Annex 3: Report on the historic Centre of Mexico City, Mexico

COLLECTIVE MEMORIES AND SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF MEXICO CITY HISTORIC CENTER

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INDEX

1. Introduction: how did each local team understand the research hypothesis?
   1.1 General Description of Mexico City’s Historic Center (MCHC)

2. State of the art: from individual to cultural memory
   2.1 Individual memory as social representation
   2.2 From collective memory to cultural media memory

3. Controversial memories of Mexico City Historic Center: A Return to Halbwachs’ Collective Memory
   3.1 Methodology
      3.1.1 Northeast Sector of Mexico City’s Historic Center (MCHC)
      3.1.2 Alameda’s Southern Sector
   3.2 Social Actors

4. Analyses and results

5. Interpretation of results: Collective memories and social representations of MCHC
   5.1 Layers of Urban and Social Memories Convergent in Present Time
      5.1.1 Memory of Mexico-Tenochtitlán (1325-1521 A.D.): Imaginary of the buried prehispanic city
      5.1.2 Memory of the Spanish City (1521-1810): Urban and Spiritual Colonization
      5.1.3 Memory of the Independent and laic city: end of the religious city
      5.1.4 Memory of Porfirio Díaz Dictatorship (1884-1911): Ideals of Order and Progress
      5.1.5 Post-Revolutionary City (1920-1980): The Abandon of the Historic Core
      5.1.6 Construction of an Urban Island for Mexican Heritage Protection (1980)
      5.1.7 Memory of Economic Crisis and Earthquake on 1985
      5.1.8 Memory of the Democratic City (1997): HC Island Under Reflectors
   5.2 Convergence of Different Social Actors, Divergent Social Representations and Memories of MCHC
      5.2.1 MCHC as Urban Heritage: A Polysemic Concept
      5.2.2 Hegemonic Social Representations and Heritage Management

Final Remarks

Bibliography

Annexes

1. Program of the Workshop: Social Memory of Mexico City Historic Center.
2. Program of the Workshop: “Towards a Management Plan for the Historic Center of Mexico City 2017-2022” (Hacia el Plan de Manejo del Centro Histórico de la Ciudad de México) organized by Autoridad del Centro Histórico.
1. Introduction: how did each local team understand the research hypothesis?

This document presents the research project, results and interpretations about controversial memories in the historic urban landscape (HUL) for the case of Mexico City. According to the general objective of research comparing HUL in Rome, Beijing and Mexico City, our purpose is to assess the “potential and limits of the emerging approach of HUL by analyzing the social-spatial effects of its implementation at the local level...”.

We developed the research about social memories of Mexico City Historic Center (MCHC) from a psychosocial perspective, nevertheless we use a methodology from an interdisciplinary approach by using tools from geography and architecture. Social psychology studies the relationship (tensions) between the subject and the society. How the society shape, gets into the person and how the person constructs society by her or his acts in a relationship with others in a historical and cultural context.

From this point of view, studying social memory implies the observation of this relationship on different levels: on the individual, on the groups or institutions, in general society sense. Research questions and methodology of this study follows this approach:

1. What are the social memories of Historic Center of Mexico City, that subjects, groups, and society has constructed in the context of UNESCO recommendations for heritage protection?
2. What different memories integrate the social representations of MCHC?
3. To what extent social representations and memories of MCHC are controversial?

Before entering in details of the research, we will make a short description of the concept of Mexico City Historic Center and the territory that it covers.
1.1 General Description of Mexico City’s Historic Center (MCHC)

Mexico City Historic Center corresponds officially to the territory of the entire city at the beginning of the 19th century, which was part of the Distrito Federal, capital of the Mexican Republic. In January 2016, the Distrito Federal was officially named Ciudad de México.

The toponym “Historic Center” of Mexico City emerged in 1980, when a presidential decree created a geographic area of about 10 Km2, which boundaries contained historic buildings classified by the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH, for its acronym in Spanish). It is divided into Perimeter A and Perimeter B. The former hosts the most important ancient buildings, and the latter has fewer classified buildings and is considered as a buffer zone (área de contención). This legal order created a geographic fragmentation of the central area, following the criterion of protection of architectural heritage, neglecting the existing sociocultural dynamics in the entire central area. From one day to the next, local residents saw their everyday life territory fragmented and regulated by different urban laws. The residential signification of their space was substituted by the reinforcement of a historical discourse that promoted preservation of national heritage. This process of transformation of the place meaning took relevance when the most important Aztec religious site was unearthed in the late seventies. The foundational myth of Aztec culture was materialized in the ruins.

Since the eighties Mexico City government (Departamento del Distrito Federal) applied different policies of renewal or conservation of historic urban areas. The historical core of the city has been submitted to a process of heritage preservation that has changed its socioeconomic and cultural dynamics in few decades.

In 1987 the politics transforming MCHC in a city-museum were reinforced by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declaration of Perimeter A as a World Heritage site.

Since 1950, this zone has been losing population. Between 1970 and 1995 MCHC lost 11,609 inhabitants. In 2010 its population was 146,349 inhabitants in Perimeter A and B. The 1985 earthquake made evident the precarious conditions of living for downtown residents. Many local residents resisted the government pressure to send them to the periphery living zones. Some ancient popular habitation buildings (vecindades) were reconstructed, others remain the same until now. Besides residential problems of low-income population of MCHC, the increasing of tertiary activities imposed a particular social and urban dynamics: an alive space on daytime, empty at night. Intense activity within MCHC was also produced by thousands of street vendors occupying public spaces. Every local administration has to deal with street vendors organizations, which are politically active and powerful.

The idea of recovering, rehabilitate or renew the MCHC was circulating “in the air” by the eighties. Rehabilitation discourse has motivated each local administration to create a series of programs and regulations for the site.
2. State of the art: from individual to cultural memory

We will discuss the concept of social memory and its different levels of analysis.

2.1 Individual memory as social representation

Memory has been conceived as a socio-cognitive process, as any other cognitive process (For example: perception, intelligence), by classical authors (Piaget, Vygotsky or Bartlett) that studied cognitive development. From this perspective, personal memory is social because it is co-constructed with others during the lifetime. Some research on neurology (Damasio, 1994) underlines the importance of cultural and social context on cognitive development (Candau, 2005).

If personal memory is social, we can define it as social representations of the past. According to Moscovici (1961), social representations are a common sense knowledge socially constructed through communication between people relationships, mass media or any other form of information diffusion. These social representations are the basic knowledge that individuals or groups use to deal with our world. We incorporate them during socialization, but not in a passive way. We’re always reconstructing them depending on our interests and desires, on our cultural and social contexts. The individual is considered here as a social subject with a capacity of action. Social representations are anchored on a cultural context, on the groups and in the daily experience.

Defining social memory as social representation allows us to approach Halbwachs’ concept of Collective Memory (1925, 1950). Both Moscovici and Halbwachs were inspired by Durkheim’s sociology and redefined his concept of collective representations (Alba, 2016).

Halbwachs made of collective representations a sort of phenomenology of collective memory, considering it as a social construction of the past events, transmitted from one generation to other through socialization. So, our memory is collective because it is the memory of the group. As long as the group and its products exist, the memory will have social frameworks, helping the memory reconstruction. Culture, language, space, time are general frameworks of the social construction of reality in the present and the symbolic reconstruction of the past.

Space as a framework of collective memory is critical for our research. Halbwachs considers that space is a reflection of the social structure. On a dialectic process, the group constructs its space as much as space gives identity to the group. So space becomes a framework of collective memory because individuals and groups can find on it the marks of their lives. If such spatial marks disappear, space will no longer be a framework of collective memory for that group.

