

The utilization of public squares: considerations on the action of the social occupational therapist

Marina Jorge da Silva^a , Marina Leandrini Oliveira^{b,c} , Ana Paula Serrata Malfitano^a 

^aDepartamento de Terapia Ocupacional, Universidade Federal de São Carlos – UFSCar, São Carlos, SP, Brasil.

^bDepartamento de Terapia Ocupacional, Universidade Federal do Triângulo Mineiro – UFTM, Uberaba, MG, Brasil.

^cUniversidade Federal de São Carlos – UFSCar, São Carlos, SP, Brasil.

Abstract: This work presents, as an experience report, the proposal which has been presented since 2015 as teaching, research and extension activity in social occupational therapy for undergraduate and graduate students from the Federal University of São Carlos – Universidade Federal de São Carlos (UFSCar). Starting from the proposal of working with poor young people from the urban area of São Carlos city, connected to the METUIA Program, which performs an extension program in such region since 2005, we weekly performed Workshops, Dynamics and Projects with the purpose of promoting spaces for interaction and socialization in a public square. The work methodologically used analyses from the participant objectivation at the workshops process, recorded through the production of academic papers and field journals, along with interviews made with participants. The results have shown the use of public spaces as a strategical possibility for the territorial and community work with the youth. The conclusion is that the squares can be a place for living and one of the elements on the constitution of social support networks for the young people from that neighborhood.

Keywords: *Social Occupational Therapy, Community-Institutional Relationship, Community Participation, Youth.*

O uso do espaço público da praça: considerações sobre a atuação do terapeuta ocupacional social

Resumo: Este trabalho apresenta, sob a forma de um relato de experiência, a proposta que vem sendo realizada desde 2015 como atividade de ensino, pesquisa e extensão em terapia ocupacional social para alunos de graduação e pós-graduação da Universidade Federal de São Carlos (UFSCar). Partindo da proposta de trabalho com a juventude pobre urbana no município de São Carlos, articuladas ao Programa METUIA, que realiza ações de extensão naquela região desde 2005; têm sido realizadas, semanalmente, Oficinas de Atividades, Dinâmicas e Projetos, com vistas à promoção de espaços de convivência e sociabilidade em uma praça pública. O trabalho utilizou-se metodologicamente de análises advindas da objetivação participante, durante o processo das oficinas, registrada por meio de produções de relatórios acadêmicos e diários de campo, associadas a entrevistas realizadas com os participantes. Os resultados têm apontado o uso de espaços públicos como uma possibilidade de estratégia do trabalho territorial e comunitário com a juventude. Conclui-se que as praças podem se configurar como um local de convivência comunitária e um dos elementos na constituição de redes de suporte social para a juventude daquele bairro.

Palavras-chave: *Terapia Ocupacional Social, Extensão Comunitária, Ação Comunitária, Juventude.*

Corresponding author: Marina Jorge da Silva, Laboratório METUIA, Departamento de Terapia Ocupacional, Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Rod. Washington Luís, Km 235, CEP 13565-905, São Carlos, SP, Brasil, e-mail: mahjorge@gmail.com

Received on July 4, 2018; 1st Revision on Aug. 27, 2018; Accepted on Dec. 19, 2018.



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

1 Introduction

The squares have been the object of study of several areas of knowledge and historically have been interpreted from different perspectives. From a more objective and territorial apprehension to refer to meeting points (ALEX, 2008) to a more sociological perspective, with squares as a political space, the squares are used to host debates and discussions about the organization of public life, even as the stage of many social manifestations and movements of emancipatory struggles (GOHN, 2013).

Also recognized with the function of integration and sociability, the squares became central for the construction of urban space and public life (VIERO; BARBOSA FILHO, 2009; ALEX, 2008). For Alex (2008), the main feature is directly linked to their openness and access to different people and groups that foster social events and practices through the use of this communal area. Calligaris (2011) presents it as the sharing of spaces where the dialogue and the creation or recognition of common patterns of collective interest are promoted.

For Arendt (2005), living spaces and social coexistence give to the human plurality the possibilities of the legitimate exercise of democratic coexistence and debate for the construction of the “common good” and effective exercise of citizenship. Thus, the reading of the squares starts as a significant dimension of the social life of the individuals, collectives and social groups and as “[...] locus of excellence of the public space for the exercise of citizenship” (GOHN, 2013, p. 203).

According to Milton Santos (1998), it is impossible to imagine concrete citizenship separated from a territorial component because space reproduces the social totality, modifying and being modified by the individuals and the social relationships. Thus, Santos (1998) presents the territory and its use (territorial dynamics) as significant in the composition of contours for production and reproduction of life, that is, the author considers that social dimensions such as social class, among other markers, affect the individuals’ experiences, being strongly linked to their place of life.

