lot of learning, because you learn to see and value the spaces with different eyes and involve all people. I think that if we had not experienced this exercise in person, it would have been difficult for us to understand the dynamics correctly and to have proposed a good work".

**Student 2:** "In this project we have learned many things, about what is respect for heritage, about flora, and most importantly the issue of integration to people with disabilities, it is a whole topic but it was personally a project that has marked significantly in my career because many times I never thought about integration, in vegetation or in the respect that should be had for heritage, many times we leave with the impression that our designs are made to improve the place, and it is true but we also have to investigate, we have to find a way to make our project help instead of just being something aesthetic, in short, this project has been very important for us as students and it will also be important for the people in Guanajuato".

**Student 3:** "The City of Guanajuato represents a huge architectural challenge in terms of inclusion. The topography of the site is the critical factor in this case, since its large differences in level in such short spaces force the vertical displacement of the user. However, we were able to observe with the project that there are several alternatives that can be implemented in the municipality to create more user-friendly spaces. It is important to interact with the spaces in the shoes of any user in order to achieve inclusive designs for the greatest possible diversity of users"

According to the children's experience, they participated in the Triennial of the South of the World, where they can see how they now know about spaces and the concept of more human cities. Available at:

<https://youtu.be/F-ohrZtl-8E>  
<https://youtu.be/oLJQ5D3dgho>

Children from 8 to 12 years of age from Mexico and France were interviewed so that they could give us their views on accessibility in cities.

### Children 1

E: I am... my name is SAC, I am ten years old and I live in Zapopan, Jalisco.

I: Thank you FCF. Thank you, SAC, how are you? I want to ask you... Why did you decide to participate in this interview for the project?

E: Well, I decided to participate because I would like to share what I have, what I have experienced thanks to my sister and everything I know.

I: Excellent, thank you very much, and what do you understand when they say the word "inclusion"?

E: Well, I understand that it means to include someone, to integrate someone.

I: Great, and what does accessibility mean to you?

E: That... for example, if you go to a place, to a park, there should be ramps for accessibility for people in wheelchairs or who find it hard to walk, so that they can go to places, be in the street.

I: Very good, how should a city be or have a city for all people?

E: Well, a city where... where in many places there is accessibility and they also include them, for example, a restaurant where there is accessibility and they also include them or games, parks, that there are places that not only have accessibility or inclusion, that have both.

F: Yes, Zapopan. \*Responding to IMV

Have you seen any places in Zapopan that are accessible? For example, you mentioned that you had a little sister with a disability. When you go, what is the best place you have seen that is conditioned and that she can enter without any problem?

E: Well, I've seen parks. A park... I don't remember very well which one, it had ramps and swings so that people with disabilities could get on them, some big swings, some smaller ones, some games with things so that everyone could get on them.

F: One question. When you have gone with your little sister, what place do you remember, you say: "this place was a nightmare and as a family, we would not go there again because I did not feel comfortable, not for my family, not for my sister, it is a place where I did not feel comfortable", you say "I would not go back to that place", what was that place like? can you tell me about it?

E: Well, it was a park, where it was special for people with disabilities, we went there one day and there were ramps, there was accessibility and also inclusion, but when I wanted to go with my sister to the rides and stuff, they called our attention and said that only people with disabilities could go up there.

F: And if they told you "SAC you have to redesign that park", what would you do to that park so that you could be comfortable with your sister?

E: Well, I would make it like special games with things so that big people, small people, with or without disabilities, can get on it.

F: Hey SAC and if they told you "you have the opportunity to change Guadalajara" let's not talk about... imagine, you say "I live in Zapopan" what would you like to do for Zapopan? if you say "today I am an architect for a day" and SAC wants to do for Zapopan... What would you do?

E: Well, I would: put many ramps, but not only ramps, but ramps to the places and the streets, I would improve them, I would put them so that from the street you can easily go up to the sidewalk, I would put signs so that they do not cover the ramps.

### Children 2

E: My name is SZA, full name is SZA, I'm 11 years old, I live in Guanajuato, Mexico.

I: Hey, what do you understand when they say the word inclusion?