2.2 From collective memory to cultural media memory

Halbwachs developed his concept of collective memory between 1925 and 1944. He died in the concentration camp of Buchenwald in 1945. His Collective Memory is a post-mortem book.
Occidental societies have changed in the last seventy years. Can we use the same concept for describing collective memory now? The contemporary theoretical discussion about the city and social life tends to underline that modernity and technology development have modified the traditional ways of living all over the world.

Pierre Nora (1989) states that we cannot talk about collective memory in contemporary societies because traditional social links and communities tend to disappear on a modern context that enhances individualism, permanent present and rapid transformations. Under this perspective, we can say that space is a less powerful frame of memory in modern societies because places change more quickly.

In contemporary societies, individuals, groups, and institutions have been constructing “lieux de mémoire” (places of memory) to keep their memories and maintain their identity. Places of memory are symbolic, material and functional. Photographic family albums, museums, scholar history books, public and official commemorations, are places of memory. They are externalized artifacts of memory constructed with the help of historical documents and symbolic objects. This reconstruction of the past could become theatrical stages, where characters and symbols appear in an exaggerated manner, to emphasize a message.

Places of memory took particular relevance for the construction of the ideals of national states on the 19th century. According to Huyssen (2003), such memory does not make much sense in the context of globalization. Urbanization, industrialization and modernity destroyed collective memory on occidental societies. As a consequence, there is a boom of memory reconstruction, a recreation of the past that tends to transform our world into a museum. Since the seventies, historical places have been restored as open museums in Europe and North America, creating a massive marketing of nostalgia. Huyssen proposes that this culture of memory could be a reaction to globalization process. The public concern for memory implies a fear of oblivion.

In a culture saturated by media, it is evident for Hyussen that the concept of collective memory is no longer useful for the analysis of this explosion of memory. It is hard to conceive that in our highly fragmented society, there might exist a consensual collective memory.

Huyssen states that the study of individual or social memory today has to consider the influence of media in the construction and diffusion of memory. The marketing of memory is successful because we are consumers of memory as a product not only produced by official institutions. We like theatrical scenarios of history, or places of memory because they compensate the instability of traditional cultural identity.

After the revision of the concept of social memory in contemporary occidental societies, we can formulate some questions about the influence of the UNESCO heritage concept: Is UNESCO’s idea of heritage protection part of this general preoccupation for keeping a memory that no longer exists? Are UNESCO recommendations helping to create places of memory consumed by their diffusion on mass media?
3. Controversial memories of Mexico City Historic Center: A Return to Halbwachs’ Collective Memory

The previous discussion about social memory leads us to think about the pertinence of such theoretical approaches for studying social memories of Mexico City Historic Center.

If we return to the psychosocial perspective, focusing the relationship between the subject, the group, and the social level, we cannot say that there is no longer cultural identity or a collective memory in the case of Historic Center of Mexico City. When we change the level of analysis, from the social memory to the small group or individual memory, we can see that cultural identity and collective memory cannot disappear because they are processes inherent to human beings. We cannot abandon the conception of identity as a construction of the self in society, neither the idea of a socio-cognitive memory. Social memory and cultural identity are processes that evolve with social transformations.

Certainly, we cannot talk about collective memory thinking of the same groups and social frameworks of Halbwachs’ historical context. Our task is to discover what is the contemporary social structure that shapes socio-cognitive processes, such as social representations, memory, and identity in the case of MCHC.

The objective of this study was to analyze social representations and memories of Historic Center in present and past time, expressed by different social actors involved with this territory.

For Halbwachs, as for Moscovici, memory and representations are rational processes. Individuals and groups will construct the past from their situation and their position on the social structure in present context. Controversial memories emerge because of different interpretations of events that could be positive for some people but no for others; because society is heterogeneous and unequal concerning political power.

Social representations and memory relate to social practices and collective actions. Different social representations of present and past coexist in the same context. Some of them are more recognized that others, some could be opposite to others. After Alexander (2012), the memory of a group becomes hegemonic because this group has more power and access to the media, than others.

We will observe controversial memories of HCMC at several levels of analysis: cultural mediatic memory, places of memory, collective memory in social actors.

3.1 Methodology

Social representations of a city are complex symbolic constructions (Jodelet, 2015). Verbal narratives, actions, graphical expressions are materialized forms of such representations. We replicated the methodology used for previous studies about social representations and memories of Mexico City (Alba, 2002, 2006, 2011), and Historical Center (Alba, 2010, 2007). Consisting of free word associations, questions related to geographical maps,
generating present and past narratives about personal experience, social dynamics, and practices:

- **Interviews**
  - Personal spatial experience
  - Social and historic landscape
  - Cultural traditions
  - Narratives on Sketch maps and official maps
  - Free association words
- **Social and Institutional discourses**
  - Open Interviews with institutional and social actors
  - Workshop organized by Autoridad del Centro Histórico de la Ciudad de México
- **Archive research**
- **Fieldwork observations**: two contrasted areas (Including photos, maps and sketches).

To reach our general objectives and to apply the methodology proposed, we formed a research team, composed of students on Social Psychology and Urban Studies:

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Cognitive maps are geographical and figurative dimensions of social representations of urban spaces. Their study is important when boundaries become unclear, or places are suffering transformations (Moscovici, 2007). They allow us to conceive territory as a social framework of memory that changes during time. The historic core of Mexico City has had major transformations since the origin of the city. We will focus on recent changes, related to the creation of the concept of Historic Center in 1980 and its nomination as World Heritage by UNESCO. Such transformations had a social and urban impact in several sectors of the territory considered as HC. We will analyze two socially contrasted areas, located in different parts of HC: Southwest and Northeast (see Map 1).
Comparing representations, memories and social experiences in these sectors seems important because we can study in both cases, the effects of rehabilitation policies of Mexico City’s Historic Center in opposite directions. In the northern sector social exclusion of users and low-income residents is observed; while the southern sector of the Alameda clearly shows the integration of upper middle class residents with various ways of life different from traditional life in the area.

Framed in a speech of rescue of the historical heritage, Historic Center rehabilitation policies change the dynamics in the place under a free market logic that minimizes the existing socio-cultural value in them.

One of the main objectives of this research will be to identify the socio-cultural dynamics (social representations, collective memories, practices) of each sector to investigate how they can be integrated into projects of the cultural heritage, under the concept of Historic Urban Landscape, proposed by UNESCO.

Fieldwork observations on both areas consisted on register social dynamics and cultural expressions on public spaces. We have mapped observations, illustrated by photographic images and video.

3.1.1 Northeast Sector of Mexico City’s Historic Center (MCHC):

Polygon delimited by Brazil Street to the West, Eje 1 Oriente Vidal Alcocer to the East, Eje 1 Norte Ignacio López Rayón and to the South by a street which name changes in different stretches: Donceles, Justo Sierra and Mixcalco. Part of the polygon is located in the Perimeter A, the rest of it in the perimeter B.
The prehispanic borough of Atzacoalco is the historic core of this sector. During the Colonial period the area was named as San Sebastian Atzacoalco, because of the church of San Sebastian, which plays an important role until now.

It is a sector characterized by a large number of neighborhoods that represent the traditional form of collective housing in Mexico City, known as vecindades. The lifestyle of the neighborhood has remained in the urban memory through the famous study *The Children of Sanchez* by Oscar Lewis (1961). Many of the vecindades were renewed after the earthquake of September 1985.