Therefore, the social reality projects in different ways on the lives of individual and collective subjects even expanding or reducing their possibilities of exercising citizenship and social participation. Thus, the spatial dimension in the reproduction of society is emphasized, in the perspective that “[...] space, its materiality and the meanings constructed

from this materiality are an expression of society” (SILVA, 2010, p. 28).

Considering the importance of this debate to occupational social therapy (MUNGUBA; MALFITANO; LOPES, 2018), as it relates citizenship and rights as essential categories in working with groups in a situation of social vulnerability (LOPES, 2016), the report of a teaching, research and extension experience in a public square is proposed on the outskirts of the city of São Carlos, SP, Brazil, based on the activities carried out by the nucleus of the Federal University of São Carlos (METUIA/UFSCar) from the activities of the METUIA¹ project (UFSCar). The activities in that region have been taking place since 2005, focusing on those activities held in a public square since 2015, seeking to discuss the use of public spaces in the creation of intervention strategies for young people in situations of social vulnerability.

2 Approaching

The METUIA/UFSCar project has carried out social interventions with urban poor youths in São Carlos, SP for 13 years (LOPES et al., 2008), in a region with neighborhoods highlighted by their rates of violence, drug trafficking and conditions of precarious infrastructure, such as the population’s access to public social network equipment (ROSA, 2008; SOUZA, 2010).

In that context, a double place of socially occupied fragility by the local youth is questioned: the very juvenile condition that by the social imaginary is associated with “problem” and “rebellion” (DEBERT, 2010), and the situation of social and territorial vulnerability situation in which they live. When these conditions appear to be associated with the experience of certain social individuals, stigmas are generated, which can negatively impact the possibilities of experiences of movement, social participation and effective exercise of their citizenship, often leading them to a situation of ruptures of social participation.

Thus, to cope with the impacts that these situations produce on the possibilities of youthful living, METUIA/UFSCar has undertaken collective actions, mainly under the offer of Activity Workshops, Dynamics and Projects. The Workshops use several activities as a

[...] mediating resource of the work of approach, follow-up, apprehension of the demands and strengthening of individual and collective subjects, directing their actions (LOPES et al., 2014, p. 595).

In this way, dramatic, plastic and playful activities are used with objectives based on the notions of citizenship, rights/duties and democratic participation (LOPES et al., 2014).

The Workshops were held in different public spaces such as a state public school, a leisure and social space called the Youth Center (CJ) and social assistance facilities such as a Community Center, which was later transformed into a Reference Center for Social Assistance (CRAS), and a Community Station (ECo), all present in that region of the city (LOPES et al., 2014).

The proposal traveling through different spaces of the same territory was created as a possibility of approaching with a greater number and diversity of young people and the ways of being young since depending on several aspects such as gender, work, notion of belonging, among others, there are differences in the circulation and uses of the urban space. In this way, it was possible to approach young people who were not connected to a service/equipment, considering the possibility of intervention in other public spaces.

To operationalize this strategy, the neighborhood was visited for a few weeks to identify spaces that could perform workshops without an institutional outline. In this exercise, the team talked with several residents who helped to identify a square as a great transit space for people, given its place of centrality in the geographic and historical constitution of the neighborhood, because it was the space of the first houses (ROSA, 2008).

3 Knowing

The space suggested by the residents to perform the activities is located right on the border with a immense green area, limited on the front by a street, by houses on the sides and behind it, by a cliff, known by the residents as “buracão”, being a place of preservation (CAMPOS et al., 2003) (Figure 1).



Figure 1. A square: meeting point and space of intervention. Source: METUIA/UFSCar collection.

When our team arrived (one professor, two trainees and four students in supervised observation practice), there was a reality without trees, except for two seedlings still in the process of growth. The benches, tables, and toys were destroyed by the time and the human action, and what seemed to be lacking in investments to qualify the space was left as garbage on the grass, also maintenance-free.

When approaching the reality lived in that space, the team was identifying that the square was used as an informal space of work – such as selling food - with illegal work - selling drugs; as recreation particularly for children, at night; and also as a meeting point on weekends for people from the neighborhood, for barbecues and social meetings. Before the beginning of the workshops, the space of the square had already an important circulation of some residents of the neighborhood.