E: Well, I relate it to the fact that there is a space where people, all people can be there and live together with no matter what they are like.

I: Great, and for you what is accessibility?

E: It is what... well, I also relate it to a place where all people can be there, that there are ramps and that there is a space that is... that the space is adequate for all people.

I: Super and how should a city be or have a city for all people? how do you imagine it?

E: Well... that the streets have ramps when you go up and down the sidewalk, also that the buildings are... are accessible and that the city itself is inclusive.

I: So your city should be accessible and inclusive, in other words, both things, right?

E: Yes.

I: Great, and there in Guanajuato, what would be a space that has those conditions? Is there any place in Guanajuato that is accessible and inclusive?

E: I don't know of any place... well maybe yes, but they are accessible and inclusive within the place, but to get to that place it is not.

I: Ah, like the place by itself if it is accessible and inclusive but getting there, how you got there is what it is not, is that it?

E: Yes.

I: And what place is that?

E: Well, a long time ago we went to a museum with my cousin and it wasn't the best, but it had some accessible points, but to get there it's like... there's a tiny sidewalk and no ramps.

I: I mean, it has potential, you can make adjustments. Hey SZA, what would an ideal city for children be like? what would a city like that be like if you imagine yourself as an architect for a day? what would it have to have?

E: Well, the buildings from my point of view as a child and the height I have, many buildings like I don't know, have all the things at the height of an adult and children can't reach them or can't use them. It would also have to... I don't know, have, well it would have to be accessible but not... well yes related to disabilities, but also so that children and adults can coexist in this city.

F: Hey SZA, if you had the opportunity to transform the city of Guanajuato, what place would you transform and why, and how would you do it?

E: Well, I would transform the center, the historic center, but it is very difficult because the streets are very tiny, the sidewalks and the buildings too. A drawing I made of the bell ringer, I don't know, it is a very good representation that I think is one of my favorite places in Guanajuato and I would like to change it a little bit to make it inclusive for all people, and that all people can move freely in the place.

F: Ok. Of the buildings in the historic center, which do you think is the most important and emblematic and that every child should know? that you say "if a child comes to Guanajuato, he/she cannot leave without visiting what?

E: [Laughter] It could be the Alhóndiga, I mean, it's very cool, and besides it's fun to climb the stairs, and it's nice, yes.

### Children 3

E: My full name is RSA, I am ten and a half years old and I live in Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico.

I: Great. Guanajuato, Guanajuato,

F: In the capital city, in the state

I: The state of Guanajuato?

F:...of Guanajuato. F: \*Signs\*.

I: Ah perfect, hey, RSA, and why did you want to participate in the interview for the project? Or just because your mom told you to?

E: My parents are architects, so they have already taught me about these topics and also in school. So my mom suggested it to me and I said yes, it was fine.

I: And in the background, because you are interested in knowing and supporting. Aunt FCF. What do you understand by the concept of inclusion?

E: Well, that we include others. It doesn't matter if they have different abilities and are from other countries, because the economy also, and I say that we should include everyone and do nothing and that we should all play and respect everyone.

I: Your answer was excellent, I loved it. I think it is the first time I hear a child when you talk about equality or not having socioeconomic differentiation, that... Well, good input, RSA excellent. Hey, and what happens, what do you understand by the concept of accessibility?

E: Well, that... The places where people go to have handrails and ramps. For example, spaces for wheelchairs to pass because there are many places where the benches, or something like that, are very small and not even a wheelchair can fit, and nowhere here in Guanajuato, there are ramps or handrails, so people can be in danger.

I: Can you explain to me what the handrails are?

E: Ah, yes; when you are in a wheelchair or cane, the handrails are for support.

I: Ah Ok. E: And you go like this with one hand with the cane or you go in the wheelchair and lean on the handrail.

I: Ah, perfect. Here they are called handrails. Here in Chile, it's called Pasamanos, but it's always good to learn. So thank you very much RSA for teaching me. And you...? What do you think a city could be or should be? a city for all people?