This sector is also marked by economic dynamics imposed by formal and informal trade since the beginning of the eighties, aimed at popular sectors, both local and foreign, who arrive to the Historic Center for products ranging from wedding dresses and furniture to hundreds of Chinese or Korean trinkets that are resold in other states in Mexico. For decades, different trade readjustment programs in public spaces have been implemented. These programs have attempted to “cleanse” the area of the stalls. It is important to note that the strength of business leaders and trade organizations in the sector have made a battleground between the grenadiers who pass with their trucks to lift the stalls and street vendors who return to the streets for selling again once the truck is out of sight.

The urban landscape of the area changes as we walk from the Northern streets of the Metropolitan Cathedral, towards Eje 1 Norte. The streets near the Cathedral and the Archeological Zone of Templo Mayor, like Justo Sierra, are free of stalls, which are increasing as one moves northward. Buildings also change its aspect, from renewed facades to neighborhoods in ruins. It is therefore a transition zone between the “museified” (clean historic center) and the popular neighborhoods and trade.
Public squares, churches and colonial buildings are erected amid intense popular activity as the evidence of how life once was, with other pace and values. The religious memory is still present in the sector as well as the memory in the markets (For example: Garibaldi, Lagunilla, Abelardo Rodriguez, Mixcalco) which have made tradition.

The respect for the memory of the popular and traditional life of the area should be imposed against architectural heritage conservation policies, which are just interested in their economic value threatening the local culture as a form of “intangible” heritage.

The National Student’s Home is a residence built in the late nineteenth century with the purpose of housing students from other states of Mexico who came to study to the high schools and universities located in Mexico City. It has maintained its original vocation thanks to the fact that it is a civil association, therefore has not been expropriated by the government for other purposes. It is one of the few buildings that preserve its architecture and function despite economic pressures for a change in land use within the area. However, residents are aware of the risks facing this building from political rehabilitation of the Historic Center. Students open their doors to locals who want to use their facilities for celebrating birthday parties, children’s recreation or cultural workshops.

We believe that the National Student’s Home can become a cultural center in the area that meets the needs of residents and users of the neighborhood, regardless of the imposition of government support policies, which are not sensitive enough to the ways of life of the local population they actually are looking to assist. We have conducted some interviews with residents of the National Student’s Home.
3.1.2 Alameda’s Southern Sector:

This area, located in the Perimeter B, it is delimited by the Juárez Avenue to the North, the Eje Central to the East, Fray Servando Teresa de Mier Avenue to the South and Balderas Avenue to the West.

The origin of this area was the prehispanic borough of Moyotlan, which was renamed as San Juan Moyotla after the Spanish colonization. While in the area there were mainly religious buildings before the nineteenth century, this was developed as a straightforward extension of the city until the early twentieth century.

There are representative buildings of Art Deco and Art Nouveau, other typical mid-twentieth century constructions. This area was severely affected by the earthquake of 1985, which gave rise to the use of land for new construction intended for various urban uses: civil service (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Museum of Memory and Tolerance, Courts of the Federal District, Folk Art Museum, Museum of the Police, Notarial Archives, etc.), commercial (shopping centers [malls] and luxury hotels), and residential (minimalist housing complexes like Puerta Alameda). The recent modernization of the area has increased its commercial value and is changing its socio-demographic configuration. The minimalist housing for high middle-class, contrasts to the type of housing and traditional activities in the area.

The sector has a traditional commercial distribution through the streets: selling and repairing of appliances in the Article 123 street, selling of lamps and luminaires on Victoria Street, Oriental products shops and Chinese restaurants in Dolores Street. We find also handcrafts and flowers markets, and various products, where one can find traditional Mexican cuisine products (San Juan).
In this area, we got in contact with the Movement of Unification and Triqui Fight (Movimiento de Unificación y Lucha Triqui - MULT), an indigenous organization that supports Triqui migrants from the State of Oaxaca. They occupy an ancient building in Lopez Street, where Triquis or other Mexican ethnic groups can obtain support. We realized some interviews with street vendors working in the MCHC, who come from different regions of the country.

3.2 Social Actors

Social representations anchor in the experience and the categories shared by groups or general society. If the group has a significant influence on its members, they will share similar social representations. In the context of MCHC, we assume that social representations will anchor on a particular relationship with this space.

We conducted 21 interviews with different social actors (residents, traders, street vendors, Catholic church members) in the Northeast sector, 14 interviews in Southwest area, and nine interviews with social actors (researchers, authorities, investors, civil organizations) concerned with MCHC in general (See Table 1). We recorded and transcribed all interviews.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFORMANTS</th>
<th>SOCIO-SPATIAL POSITION</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>NAME</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NORTHEAST</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Residents</td>
<td>Residents in reconstructed building—after the earthquake (1985)</td>
<td>Traditional Inhabitant</td>
<td>Blanca</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Casa Nacional del Estudiante</td>
<td>Student - Inhabitant 1</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Student - Inhabitant 2</td>
<td>Raul</td>
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<td>2. Traders</td>
<td>Historic Commerces</td>
<td>Restaurant Taurino &quot;El Taquito&quot;</td>
<td>Rafael</td>
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<td>Market “Abelardo Rodríguez”</td>
<td>President of the “Mercado Abelardo Rodríguez” Association</td>
<td>Leticia</td>
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<td>CAF - Association</td>
<td>Verónica</td>
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<td>Esther</td>
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<td>Traditional Commerce</td>
<td>Traditional Shoe Designer</td>
<td>Angel</td>
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<td>Traditional service</td>
<td>Tailor Shop</td>
<td>Gonzalo</td>
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<td>3. Street Vendors</td>
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<td>Torero</td>
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<td>Genaro</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Torero</td>
<td>MULT member</td>
<td>Josefina</td>
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<td>4. Catholic Church members</td>
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<td>Lauro</td>
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<td>Manager</td>
<td>Mauricio</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Church “Parroquia de San Sebastian Martir”</td>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>Felipe</td>
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<td><strong>SOUTHWEST (Alameda South)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Residents</td>
<td>Motivated by the renewals projects (Puerta Alameda, Independencia, Revillagigedo)</td>
<td>Puerta Alameda</td>
<td>Luis</td>
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<td>2. Traders</td>
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<td>Market “San Juan” (food)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Service</td>
<td>Hairdressing</td>
<td>Jorge</td>
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<td>3. Street Vendors</td>
<td>Artesanos Indígenas</td>
<td>Leader MULT</td>
<td>Pascual</td>
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<td>4. Catholic Church members</td>
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<td>Priest</td>
<td>Alfredo</td>
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<td>Manuel Carlos</td>
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As part of the field observation of the social dynamics and the different discourses about MCHC, we assisted to the Workshop “Towards a Management Plan for the Historic Center of Mexico City 2017-2022”, (Hacia el Plan de Manejo del Centro Histórico de la Ciudad de México) organized by Autoridad del Centro Histórico, with collaboration with UNESCO local representatives and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Participants were coming from public institutions and universities, civil organizations of residents, street vendors, traders, and investors. They have been invited to present proposals that would help on the elaboration of the new Plan de Manejo. It took place at the Autoridad del Centro Histórico building, between the 3rd and 7th of October 2016. Several themes were discussed every day: issues about MCHC territory, economic development, housing, public spaces, and administrative aspects. All sessions were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

4. Analyses and results

In this report, we will present a general synthesis of results, based on a content analysis of narratives and graphic representations of MCHC (mental maps).

We also conducted a geographical analysis of responses based on official maps, which was proposed by Jean-Christophe Loubier and carried out by Lesslie Herrera with the collaboration of the UAM students.