As the statement of Alex (2008), opposed to an almost “natural” function of public space, it seems appropriate to identify that some of the functions of the space in the territory are based on the

[...] organization and mode of functioning of social life as a point of departure and of arrival, constituted by relational reciprocities, and practices that propitiate and generate them. It is the concept of social practice (PEDROSO, 2013, p. 66).

For this reason, it is essential to guide the correspondence between the territorial and social space, including the production and reproduction of stigmas relating to the characteristics of space, extending them to its residents by association. Understanding that the organization of that urban territory reflects a broader social organization, with its contradictions and conflicts, this is the central point, sharing with Rosa (2008), the understanding the need for vigilance so the works produced on stigmatized territories do not fall, in their constitution, on a deterministic basis and reflection.

In this way, the difficulties observed and experienced in that territory go through issues that are not specific to them. They are more generalizable conditions, derived directly from the material reality of individuals when they could be approached by the social non-integration of large segments of urban society; being crossed, inside and outside the neighborhood, by the processes of fragilization and rupture of social bonds, as explained by Castel (1994).

Thus, Arendt (2005) and the author’s emphasis on spaces of different sociabilities, among plural individuals, recognizing the square as the power of constitution of a public space or, based on the

author, eminently political. Initiations were then given to visits and regular activities, described below.

For the description of this report, a methodological analysis of participant objectification was used during the workshop process, recorded through the production of academic reports and field journals, associated with interviews with some residents whose excerpts are highlighted throughout the text.

4 History of Actions

4.1 2015: knowing the square and the dynamics of the territory

When arriving at the square, the shadow of one of the trees was used as a meeting point. The team introduced themselves to whoever was there, and then, they began to put posters showing the proposal for the day, opening also the possibility of approaching more curious people who came to check who they were and what people were doing there.

Through the work carried out by the METUIA/UFSCar team (LOPES et al., 2008), the bond with that community favored the ways of being in that place, allowing greater proximity to the residents, and providing elements to share and present the proposals, or, in other words, favorable conditions for being in the market place and the achievement of the proposal. Taking advantage of a pre-established bond with METUIA/UFSCar, the team and the new place of Workshops development were understood by the residents as a continuation of the long-established actions they have there.

In the initial period of actions in the square, there was a more frequent circulation of the young people by the neighborhood in the afternoon and/or night. In the morning, those who were not in school were working - usually, in informal jobs such as handing out pamphlets and preparing bottles for recycling - or, as the rest of the residents reported, they were sleeping, after having spent the night in illegal work, such as drug dealing and/or marketing. For this aspect, the actions were offered always in the afternoon or late afternoon/early evening.

As an approaching strategy, the organization of weekly dialogue circles began to learn more about the constitution of the neighborhood and the impressions of the residents on that territory. Although the proposal was (and continues to be) a priority for the youth people, the rescue of the history of the neighborhood was creating a circulation that, necessarily, went through the story and rescue of the memory of the older residents,

with the oral narration as the main source. In this way, a dynamic was created in which the young people did small interviews, seeking to know who were the oldest inhabitants, how they lived and how that territory was constituted some time ago, when was its initial formation, at the end of the 1970s (ROSA, 2008). This dynamic also included the rescue of old images of the neighborhood and the reproduction of these images in the current moment and scenario (Figure 2).

This process favored the team began to be identified by the way of circulating in search of the stories and, in this way, the proposal was designed for that space and its frequenters, doing three weekly meetings through Workshops of Activities, Dynamics and Projects.

During three hours, the Workshops had/have the proposal of using the first hour for the "arrival": free talks and rescue of the previous meeting, followed by two hours for the execution of an activity/dynamics and their discussion and, finally, the end also aimed at free-living and farewells. These moments before and during the workshops were very potent and favorable to the experimentation of a space of exchanges and sociability as expected by the Workshops for occupational social therapy (LOPES et al., 2014). Thus, the power of the proposition of this device in the public space of the square stands out, as an extra stimulus to provide the possibility of qualification of that public space through the relations established there.

In 2015, as it was said, it was chosen to know a little more the history of the neighborhood, in the proposal of work with the theme "Identity and Memory". Starting from the focus on the territory and the understanding that the construction of



Figure 2. Rescuing narratives about the territory. Source: Fotografia por Maria Luiza Toledo Ferraz, cedida em direitos ao acervo do METUIA/UFSCar Photograph by Maria Luiza Toledo Ferraz, assignment of rights to the METUIA/UFSCar collection.

juvenile social identities, individual and collective, are directly connected to the history of the constitution of that place, it was possible to discuss, for example, the impacts that the territory produces on the life of the individuals, as when one of the young people mentioned fear of passing through spaces outside the neighborhood. When asked about his motives, he argued that:

I came down [referring to the center of the city] the guys [police] took people, they were abusing, they were beaten... they said: "what are you going to do there?". Do you understand, miss? I was afraid of being confused, I wanted to buy something and thought "They will judge me,"... I was afraid of everything! I did not know! I was afraid of everything, Gonzaga was everything to me... (Resident 1).