E: Well, first of all, with safety. As I already said, with ramps or handrails, as they say, there in Chile, or handrails, as they say here. That the ramps, mainly are not steep because there are times when the traps are so \*Signals inclination\* that a person with a wheelchair can go upside down, so the ramps should be a little flat. Eh... that there are handrails, that there is safety, and that all people can be there without discrimination.

E: Mande?

I: Do you feel safe in your city of Guanajuato?

E: Well, I don't have any disability problem or anything, yes, but I feel that it lacks a lot of security and it lacks... ramps, handrails, railings, I feel that it is not a safe place here, because here it is always full of people and people almost don't care if you have a disability if you are in a wheelchair, I mean, they push you when they pass on the streets or, no, there is no security here.

I: Hey, and what does it mean to you to be safe that you... what do you feel about being safe? what does that mean to you?

E: Well, that there are no thieves, that people treat you well, that if you ride a bike or a skateboard or something, that the cars respect you. Well, yes, that is, that they respect people.

I: Super hey, and in any part of your city, do you think there is anything that has this capacity to be accessible and inclusive?

E: No. I: None? \*questions surprised\*.

E: No, it's very unsafe here. There are always cases like thieves, this one... no. I would say it lacks security. The cars go by as they please, they never respect the signs. They cause accidents. It's not... it's not safe.

I: Yeah, but that's about safety, but what about accessibility and inclusion? What's happening in your city? Because you're talking to me more from the safety aspect, which I think is pretty good, but in this accessibility and this inclusion.

E: Eh... Accessibility no, there are never ramps and if there are ramps they are very steep. A wheelchair can't get through, there are no handrails or railings. And of inclusion, many people think they are superior to others and they do like their clubs and they don't join anyone else but the... for example, the economy here is: if someone is richer than other people or has a higher economy than other people, he treats them as less. He doesn't pay attention to her, he always tells her things.

I: Okay, listen, and tell me about a typical day. On a typical day, what do you do, do you get up, I mean, let's forget that there is a pandemic and maybe you are confined. So let's think about a normal day for you on any given day.

## 5. Results and conclusions:

The study confirms that children use the city like any other citizen and it is not designed for them. This explains the lack of interest on the part of municipal authorities and local governments, as well as the lack of public policies in Latin America to improve the design of public spaces and establish lines for the generation and application of knowledge on issues related to culture. In our workshops

and interviews, we found great differences in the city of origin and the countries from which the interviewees came, the perceptions of safety and design patterns are repeated, it is confirmed that children have a great interest in being included in the design of cities and that each one has different facilities and that the enjoyment and enjoyment of cities and their heritage depends on the environments associated with the safety and growth of cities in different environments.

"You cannot value what you do not know" and as the city and heritage are not known by all children, not all of us have the accessibility and inclusion that children would like and be considered in the design of cities.

The construction of knowledge and education undergoes great processes of transformation, depending on how we transmit it to children as a value of culture, education from childhood requires special attention so that it transcends. That is why from RWYC International since 2020 we build a model of education through the pedagogical method based on the environment of their cities and what they know of their heritage and through different didactic strategies oriented to culture is how you can collaborate and develop a sense of identity that provide their city and/or country.

Social knowledge is not natural, it is an artificial product, that is to say, it is constructed by human beings; it is a cultural product.

Since knowledge is a product, society must know how to produce, accumulate, reproduce and distribute it. Like any product, it can deteriorate, be lost, transformed, and made to grow [17].

José Bernardo Toro, in his article "Social knowledge and learning contexts," mentions that knowledge is produced through interaction with others, at work, in daily life; through observation, and over long periods. The society produces cultural knowledge every day.... Through cultural forms, the most important knowledge of society has been created and developed: language, child-rearing habits, table customs (ways of preparing food), forms of courtship (how to choose a partner), and ways of arranging the house.

This knowledge is accumulated in the memory of the elders, in family and social traditions, in legends, beliefs, rites, myths, monuments, and instruments.

They are reproduced in conversation and interaction between elders and children.

Cultural knowledge is distributed through migrations from one culture to another. Voluntary or forced displacement always implies the distribution of cultural knowledge that, when interacting with other cultural knowledge, is strengthened and transformed.

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