From the point of view of geographical science, it is a question of visualizing and spatializing individual representations which, with a treatment in spatial analysis, makes it possible to reveal socio-spatial continuities/discontinuities on the scale of the studied territories. It is, therefore, the fusion of individual points of view that must make collective representations appear. This is a standard approach in quantitative geography and refers to the paradigm of spatiality (Pumain, D.et St. Julien, T. 2010; Darly, S. 2008).

The space of the geographers is defined by means of three concepts used simultaneously in the territory:

- The localized space
• Individual living space
• The geographical space which is collective space

The localized space makes it possible to account for the position of objects in space. These are systems of positioning on the surface of the earth. These are scales of measurements to better control the passage from reality (taking into account the curvature of the earth) to a 2D representation on a sheet of paper or a computer screen. The advantage of properly managing projection systems allows the stacking of maps in a geographic information system exactly on top of one another provided that these maps share the same position in space. This observation is important because it is what makes it possible to carry out spatial analyzes and to make appear the geographical space from the individual representations.

For Mexico City, the projection system used is: North_America_Lambert_Conformal_Conic_ITRF_1992

After the conduction of interviews and the recollection of data, technically, the process of construction de spatiale database took place in four phases:

• Photographing maps flat and creating a repertory of maps per individual
• Positioning these photos in the projection system of the studied territory
• Digitizing maps and filling in attribute fields
• Merge and interpolation of the results of the different actors
• Creation of a heatmap for analysis

The first phase is simple and does not pose any particular problems. On the other hand, the second must be carried out rigorously in order to ensure that the X and Y spatial positioning is efficient. In order to obtain a correct result, the operator must first establish a spatial positioning correspondence between pixels of the photo and set points (at least 6) marked on the territory in the cartographic projection system. On the other hand, in the judicious choice of the algorithm of geometrical deformation of the photo so that the position of each pixel of the latter corresponds to the reality of the positioning.

The result, if conducted judiciously, produces a perfect correspondence between the layers of the built environment in the geographic information system and the individual maps of the interviews.
At the level of image transformation, different types of algorithms have been tested. Herlmet registration usually gives the best results. (Späth, 2004), which was the case for our project as well. Moreover, it is very often implemented in the traditional GIS tools including the free distribution QGIS software which was used in the framework of this study. The next step was to create the database as such. This operation is carried out in two stages. The first step is to build a database architecture and secondly to digitize the cartographic production of the questioned individuals in order to create the data layers that will be used to produce the spatial analyzes.

We first worked in the context of the method tested during the analysis of the Var plain (Dubus et al. 2015). However, it appeared that this somewhat normative approach was not adapted to the sociological and ethnological context. Indeed, the approach developed by the geographers was based on the prior construction of a precise questionnaire combined with a directed spatial grammar composed only of the three elementary types of figures authorized in the GIS (point, line and polygon). For example, to the question “what are the places dangerous to you” corresponded a figure of type point that the person questioned had to use necessarily. The construction of the questionnaire and the type of figure was tested several times in order to establish a consensus between the types of spatial figures, their representation on the maps and their meaning in space for the individuals surveyed. The reasons for this normative nature of the acquisition system are mainly based on the fact that to digitize data in a database it is necessary to eliminate the ambiguities of representation. Otherwise it would be impossible to respect the property:“An entity (an object drawn and existing in the database) is linked to a single individual” which is mandatory in the development of a spatial layer.

For our project, however, it was unrealistic to operate according to this procedure. We found a compromise that allowed for flexibility in the data acquisition process. Therefore, during the a process of test, we decide to try two different approaches. The first one, instead of trying to identify the best figure for a question such as a geographer, we have broken down the database by creating 3 tables for each question, one for each possibility of representation. For example, the question “What are the dangerous places for you?” are repeated three times in the database, one expected in the case of a response in the form of a dot, another for the case where the answer would be in the form of a line and finally a response in the form of a polygon. The link with the individual responsible for the drawing is then made with a unique identifier present in a form attributed to the three spatial levels and obligatorily informed to the digitization. This procedure was based on the hypothesis that this redundant architecture makes it possible to reconstitute the whole representation of the person who produced the map. Nevertheless, after the test, we found out that 98% of the times, the people had chosen the polygon figure as spatial grammar for all the questions. Therefore, even though that data acquisition process was already constructed QGIS for that purpose, we decided to work on a second approach. This second approach was based only the polygon figure, the most repetitive figure, and also this facilitated the introduction of data in the QGIS software. This structure is completely reproducible in any GIS tool and offers the flexibility to deal with all possible situations of individual drawing carried out during an interview. Then a digitization work using a classical GIS approach is carried out and the spatial database becomes effective. Finally, the results are merged and an
interpolation is conducted, this allow us to have intersections and overlappings spaces of the different actors perceptions. These overlappings and intersections allow us to create a heatmap, in which is possible to visualize and highlight common spaces of the different actors. It can therefore be used to carry out spatial analyzes and to reveal weak or strong spatial perceptions according to the question asked in the interview. It is worth mentioning that this work was complemented by a spatial-visual analysis of the area by using photography and mapping different urban factors (urban spatial structure, connections and articulations of spaces, forms of appropriation and perception of space, etc.). These tools allow us to have a complete panorama of the socio-spatial interactions.

The geographical analysis allowed us to observe cartographic social representations and memories of MCHC produced by interviewers living or working on the contrasted areas of study. Alameda South is less poor than Northeast sector. It is also a more gentrified zone. Northeast area hosts a lot of street vendors.

On Map 4 and 5 we can observe the superposition of all responses about opinions and practices in MCHC of the 20 informants that worked on maps during the interview. We find that the most mentioned places were the central square of Plaza de la Constitución (Zocalo) and surrounding buildings: Cathedral, National Palace, commercial buildings. In previous studies about MCHC (Alba, 2010, 2007) and Mexico City (2014, 2004, 2002), we have also observed that these places have a potent symbolic force. They represent the national powers and origins of Mexican culture. Other places with strong meaning are Alameda Park, Bellas Artes Palace, Santo Domingo Square and La Merced Market. They are all reminiscences of multiple functions of ancient Mexico City: places of recreation, culture, religion and commerce.
We observe in our results a difference regarding the cartographic representation of 2006 study (Alba, 2007): the symbolic importance of Brazil Street and streets crossing it. We assume that it is the effect of urban renewal of this axe relating Zócalo with northern areas.

There is also a clear delimitation of the symbolic conception of Historic Center geographical areas. It goes from Reforma on the West to La Merced on East, and from Tepito on the North to Arcos de Belén Avenue on the South. The social representation of HC follows a different geographical logic than the official one. It represents the territory kept in memory, related to personal and social experiences of informants.

Figure 1 shows cartographical analysis of places and zones associated with interviewers’ private life. We see that Plaza de la Constitución (Zócalo) has significant centrality for people living in extreme zones of MCHC. People from both areas frequently go to the touristic areas of Reforma, Alameda Park, Madero and 5 de Mayo streets. They go to the popular market of La Merced. Brazil Street is also a pole of attraction of both samples. Nevertheless, people coming from South Alameda go there more often than residents and traders from Northeast. These informants have a larger experience of MCHC than those from South Alameda. South Alameda residents do not have any relation with Tepito, Ave. Circunvalación and East popular areas.
In figure 2 we observe places considered as problematic in MCHC. For both samples, there are problems in a vast territory. Problems are associated with security, hygiene, traffic, overpopulation on touristic sectors, inefficiency on the public services, corruption, street vendors, etc. Northeast residents and traders marked their zone of residence as highly problematic, including La Merced and Axe Central. These are spaces where street vendors are very active. They expand the problematic areas towards the northeast. Residents from South Alameda also include West areas as problematic.