Through this report, there seems to be a strong bond of the young people to that territory, a desirable aspect in the constitution of identity processes. However, this identification of the place of life seems to be effective before a limit of circulation by the city, excluding other possibilities of existence and referential, even within the urban territory.

Discussing the movement of some young people from this same region of the city as seen in this experience, Pereira and Malfitano (2014) pointed out the impediment of movement of poor youth from the periphery and their circumscription in spaces of social exchange restricted to their own neighborhood or surroundings, but equally peripheral. In this way, they are unable to experience other relationships and sociabilities that take place in other spaces. Therefore, it is necessary to know the relationships established in the territory, such as the networks of support and solidarity established there, as well as the interconnections of that territory with the other spaces of the city.

The limitation of movement of these young people through their neighborhood and city can be thought based on Gomide (2006), in which the issues of urban mobility of the poorest deflagrate and reinforce the phenomenon of inequality of opportunities and spatial segregation that affect some groups. According to the author, "[...] the main impacts of this situation are felt on basic social activities: work, education and leisure" (GOMIDE, 2006, p. 244), and it is possible to establish correlations between the impacts on the "social activities" of the individuals and the perpetuation of their condition of social vulnerability.

Such aspects could be interpreted as sufficiently relevant for the discussion of the occupational

therapist's possibilities of action, given their attention to aspects of the daily lives of individuals. However, the promotion of a greater participation and social circulation is also identified as a possibility to face social disadvantages, intervention fact for the social occupational therapist, either in the promotion of access to public spaces as a citizen's right, in the reflection on the consequences on the articulation of networks, people and services, or on the valuation of individual and collective identities of the subjects (MALFITANO, 2005).

Based on this reading, there is the need for the social occupational therapist to plan and execute activities oriented to facilitate access to experiences of different aspects, favoring circulation in the territory and in different socially significant and accessible spaces, for the creation of coexistence spaces.

Therefore, the participation of some young women and their circulation was observed in that place only in the period of the Workshops. When asked about this, they replied that, generally, there was nothing to do there. With examples such as this one, there was the possibility of discussing the relationship between the therapeutic-occupational interventions with the public space of the square as an important social instance that can interfere in the local dynamics.

It is also important to think about how circulation and belonging issues are still fragile when dealing with poor youth as a specific population group. As Mendes and Torres (2011) pointed out, the condition of poverty experienced by young people affects the use, circulation, and appropriation of city spaces. In this sense, the discussion of access to the territories is relevant, whether of the neighborhood or of the city.

Taking territory as a space of multiple potentialities, where knowledge about life, forms of being in the world are produced (SANTOS, 1998), it is the place where there are collective relationships, constructions, identities and subjective that are outlined from the different uses of those spaces by the individuals. Being in different ways in places already known and/or being in different/new spaces seems to bring other possibilities to the individuals, such as the feeling of being able to new experiences. This idea is brought by the resident 2 when asked about the meaning of participating in the Workshops:

J - Ah, it means that, ah, I do not know how to explain it... it means quite a lot of you actually, you know!? I just cannot explain it like this... With details...

OT - But do you think it is positive, negative?

J - Certainly positive! Because it helped me a lot, so... It's certainly positive...

OT - And when you say "it helped me a lot", could you give me an example?

J - Oh, it helped me to believe in something that I thought I could not, it helped me change my mind [...], it helped me to know things that I did not know, things that I did not think I would know... (Resident 2).

Understanding the coexistence and bonds as "[...] attributes of the human condition and modern life, which occurs between individuals of law that are constituted as they relate" (BRASIL, 2017, p. 19), situations of coexistence are taken as opportunities that need to be created, prepared, and experienced. Coexistence is materialized through meetings, conversations and actions, which can be instrumented by strategies such as: listening, the posture of appreciation/recognition, situations of collective production, favoring and presenting the exercise of individual and collective choices and decisions, the experience of dialogue in situations conflicts and disagreements, among others.

With this reading, it is also possible to show the power of the workshops in the square to be constituted in spaces for the creation and strengthening of the coexistence and resignification of daily aspects of the life of those subjects, from the sharing of other references.

