**‘Distilling materially the immaterial’: The variation of the spatial knowledge of children and youngsters within the re-figuration of spaces**

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The paper problematises the notion of spatial knowledge of both children and teenagers (see, interalia, Piaget and Inhelder, 1967; Hart and Moore, 1973; Lynch, 1977; Ward, 1977; Tonucci, 1996; Chawla, 2002) framed in the process of re-figuration of spaces. To that end, the starting assumption is that the transformation of the social order becomes particularly clear when looking at the (re)structuring of spaces. Spaces,thus,are understood as relational arrangements of actors, objects and technologies – both placed and placing. These arrangements, moreover, are based on two analytically distinct social processes that synthesise specific practices of placing, referred to as *spacing*. Social changes are constantly leading to new forms of synthesizing spaces and new dynamics of*spacing*, which, in turn, results in the spatial reorganisation of societies. Given that this process of rearranging and restructuring is, on the one hand, described from the perspective of the spatialand, on the other, regarded as fundamentally social and relational in nature, it is analysed as re-figuration of spaces (Knoblauch and Löw, 2017: 3-6).

The paper presents an overview of a research project that is being carried out in an interdisciplinary collaborative research centre, which, based on previous research, tackles the following characteristics of the re-figuration of spaces: (i) the poly contexturality of spatial constitution, (ii) the mediatisation of communicative actions and (iii) the translocalisation of places (Knoblauch and Löw, 2017: 6ff.). Against this backdrop, the research project, more specifically, looks at the re-figuration of spaces from the perspective of children and adolescents, the generation of “digital natives” (Prensky, 2001), and the production of their spatial knowledge; to put it differently, it seeks to fathom out how the immateriality of spatial knowledge becomes ‘fixed’ in the materiality of spaces being constantly re-figured. The investigation aims to, first, reconstruct changes in the appropriation of educational spaces by children and adolescents, and the spatial knowledge involved therein since the 1970s. Building on these findings, it will subsequently explore how these changes in spatial knowledge are nowadays being processed and rendered operative by professionals planning educational spaces. The methodology combines a qualitative meta-analysis (Novak, 2007; Sandelowski, 2004; Sánchez-Meca, 2010) of relevant literature (in German, English and Spanish), in order to grasp a sort of second-level empiricism, with two empirical case studies on planning and designing of non-formal educational spaces in both Latin America and Europe.

All in all, it is believed that unravelling the production of children’s and youngsters’ spatial knowledge within the re-figuration of spaces shall shed light on the evolution of how their subjectivities and identities are constructed (through the use, cognition and appropriation of space) as well as it reveals new – or even the pervasion of routinised – forms of political praxis, where their spatial knowledge is made (ir)relevant(particularly, when assessing the implementation of spatial knowledge in the planning and designing of not only formal but also non-formal educational contexts). Theoretical background, methodology and first insights of the meta-analysis are outlined in the paper.

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