Most respondents from Alameda South consider a large territory as valued by others, as we can observe in Figure 3. Northeast interviewers are more accurate on marking valued places; they focus on Alameda, Zocalo, Cathedral, Templo Mayor ruins and Palacio Nacional.
Interviewers marked specific places when we asked them to indicate most recognized places at the historic center (see Figure 4). Northeast residents and traders focus on the Zocalo Square and surrounding buildings, the touristic corridor Madero and Alameda, including Reforma. They also mark poor areas like Tepito and La Merced, which have not been identified by South Alameda participants. They mark a larger territory as recognized from a historical point of view.

![SOUTHWEST](image1.png) ![NORTHEAST](image2.png)

*Figure 5. Traditions and customs persisting on MCHC.*

Historic Urban Landscape concept, proposed by UNESCO, underlines the importance of intangible heritage in historical places. One of our questions aimed to observe what social representations of traditions and customs recognized by people living or working in MCHC. As we can see in figure 5, residents and traders from Northeast, mentioned a greater variety of traditions and customs, related to religious and cultural activities, to official commemorations and public spectacles. They locate such traditions and customs in vast areas. On the contrary, maps of South Alameda interviewers find traditions in few delimited areas: Garibaldi, Lagunilla, two streets with specialized commerce and activities taking place in the Zocalo Square, the Cathedral, Palacio Nacional and Templo Mayor ruins.

5. **Interpretation of results: Collective memories and social representations of MCHC**

The interpretation of narratives and cartographic representations follows the theoretical assumption exposed at the beginning of this text, regarding different levels of analysis of social representations and memories of MCHC. In the first social level of analysis of discourses (media, myths, legends, imaginaries, believes, scholar texts, official documents, individual narratives, geographic representations, etc.), we find that layers of collective memories of MCHC converge in present time. On the second level of analysis of institutional discourses and collective narratives, we find collective memories of MCHC, anchored on the values and interests of groups and institutions. On the third level of analysis of individual experiences, we observe how the general and collective memories converge with the personal, affective, relationship with MCHC in present and past time.
5.1 Layers of Urban and Social Memories Convergent in Present Time

Different layers of memories of the city coexist in the same territory. Such memories are shaping social representations of MCHC on social actors. They are anchored on historical moments and correspond to hegemonic representations of the city in every period. They are not static, but evolving on time (Alba, 2014).

5.1.1 Memory of Mexico-Tenochtitlán (1325-1521 A.D.): Imaginary of the buried prehispanic city

In the individual or collective narratives about MCHC or Mexico City, we find constant references to the prehispanic town. Some remind the foundational myth of Tenochtitlan as the metropolis of the Mexica (Aztec) empire, ordered by their gods. The Historic Center, particularly the central square and blocks symbolize the original Aztec city culture, destroyed by the Spanish colonizers. The buried city haunts the spirits to recreate an imaginary ancient culture, uncorrupted, with the beautiful urban landscape of the original lakes. This mythic memory nourishes a proud of Mexican origins and national identity.

Mexican muralists, like Diego Rivera, depicted the mythical Tenochtitlán on the murals of famous buildings, such as the National Palace and the Ministry of National Education. These emotive images reproduced in scholar texts, postcards, and touristic artifacts, communicate one of the most important places of memory (Nora, 1989) of Mexico. Ancient maps and mock-ups presented in local museums or public spaces, also help to reconstruct the memory of the buried city.

In the analysis of mental maps of MCHC of our sample (2016), but also in a previous study realized in 2006, we find the reminiscence of the urban structure of the Tenochtitlán. People frequently draw the perpendicular axes that divided the city into four neighborhoods, the central square as the origin of the sketch map, and also represent the prehispanic ruins or other elements linked to the Aztec society.

This memory also appears on the institutional discourses about Mexico City or its historic core. It legitimizes urban programs and intervention policies, related to heritage protection. Architect Alejandro Suárez Pareyón, who elaborated the Partial Program of Urban Development (Programa Parcial de Desarrollo Urbano) for MCHC, had the intention to recover the 4 Aztec original neighborhoods. The text of The Constitution of Mexico City starts with a phrase, written in Nahuatl (Aztec language) and Spanish, which commemorates the Aztec City: As long as the world exists, the glory and fame of Mexico-Tenochtitlan will never end. The memory of the Aztec City is frequently emotive and nostalgic. The proud the indigenous origin is mixed with indignation for the destruction of the prehispanic temples, monuments and buildings. It is a traumatic memory (Alexander, 2012), still alive, like an old grief.

5.1.2 Memory of the Spanish City (1521-1810): Urban and Spiritual Colonization

The memory of the destruction of the Aztec City does not diminish the reminiscence of the Spaniard “city as of palaces”, the Catholic landscape and the atmosphere of the colonial society. Most of the architectural heritage corresponds to this period.
We find two kinds of social memories of the colonial city. One is an erudite memory, held by those who have a good knowledge of history and architecture of this historic period: authorities, researchers, priests, or higher educated inhabitants. The other is a memory nourished by myths and legends of the colonial city. Most of them have moral lessons about religious behavior or social principles. Some people recall legends associated with ancient streets names: street of the lost child or the crow bridge. Both memories are anchored in the colonial buildings, churches, squares, alleys, convents, and other colonial scenarios.

Mental maps recall the Spanish origin of the colonial city. Almost all of the sketch maps drawn in 2006 and 2016, reproduce the central square (Plaza de la Constitución), surrounded by the Cathedral, the National Palace and other buildings of the viceregal period. Many colonial buildings are included as places that interviewers appreciate or where they like to visit.

Alameda was the first public park built by the end of the 16th century on the west side of the colonial city. It is very present in the images of the Historic Center and it makes part of the obligatory visit in Mexico City.

5.1.3 Memory of the Independent and laic city: end of the religious city

Mexico achieved independence from Spain through a war that lasted from 1810 to 1821. In 1824, the Federal District (Distrito Federal) was created as the territory that contained Mexico City, the capital of the Mexican Republic, and other districts. Towards the middle of the 19th century, the city underwent another radical change in its structure and functions. The Reform Laws, pronounced by President Benito Juárez (1859-1863), allowed the State to confiscate the majority of the Church’s property. A large number of religious buildings were demolished to build more modern constructions and improve traffic by opening up streets. These transformations brought an exodus of the wealthy sectors of the city to new neighborhoods being built towards the west, on either side of the current Avenida de la Reforma (Monnet, 1993).

Catholic priests have a clear memory of the destruction or modification of Catholic buildings. The religious memory of the city is still present in the urban and architectural MCHC landscape. Many convents and Catholic schools had different functions after the nationalization of clergy properties. For instance, part of the market Abelardo Rodríguez was an old Catholic school. On mental maps, the Metropolitan Cathedral appears as a symbol of Catholic Church in Mexico.