In the expansion of the references, there was the strategy of organizing some activities in other spaces such as cultural and leisure points (visit to the Social Service of Commerce - SESC, ice cream, trails) and spaces for academic training and/or professional qualification (University), places that many did not know. The experimentation, knowledge and recognition of other public spaces by visits and/or tours, can provide circulation in the city and can be constituted as

[...] strategies to approach the forms of traffic and of impediment to the circulation of the public and social spaces, as well as their experiences in their daily dramas (PEREIRA; MALFITANO, 2014, p. 28).

Thus, it is evident the need to reflect on the marks of these restrictions on the youthful life woven in the peripheral neighborhoods, as Pereira and Malfitano (2014) pointed out. In this perspective, the continuity of the proposals developed in 2016 was outlined (Figure 3).

4.2 2016: drawing possibilities

In the previous year, people did not seem to recognize positive aspects of their living space, or even about themselves. One of the residents illustrated this perception when he reported that the only good thing he could see about the neighborhood was the possibility of getting out of it. With this information, the discussion of elements such as the notion of belonging of those individuals and the self-valorization and/or appreciation of the neighborhood were opted.

Thus, in 2016, it was sought to identify aspects considered as beautiful, pleasant and interesting with the residents in that neighborhood and a reference to promoting personal and collective belonging and appreciation.

Keeping the duration and frequency of the workshops, a change of strategy was chosen, proposing the movement of workshops through the neighborhood, from the guide of the young residents, in the active search for "positive" aspects. There were picnics and walks through places within the neighborhood, using photographs mostly as a resource for knowledge/recognition of that place. With a digital camera, the young people took turns searching for what seemed to them most motivating in that territory, and it was interesting to note the records of natural beauties, people and even institutional spaces. Each one revealed their vision and their interests, constituting elements for the discussion about what it is like to be part of that space.

These conversations produced discussions about identity, belonging and co-responsibility for the territory, besides favoring a reversal of roles. As is the team's guides, the young people could experience a place of learning, which was often unknown to them (LOPES et al., 2014).



Figure 3. Tour at UFSCar as a strategy to expand the repertoire and circulation around the city. Source: METUIA/UFSCar collection.

The greater the identification with their living space, the more the individuals recognize that place as their own, building elements to structure their relationship with space and with the people they share it. This may lead to an increase in the sense of belonging to the community, such as when they are proud of being part of the group or sharing a particular vocabulary or even when one of the young women reflects on the influence of having participated in social projects, including METUIA/UFSCar and the actions in the square:

OT - So do you think the influence of social projects is more individual?

N. - Not only individual but in the collective... I want improvement for me, but I also want improvement for those who are by my side, and who knows, so, would a chain be formed and today everything would be better?! (Resident 3).

Taking the understanding of the life histories, representations and social and cultural practices are related constructions, that is, that the individual cannot be separated from the collective, also because he shares “[...] knowledge and actions constituted and constituents of their history and culture” with this collective (NEVES; MACEDO, 2015, p. 407), the validity of the tension of a dialogue about belonging to a community and refutations about individual formations are observed.

From the perspective of the young person, the interventions are held in the perspective of the construction of networks of solidarity, in a qualification of the spaces of sociability. Thus, the action of the occupational therapist in the square can expand beyond the legitimacy of the square to the social and sociability, characteristics associated with the territorial space of the square (ALEX, 2008). It is believed on the possibility of qualifying these aspects through the technical mediation of relationships between the individuals and the individuals with the spaces since as Lafer (1997) pointed out the access to public space allows the construction of a common world.

4.3 2017: expanding repertoires

The workshops continued in 2017, keeping the frequency and duration of the actions in the square. As reported from the previous year's experiences, there were proposals linked to the process of thinking about the young people's belonging in the workshops and in the neighborhood and the need to extend this discussion to the city, seeking to know some of

the dynamics of the residents for the uses of public spaces for beyond the neighborhood. Thus, the meetings during 2017 had as a thematic proposal to discuss the public space, from its conception to the identification of possibility for its effectiveness, strengthening, and qualification.

Initially, the recognition of the public spaces of the neighborhood was proposed and, later, the theme for the city was expanded. As an illustration of this process, a model of the neighborhood was built over six weeks, with the participation of young people who collectively composed concepts about public spaces, their identification, and their uses (Figure 4).

During the mapping of public spaces, the number of squares that were successively appearing was impressive; perhaps, the accomplishment of the activity in the square favored the identification of similar spaces and, perhaps, the recognition of these spaces as synonymous with public and collective space.

The participation in social-assistance projects and in public services of the health and education networks was observed, mainly, to increase the possibilities of circulation of these young people.