Urban modifications made after the destruction and transformation of the Church’s property incited the wealthy groups to build new individual houses on the sides of Reforma Avenue, outside the colonial city, on the west side. This urban development on the west marked a socio-spatial segregation that we can observe in mental maps of Mexico City (de Alba, 2004, 2006, 2014) and of its Historic Center. Zones and places located on the west side of the central square Zócalo are more drawn and cited on mental maps than places situated in the northeast, which is considered a popular area.
5.1.4 Memory of Porfirio Díaz Dictatorship (1884-1911): Ideals of Order and Progress

Under Porfirio Díaz regime, Mexico City enters into the way of the 19th century modernity. The city ceased to be a predominantly religious place, opening the door to new functions and new meanings associated with modernity and progress. The city at the end of the 19th century is implanted in an urban area that thirty years later doubles its size and population. Mexico became an industrial city where the power of the Church and the State had to compete with the vigorous capitalism of the 19th century. The railway lines and the Buenavista station are a symbol of progress, representing a radical change in transport for people and goods from the rest of the country. The development of urban transport imprints a greater dynamism of the city by facilitating the flow of individuals and goods, as well as the possibility of living further from the central part of the city. It is the beginning of urban expansion.

Until now, we can see the influence of French architecture, particularly of Eiffel’s iron structures on buildings like Palacio de Hierro (Iron Palace), the first commercial gallery in Mexico City.

The industrial development of this period gave birth to a rising bourgeoisie and working class (ouvrière). A new style of life, linked with a capitalist society, started to influence the traditional Spanish and indigenous culture.

5.1.5 Post-Revolutionary City (1920-1980): The Abandon of the Historic Core

The Porfirio Díaz presidency was overthrown by the 1910 revolutionary movement. At the end of the Revolution, by 1920, the capital of post-revolutionary Mexico continued with a rate of growth and modernization. On the late thirties, it became the city of the Party of Mexican Revolution power. The party was renamed as Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) in 1946.

The PRI philosophy was based on the exaltation of a national ideology and the ideals of modernization of the country. The principles of functionalist urbanism marked the urban development and architectural projects in Mexico City.

The political and economic centralization in Mexico City caused the arrival of a massive migration of people searching for jobs in the metropolis. Most of the immigrants were living in vecindades (collective housing) located in central neighborhoods. Because of the enormous demand for accommodation, the Federal Government decided to implant the program of frozen rents from 1942. Thousands of low-income families were living in precarious conditions because the owners did not want to invest in the properties ruled by frozen rents program.

By the decade of 1950, the Historic Center of Mexico City started losing population. At the same time, modernization of other attractive areas on Southwest of the metropolis caused an exodus of important functions: The National University emigrated to the new brand Ciudad Universitaria; the business activities moved to new modern offices on Juárez Avenue and Reforma.
Little by little, the ancient city of palaces became a place of bureaucratic activities and popular commerce. Crowded by day and empty by night on the west sector. The central Square of Zócalo was the symbol of the federal power and, for that reason, the spatial target of political protests. The rest of the historic center hosted low-income residents, attached to their popular neighborhoods.

5.1.6 Construction of an Urban Island for Mexican Heritage Protection (1980)

As we have exposed at the beginning of this text, the colonial outline of Mexico City was confined to a perimeter of approximately 10 square kilometers, designated in 1980 as the Historical Centre of Mexico City, by presidential decree. UNESCO classified MCHC as World Heritage in 1987.

This new geographical entity was created under an architectural criterion. MCHC was divided in Perimeter A (zone of a high density of buildings older than 1900) and Perimeter B (area of protection of A perimeter). It became a historical island that contained the architectural treasures of Mexican heritage, which was at risk because of the rapid loss of population.

It is important to underline that the concept of heritage considered only the material aspect of it. Its social and cultural dimensions were not part of the Mexican heritage definition when by Federal Authorities created the concept of Historic Center on 1980.

The hegemonic social representation about MCHC tended to underline the necessity of rescue Mexican national heritage from degradation. Nevertheless, it was not entirely clear how to recover what, why exactly, for whom and where to start.

Under the regime of the Departamento del Distrito Federal (a branch of Federal Government ruled by the Institutional Revolutionary Party - PRI) was created the first Historic Center Trust (Fideicomiso del Centro Histórico) in 1990 as a private organization that got funds for heritage conservation.

5.1.7 Memory of Economic Crisis and Earthquake on 1985

On the context of the discourse of MCHC protection and economic crisis, the sharp earthquake of 19th September 1985 shook Mexico City. The central areas were the most damaged.

The earthquake not only affected the material infrastructure but the political structure also. The collapse of official buildings and social housing projects put in evidence the political corruption. The government institutions were overwhelmed by the size of such tragedy. Residents and organized civil groups came to rescue many victims.

The experience of social organization was strong and politically fruitful. Urban popular movements got stronger after the earthquake and learnt how to defend their neighborhoods. Many architects and urban specialists from different universities worked with organized
groups of residents, searching to maintain the architectural design of traditional vecindades. This kind of housing has been an important element of social identity on central neighborhoods.

The Programa de Renovación Habitacional (Program of Housing Renewal) was the official materialization of the academic participation on the renewal of popular housing after the earthquake (Connolly, Coulomb & Duhau, 1991). This exceptional program allowed residents to become owners of their new little apartments, ensuring their occupation of central neighborhoods, including MCHC. Nevertheless, it was not enough for stopping the depopulation of central areas.

As a consequence of 1982 economic crisis and crescent unemployment, organizations of street vendors invaded public spaces of most of the Perimeter A and northeast areas of Perimeter B. Many of the street vendors were residents of the HC. These organizations emerged as strong political actors in MCHC. Local governments have been dealing with them to recover the streets from the invasion of thousands of informal traders.

The informal economy of street vendors produces a large amount of untaxed income for many families working on it. Their organizations have enough economic power to negotiate with local officials to get permission to sell all kinds of products in the MCHC streets. They rent empty apartments or entire buildings for stocking merchandise.

Since the late eighties, the local government has implemented programs for relocating street vendors. There is a permanent fight between their organizations and authorities trying to chase them of public spaces on MCHC.

5.1.8 Memory of the Democratic City (1997): HC Island Under Reflectors

The most important urban diagnosis and programs for MCHC rehabilitation were implemented with the arrival of the first elected local government at the Federal District (represented by an opponent political party: Democratic Revolution Party—PRD) in 1997. The Historic Center Trust, now as a public organism, proposed the Strategic Plan for the Regeneration and Integral Development of the Historic Center of Mexico City in 1998. In 2000 the Partial Programs of Urban Development of the Historic Center (Programas Parciales de Desarrollo Urbano) were implemented for three areas: Historic Center (larger than perimeter A), Alameda and Merced. They are still valid with some modifications. Other areas of perimeter B are regulated by the Partial Program of Urban Development for Delegación (district) Cuauhtémoc and Delegación Venustiano Carranza. The objectives of these projects had a social and integrative perspective: the rescue of centrality, regeneration of habitation, economic development and social development.

The discourse of regeneration or rescue of MCHC has been maintained over the last three decades; nevertheless, the particular forms of concrete actions have the mark of each Major ruling District Federal Government (GDF). The administration that governed Federal District from 2000 to 2006 gave priority to private economic investment in MCHC. Renewed west streets and buildings (Zocalo-Reforma corridor) and south-west (Alameda South). This sector started being attractive for high-income residents and international
companies. Many traditional stores and restaurants in the area were substituted by international franchises like Starbucks or Zara boutiques. Puerta Alameda, a residential compound of 3 tours (18 floors) of minimalist high standing apartments, was built in Alameda South. It introduced a new style of life in Mexico City that contrasts with a traditional style of living in the historic center (Zamorano, 2015). The Historic Center Trust coordinated actions between private investors, civil society and local and federal government, through the Consultative Council of the Historic Center (Consejo Consultivo del Centro Histórico), created in 2001.