Figure 4. Mapping spaces known and used by young people. Source: METUIA/UFSCar collection.

Several of the places mentioned by them were visited together with these services, and METUIA/UFSCar was also listed as a project fostering access to other spaces for the residents.

The performance of this activity started from some understandings that favored the mediations of the discussions in the workshops about the public spaces. Among them, the following discussions stand out:

- 1) The recognition and acceptance of the questions brought by these young people as legitimate, in the identification of the youth people as a phase with value in itself (DAYRELL, 2003), constituent of the plurality inherent in the public space and, therefore, subject to the right to have rights (ARENDR, 2005);
- 2) The recognition that they are individuals with the possibility of participation and contribution in the collective debate on the collective demands and needs, as well as the propositions of what constitutes or can be constituted as a "common good". Thus, the recognition and legitimation of the exercise of effective citizenship, of becoming an actor in the public space and in the production of politics (ARENDR, 2005).

4.4 2018: observations

Finally, for 2018, activities that favor the use of public space were searched, moving towards the discussion about the qualification of the square and elements to transform it into a more appropriate, salubrious and aesthetically nice place.

Since in the previous year, the regular visitors brought a project to revitalize the urban space as a demand, a proposal has been organized for the articulation of collaborative networks for this purpose, under the perspective that the qualification of space will bring contributions to the promotion of its use as a place of coexistence for all.

It is also worth mentioning an earlier experience carried out in 2013 by METUIA/UFSCar team, built in the same direction. With a more specific character, according to the report of Silva and Souza (2016), through the youth movement through the neighborhood - in an activity linked to the workshops held in the Youth Center - the young people identified the need to develop actions that would face the state of degradation of that same square. In this way, some workshops were carried

out with the proposal of cleaning the place and planting some tree seedlings. From this territorial intervention, a greater appropriation of that space was noticed by the residents, who not only occupied the square but also discussed other possibilities of actions, such as graffiti on the walls of their environment and painting the floor with games for children (SILVA; SOUZA, 2016).

Therefore, through these experiences reported, it has been sought to constitute elements for the theoretical and practical articulation of the use of the public space of a square as a place of approximation, linking and carrying out projects with the local population. It seeks to constitute a space of coexistence for all, in the admission of the centrality of spaces as the squares in the dynamics of social life (VIERO; BARBOSA FILHO, 2009). The challenge of this experience is to

[...] widen its space in the public sphere, increase equality and recognize differences, so more participation can be produced with more freedom, and more autonomy with more solidarity (LOPES et al., 2014, p. 600).

5 Final Considerations

Knowing that social occupational therapy is based on the expansion of equality and recognition of differences fostering social participation, the space of the square is promising in this sense, allowing meetings, experiences and collective practices between different groups (LOPES et al., 2014).

The social occupational therapy can act as a possible agent of production and strengthening of public spaces, such as the square. From our experience, a technical action is defended as an instrument for the appropriation of that place by the young residents, as a public space, of coexistence with diversity, fomenting a locus of participation through the action in the territory.

Thus, this report was built to stimulate reflections discussing public space as one of the dimensions of action and reflection of the social occupational therapist. The approach and interlocution with these spaces enable the technical action manages to delineate social technologies that favor democratization and the problematization of coping forms with the situation of social vulnerability to which the individuals in the social vulnerable situation are submitted.

This experience illustrates possibilities for a field of practice under construction that challenges, causes and displaces the centrality of professional practices to public spaces that are not directly

institutionalized, which proved to be powerful for the construction of close and horizontal relationships in the concrete reality of people's lives. In this way, the square is a potential public space for territorial action in occupational therapy.

Acknowledgements

We want to thank especially the professors Roseli Esquerdo Lopes and Lívia Celegati Pan, from the METUIA/UFSCar team, for the partnership and co-construction of the field reported here. This activity is only possible due to its integration with the METUIA Program, in our joint construction and solidarity at work. We also thank undergraduate and graduate students in Occupational Therapy at UFSCar and those with student mobility from Argentina and Chile. We also thank the photographer Maria Luiza Toledo Ferraz, who, on one occasion, voluntarily going to the territory to get to know our work, she made beautiful records and gave us the rights to use and disseminate them.

References

- ALEX, S. *Projeto da Praça: convívio e exclusão no espaço público*. São Paulo: Editora SENAC, 2008.
- ARENDT, H. *A condição humana*. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 2005.
- BRASIL. Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social. *Concepção de convivência e fortalecimento de vínculos*. Brasília, 2017. Disponível em: <http://www.mds.gov.br/webarquivos/publicacao/assistencia_social/Cadernos/concepcao_fortalecimento_vinculos.pdf>. Acesso em: 18 jun. 2018.
- CALLIGARIS, C. A pauta dos jovens sem pauta comum. *Folha de São Paulo*, São Paulo, 17 nov. 2011. Caderno Ilustrada. E14. Disponível em: <<http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/ilustrada/9335-a-pauta-dos-jovens-sem-pauta-comum.shtml>>. Acesso em: 18 jun. 2018.
- CAMPOS, S. E. A. et al. O lazer cotidiano do Jardim Gonzaga - São Carlos. In: ENCONTRO NACIONAL DE RECREAÇÃO E LAZER - LAZER E TRABALHO: NOVOS SIGNIFICADOS NA SOCIEDADE CONTEMPORÂNEA, 15., 2003, Santo André. *Anais...* São Carlos: UFSCar, 2003. p. 1-12. Disponível em: <<http://www.ufscar.br/~defmh/spqmh/pdf/enarelgonz.pdf>>. Acesso em: 18 jun. 2018.
- CASTEL, R. Da indigência à exclusão, a desfiliação, precariedade do trabalho e a vulnerabilidade relacional. In: LANCETTI, A. (Org.). *Saúde e loucura*. São Paulo: Editora Hucitec, 1994. p. 21-48.
- DAYRELL, J. O jovem como sujeito social. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 24, n. 24, p. 40-52, 2003. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S1413-24782003000300004>.
- DEBERT, G. G. A dissolução da vida adulta e a juventude como valor. *Horizontes Antropológicos*, Porto Alegre, v. 16, n. 34, p. 49-70, 2010. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0104-71832010000200003>.
- GOHN, M. G. Os jovens e as praças dos indignados: territórios de cidadania. *Revista Brasileira de Sociologia*, Brasília, v. 1, n. 2, p. 203-221, 2013. Disponível em: <<http://sbsociologia.com.br/revista/index.php/RBS/article/view/48/0>>. Acesso em: 18 jun. 2018.
- GOMIDE, A. A. Mobilidade urbana, iniquidade e políticas sociais. *Políticas Sociais Acompanhamento e Análise*, Brasília, n. 12, p. 242-250, 2006. Disponível em: <http://www.ipea.gov.br/agencia/images/stories/PDFs/politicas_sociais/ensaio5_alexandre12.pdf>. Acesso em: 12 out. 2018.
- LAFER, C. A reconstrução dos direitos humanos: a contribuição de Hannah Arendt. *Estudos Avançados*, São Paulo, v. 11, n. 30, p. 55-65, 1997. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0103-40141997000200005>.
- LOPES, R. E. Cidadania, direitos e terapia ocupacional social. In: LOPES, R. E.; MALFITANO, A. P. S. (Org.). *Terapia ocupacional social: desenhos teóricos e contornos práticos*. São Carlos: EdUFSCar, 2016. p. 29-48.
- LOPES, R. E. et al. Juventude pobre, violência e cidadania. *Saúde e Sociedade*, São Paulo, v. 17, n. 3, p. 63-76, 2008. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0104-12902008000300008>.
- LOPES, R. E. et al. Recursos e tecnologias em terapia ocupacional: ações com jovens pobres na cidade. *Cadernos de Terapia Ocupacional da UFSCar*, São Carlos, v. 22, n. 3, p. 591-602, 2014. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4322/cto.2014.081>.
- MALFITANO, A. P. S. Campos e núcleos de intervenção na terapia ocupacional social. *Revista de Terapia Ocupacional da Universidade de São Paulo*, São Paulo, v. 16, n. 1, p. 1-8, 2005. <http://dx.doi.org/10.11606/issn.2238-6149.v16i1p1-8>.
- MENDES, J. T. N.; TORRES, C. C. Juventude e seus territórios usados: um estudo em Campos dos Goytacazes. In: JORNADA INTERNACIONAL DE POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS, 5., 2011, São Luís. *Anais...* São Luís: Universidade Federal do Maranhão, 2011. Disponível em: <<http://www.ufjf.br/nugea/files/2010/09/Jornada-Maranhao.pdf>>. Acesso em: 12 out. 2018.
- MUNGUBA, M. C.; MALFITANO, A. P. S.; LOPES, R. E. Debate over the "social question" in occupational therapy: an integrative review. *Cadernos Brasileiros de Terapia Ocupacional*, São Carlos, v. 26, n. 4, p. 892-903, 2018. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4322/2526-8910.ctoAR1748>.
- NEVES, A. T. L.; MACEDO, M. D. C. A terapia ocupacional social na assistência ao idoso: história de vida e produção de significados. *Cadernos de Terapia Ocupacional da UFSCar*, São Carlos, v. 23, n. 2, p. 403-410, 2015. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4322/0104-4931.ctoRE0557>.
- PEDROSO, S. F. Sobre o conceito de prática social: funcionamento e efeitos nas abordagens da linguagem em movimento. *Revista Tabuleiro de Lerraz*, Salvador, n. 7, p. 64-86, 2013. Disponível em: <<http://www1.ufmt.br/ufmt/unidade/>>