The next GDF administration (2007-2012) set up in 2007 the Historic Center Authority (Autoridad del Centro Histórico), a new organism of management for MCHC, took responsibility for the coordination of multiple actors intervening in the site. The Historic Center Trust depends on the Historic Center Authority, and it is in fact, the operative institution in MCHC. In 2008, GDF government, through the Historic Center Authority and the Trust, created a Management Plan of the Historic Center of Mexico City (Plan de Manejo del Centro Histórico de la Ciudad de México). The Plan defines strategies of heritage conservation and sustainability, and it is actualized according to UNESCO recommendations. In August 2011, the Integral Management Plan of the Historic Center of Mexico City (Plan Integral de Manejo del Centro Histórico de la Ciudad de México 2011-2016) was presented to UNESCO. The first page of the Plan points out that Mexico has signed the UNESCO’s Convention for Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) and acquired a formal engagement with this international organism concerning regulatory recommendations about heritage preservation. The Plan has not integrated the Recommendations for HUL approved by UNESCO in November 2011.

The GDF administration ruling Mexico City (2012-2018) has followed the same management strategy for MCHC. At this moment the Autoridad del Centro Histórico is creating the new Plan de Manejo, to be concluded by mid-2017. It will probably make explicit references to HUL.

MCHC is managed by a complex system of institutions and regulations. The Historic Center Authority and the Historic Center Trust deal with several institutions charged of different aspects of the city: public spaces and security, economy, public services and so on. The regulation of HC depends on several local and federal urban plans: The three Partial Programs of Urban Development (HC, Alameda Sur and La Merced approved in 2000), two Urban Programs corresponding to Cuauhtémoc y V. Carranza districts, and programs of Minister of Urban Development and Housing (SEDUVI), the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) and National Institute of Arts (INBA).

In all of this complex administrative system prevails the idea of protection of buildings and tangible landscape. MCHC regulations and most of the institutional discourses consider only the material aspects of heritage. There is not yet an inclusion of non-material elements on the conception of heritage. Therefore, it is necessary an entire program for the historic core of Mexico City that considers it as a socio-cultural place.
5.2 Convergence of Different Social Actors, Divergent Social Representations and Memories of MCHC

In this section, we will discuss social representations and memories elaborated by groups or institutions, whose representatives have particular approaches to HC: local or federal officials, researchers, UNESCO authorities, investors, traders, residents, street vendors and Catholic priests. The discourses were not expressed as personal opinions, but as representatives of institutions, associations, or informal groups, participating in the Workshop Towards the Mexico City Historic Center Management Plan 2017-2022 (October 3-7, 2016).

Social and institutional actors involved in the workshop made implicit references to the layers of memory presented before. Each person integrated different layers of MCHC memories in a social representation that justifies certain actions and visions of this place. We observe a functional use of the layers of memories that make sense and meaning to the MCHC present situation, according to the relationship that each social actor has with it.

We will present a synthesis of most important results of a content analysis of these discourses. We analyzed this material according to the next questions: How do they conceive HC? What do they think that has to be done to preserve HC? What are the most important memories in HC?

5.2.1 MCHC as Urban Heritage: A Polysemic Concept

Considering MCHC as urban heritage, we observe that every actor conceives heritage according to its interests and ways of appropriation of spaces in Historic Center. Having different conceptions of MCHC, generate controversial memories and social representations of the space shared by all of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Actors</th>
<th>Conception of MCHC heritage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authorities</td>
<td>- MCHC is a territory to control and regulate following strict norms.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Focus on material heritage.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Vertical vision of management and imposition of their conception of heritage.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- HUL is unknown and not yet included in official programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO representatives</td>
<td>- HUL must lead urban planning and management of heritage.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Democratic management and planning for heritage protection</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Reinforcement of cultural life and social appropriation of historic spaces to recreate the city as a place of identity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic researchers</td>
<td>- Abandon of heritage protection programs for an economic benefit.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Substitution of MCHC concept and geographical boundaries by the notion of the historic city, a diverse sociocultural place with a multitude of functions, integrating traditional neighborhoods.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Socially mixed repopulation is a fundamental objective.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Democratic administration.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Recognition of complexity of informal commerce for a better management of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real state investors</td>
<td>- Heritage is a valuable commercial product in the urban market.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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and businessmen - Economic power to propose projects in MCHC for economic profit.

Traditional shop owners and popular market traders - Conservation of traditional economic activities, based on personal relationship with clients (barber shop, candy store, wedding dress stores, etc.)
- Factories of handmade products (shoemakers, tailors, etc.)
- Old restaurants and bars.

Street vendors They consider that they maintain alive the tradition of the prehispanic street market. This incorporation of heritage to social identity is reinforced when street vendors come from an ethnic group. “Heritage is us.”

Residents - Consider themselves as the guardians of local cultural life, traditional collective and religious activities.
- Transmission of local memory to future generations.
- Concern for the future permanence of next generations in MCHC.

Table 2. Conception of MCHC heritage by social actors

As we can observe, these social representations and memories are controversial because each group has a particular vision of MCHC. The groups that are occupying the MCHC have different interests and power positions.

5.2.2 Hegemonic Social Representations and Heritage Management

There are at least three hegemonic social representations that influence other representations of MCHC, like meta-normative systems leading the vision and values of an ideal historical place:

1. The logic of liberal economy. Local governments tend to favor private architectural or urban projects because they believe it is the best way to renew MCHC from an economical point of view.
2. Urban foreign models. Authorities, investors and traders tend to follow architectural and urban patterns in vogue all over the world. It is the influence of a global culture that imposes its ways of life and consumption in local contexts.
3. Urban heritage became a product in the market of nostalgia. MCHC is entering into the market of nostalgia because in this place converge several places of memory, attracting local and foreigner visitors. Private and public projects of management tend to reinforce the consumption of tangible or intangible heritage.

In this context, UNESCO recommendations for heritage protection became an argument to justify the governmental control of historic places. In the case of MCHC, the federal and fragmented local regulations difficult the social and democratic development of the territory catalogued as world heritage. The label of world heritage has reinforced the transformation of the historical core of Mexico City into an urban island of monuments and museums. Most of normative instruments and authorities focus on material heritage only. They start to consider the valorization of intangible heritage, but there is not a clear definition of it. The concept of Historic Urban Landscape is in the air, but still not printed in any official document.

Until now the Plan de Manejo and other urban programs have been focused almost exclusively on interventions on public spaces in Perimeter A: Repair of facades, sidewalks, pedestrian streets, cleaning public squares, relocation of street vendors, metrobus lines, etc.
Interventions are specific to a particular place, without relation between them. Actions are fragments that construct a patchwork, but we do not know what the whole conception of it is. These actions make public spaces of HC more beautiful for tourists and investors but do not help to solve the structural problem of street vendors, neither the depopulation nor socio-spatial segregation.

In the last decades, MCHC became a flow space for consumption. Millions of visitors pass through HC every week for touristic and commercial reasons. This number of consumers structures space (specialized commerce by zones or streets) and time (day, week, year) occupation of MCHC. Urban projects have attracted many more visitors than residents.

During the Workshop about new Plan de Manejo del Centro Histórico 2017-2022, there was a consensus about the big issues of HC to be considered on the plan: depopulation, street vendors and destruction or modification of ancient buildings. Habitability and repopulation were the central concepts during the discussions. Several officials announced that it was necessary to keep alive HC through reinforcement of social links. Nevertheless, their interventions on public spaces contradict this idea. For instance, the director of Fideicomiso del CH explained that they restored La Conchita Square. He did not like young residents who played football in the renovated square because they could damage the door of the ancient Church. His solution was to transform the square in an open museum for Mexican cartoon exhibitions in fixed metal panels. His objective was to avoid teenagers to come back and to attract tourists to the area. So, young residents can no longer appropriate this public space for sports. This example shows that local authorities have a vertical style of management.