userfiles/publicacoes/df3e3f8385273c31816b2c21b23b7c7.pdf>. Acesso em: 12 out. 2018.

PEREIRA, P. E.; MALFITANO, A. P. S. Atrás da cortina de fumaça: jovens da periferia e a temática das drogas. *Saúde & Transformação Social*, Florianópolis, v. 5, n. 1, p. 27-35, 2014. Disponível em: <<http://incubadora.periodicos.ufsc.br/index.php/saudeetransformacao/article/view/2626/3645>>. Acesso em: 12 out. 2018.

ROSA, T. T. *Fronteiras em disputa na produção da cidade: a trajetória do "Gonzaga" de favela a bairro de periferia*. 2008. 217 f. Dissertação (Mestrado em História) – Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Campinas, 2008. Disponível em: <<http://repositorio.unicamp.br/handle/REPOSIP/279437>>. Acesso em: 12 out. 2018.

SANTOS, M. O retorno do território. In: SANTOS, M.; SOUZA, M. A.; SILVEIRA, M. L. (Org.). *Território: globalização e fragmentação*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1998. p. 255-261.

SILVA, M. N. *A favela como expressão de conflitos no espaço urbano do Rio de Janeiro: o exemplo da zonal sul carioca*. 2010. 157 f. Dissertação (Mestrado em Geografia) – Pontifícia Universidade Católica, Rio de Janeiro, 2010. Disponível em: <<https://www.maxwell.vrac.puc-rio.br/>

Busca_etds.php?strSecao=resultado&nrSeq=16168@1&msg=28#>. Acesso em: 6 out. 2018.

SILVA, C. D.; SOUZA, L. B. O plantio que virou plantação: germinar relações para semear vínculos. In: LOPES, R. E.; MALFITANO, A. P. S. (Org.). *Terapia ocupacional social: desenhos teóricos e contornos práticos*. São Carlos: EdUFSCar, 2016. p. 365-370.

SOUZA, L. B. *Memória e ação territorial: da história do Jardim Gonzaga às bases de intervenção em terapia ocupacional social*. 2010. 86 f. Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso (Graduação em Terapia Ocupacional) – Universidade Federal de São Carlos, São Carlos, 2010.

UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SÃO CARLOS – UFSCar. Departamento de Terapia Ocupacional. São Carlos, 2018. Disponível em: <<http://www.dto.ufscar.br/laboratorios-1/laboratorio-metuia>>. Acesso em: 18 jun. 2018.

VIERO, V. C.; BARBOSA FILHO, L. C. Praças públicas: origem, conceitos e funções. In: JORNADA DE PESQUISA E EXTENSÃO, 2009, Santa Maria. *Anais...* Macapá: CEAP, 2009. p. 1-3. Disponível em: <<http://www.ceap.br/material/MAT1511201011414.pdf>>. Acesso em: 12 out. 2018.

Author's Contributions

The reflections of this paper come from teaching, research and extension activities of the METUIA/UFSCar team. Marina Jorge da Silva, Marina Leandrini Oliveira and Ana Paula Serrata Malfitano participated in these activities and the design, writing, review of this manuscript. All authors approved the final version of the text.

Funding Source

The work was funded by the University Extension Program (PROEX-UFSCar) and it was supported by the Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel - Brazil (CAPES) - Financing Code 001.

Notes

¹ The METUIA Project is an interinstitutional group of studies, training and actions in Social Occupational Therapy, whose objective is to act for to the citizenship of people in process of rupture of the social support networks. The Project brings together professors, researchers, professionals, undergraduate and graduate students around the themes of training, research and work in Social Occupational Therapy. Currently, it is located in six different universities: USP (University of São Paulo), UFSCar (Federal University of São Carlos), UNIFESP (Federal University of São Paulo), UFES (Federal University of Espírito Santo), UnB (University of Brasília) e UFPB (Federal University of Paraíba). Information available on the website of the Occupational Therapy Department of UFSCar (UNIVERSIDADE..., 2018).