Authorities and the official programs are oriented to the administration and support of those occupants of MCHC who have a legal or formal situation: homeowners, formal traders or investors. It is hard for them to recognize that there are a lot of informal activities and situations occurring on MCHC for a long time that are already instituted out of straight paths. These activities, like street vendors, uncertainty on land property, illegal occupation of buildings, responds to a local dynamic on MCHC, that is complex and need to be understood, to create an efficient urban plan.

Thousands of street vendors have invaded MCHC public spaces for almost 30 years. They have had enough time to create powerful organizations, solidarity, practices related to their activity, and a potent economic system capable to corrupt authorities. They have developed a cultural identity that anchors in the memory of an imaginary prehispanic street market. Local authorities conceive street vendors as illegal traders that must disappear. The programs to relocate them are not working because there is not enough space for all of them, and selling on the street is more profitable.

Official discourses also deny the socioeconomic heterogeneity of MCHC. Renewal urban models and programs favor the touristic function and repopulation for high-income residents. Nevertheless, most of the inhabitants come from low and middle-class sectors with a different cultural profile. There is not a housing program accessible for them. They are not the typical consumer of Zara, Starbucks or Nike boutiques. The artistic projects made for high-educated visitors are not necessarily attractive to them.
Some residents reproached authorities their lack of sensibility and real knowledge of local life because they have never lived in HC. Attitudes and social origins of officials can also play a significant role in their conception of an ideal HC. Most of them conceive MCHC as a territory to control and regulate, following strict norms. We see an imposition of their understanding of heritage, based on foreign models of the global city. Their paragon of HC is influenced by the renewed historical places in Europe. The model is inserted in a global culture that does not recognize the local reality.

The Minister of Economy of Mexico City describes HC as a profitable product in the touristic economy. He talks about traditional markets as an economic variable. He presents the renewal of La Merced market as a successful project. But everybody knows that this project has been contested because it imposes an architectural and urban design that has not meant for the market traders, residents or traditional buyers. The minister does not understand why they have been rejected from other markets. Traders of Abelardo Rodriguez market refused officials to enter into the market. In interviews with Abelardo Rodriguez market representatives, they said that traders do not trust authorities because they perceive them as corrupted and inefficient. They are afraid of losing their heritage, not only as an economic resource but as a family heritage also, as a tradition coming from their parents and grandparents. The Minister of Economy says that they will persuade them to recover trust on institutions, because they have programs to clean up markets since they were classified as cultural heritage by the local government in recent years.

Residents also distrust authorities. For the Minister of Economy, the ideal inhabitants of HC are young entrepreneurs, who will install their high-tech companies in the renewed historical buildings, as they are doing already in fancy old neighborhoods like Condesa. He proposes to make all necessary arrangements, to invite hipsters to move to HC. In fact, the areas and buildings habilitated to host higher income residents are not receiving as much population as expected. It is clearly not a solution for repopulation of MCHC. There has not been until now a real interest in rehabilitation or construction of popular housing.

Some residents of the audience asked Authorities to consider in their programs also young people living in MCHC, who are facing a difficult situation. They did not receive any answer. Other residents asked for programs to create “cultural enterprises” for residents, because it is expensive to live in HC. One lady used the example of the high price of tomatoes in local markets. The Minister answered that she should use the new app they designed to find the lowest prices near home. He did not realize that probably the lady did not have a smartphone or she did not use this kind of technology.

All actors complained about MCHC administration, because of its fragmentation and inefficiency. Their experiences on trying to solve urban problems, like reporting water leaks in public spaces or security issues, showed disorientation to deal with a complex administration system. It is the same complexity to get permission for private rehabilitation of buildings.

Complaints about corruption and lack of the rule of law were expressed with anger in front of authorities and UNESCO representatives. This liberty for talking about such a serious
matter as corruption inside public institutions is highly important. It means that corruption is a current and natural practice. The reaction of authorities was only the recommendation to report illegal practices. They did not deny that corruption exists in their institutions.

The workshop took place in the context of the transformation of Mexico City’s normative system. One of UNESCO representatives in the workshop was director of the Historic Center Trust (Fideicomiso del Centro Histórico) before integrating UNESCO. He pointed out that the new Plan de Manejo should take into account the Mexico City Constitution, which is the document that will lead the administration of the city from February 2017. He participated in the elaboration of a proposal for heritage protection, indicating that protection of tangible and intangible heritage is of public interest, and the government should create all necessary mechanisms to preserve cultural heritage. The proposal included the concept of historic urban landscape: “Authorities will ensure the creation of the Historic Urban Landscape of the city, understood as a process of construction of cultural identity, transformation, and permanent progress”.

The Constitution of Mexico City was officially approved and was published in February 2017. It does not mention the term Historic Urban Landscape. It makes reference to the protection of historical, cultural, tangible, intangible, natural, rural and urban heritage, as a matter of common interest, implicating the participation of civil society. It regulates the actual world heritage existing in Mexico City and enhances economic, cultural, social, urban, rural and environmental development.

Regarding MCHC, the Constitution establishes that the Mexico City Major will be in charge of HC, through the Autoridad del Centro Histórico, considering all about urban regulation, maintenance, renovation, restoration, conservation of buildings and monuments.

**Final Remarks**

At the end of this exposition, we have identified multiple social memories of MCHC. Historical memories have been materialized in places of memory (Nora, 1989) held by institutions, civil society and political actors. Some historical and cultural memories are part of the contemporary global economy because they are touristic products, promoted by media and the internet.

At the level of everyday life, we observe that groups (residents, traders, street vendors, etc.) have constructed collective memories related to their social identity and cultural practices.

All of the memories that we have observed converge in the same place as layers of remembrances of different periods. They help to construct social representations of MCHC that justify social actions, official programs, economic projects, and decisions which are transforming MCHC. Institutions and groups with economic and political power are imposing hegemonic social representations. Groups with less economic and political power struggle to maintain their memories and their permanence in MCHC.

When the rehabilitation programs started, residents and traders did not have the conscience of consequences of urban transformations for them. After 16 years, they see that most of the interventions have been done in Perimeter A. Residents and traders from Perimeter B
perceive that they are being neglected. They have incorporated the concept of gentrification to their vocabulary, which they consider as a thread.

In the analysis of geographic representations of MCHC, we observe the impact of interventions on specific zones, streets and public spaces. Interviewers marked them as valuable and important. On the contrary, they located the places that they consider problematic in the Northeast sector. We find that these social representations reproduce the historic socio-spatial segregation of MCHC: west side with a positive image vs. Northeast with a negative reputation.

The social structures that are shaping social representations and Memories of MCHC are based on weak institutional systems, on a lack of clear regulations, on the logic of a formal and informal economy, and on a complex system of corruption. Social actors will use UNESCO recommendations to defend their interests in MCHC, making a special lecture of them. The definition of tangible and intangible heritage is still confused in official programs and regulations.

In the case of MCHC, UNESCO recommendations tend to materialize local culture and to conceive local heritage as an object separated from the entire social and cultural life. Mexico City Historic Center has serious social and urban problems, like the rest of the city. Its historical aspect is only part of the totality. Urban planning should conceive the core of ancient Mexico City as a complex urban territory, not only as heritage.
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