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Children´s Emotional Geographies of Well-being: The Cultural Constitution of Belonging(s) in the Context of Migration and Digital Technologies

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"My most special place is my home(land) country ["Heimatland"], because there I always feel so comfortable." The spatial dimension of children´s well-being has been receiving more attention in child well-being research recently. Empirical studies show for example the effects of the built and natural environments on children´s objective and subjective well-being or the subjective meanings that children attach to the concept of well-being in respect to place and space. What is not well understood so far is the cultural dimension of these phenomena and understandings. The aim of this paper is therefore to outline a cultural analytical approach to the spatial constitution of well-being and to provide analytical heuristics to reconstruct the spatial constitution of well-being as a cultural construct in discursive practices that children take part in. The paper also provides an empirical example that illustrates this heuristic approach and shows how belonging(s) are constituted as a spatial construct beyond local and national territories. The paper ends with a summary of how the findings and the cultural approach might inform child well-being research and the spatial (re)constitution of well-being in the context of migration and digital technologies.

Keywords: relational geographies; spatial constitution of well-being; cultural analytical methodology; emotional geographies; discursive practices

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Introduction

The contemporary transnational subject dwells and unfolds itself within the intermediate space of times and geographies, within the perpetual space of "elsewhere", in-between the phantasmagoric shores of "here and there." (Stephanie Siewert, 2011, p. 224; translated by the authors).

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The spatial dimension of children´s well-being has been receiving more attention in child well-being research recently (see Coulton & Spilsbury, 2014; Fegter, 2014). Empirical studies show for example the effects of the built and natural environment on children´s objective and subjective well-being (e.g. Crous & Bradshaw, 2017; Dinisman, Fernandes, & Main, 2015) or the subjective meanings that children attach to the concept of well-being in respect to place and space (Fattore, Mason, & Watson, 2016). What is not well understood so far is the cultural dimension of these phenomena and understandings. The aim of this paper is therefore to outline some ideas on a cultural analytical approach to the spatial constitution of well-being and to provide analytical heuristics to reconstruct the spatial constitution of well-being as a cultural construct in discursive practices that children take part in.

The paper starts with an overview of current theoretical and analytical perspectives within child well-being research on places and spaces and research on children´s (emotional) geographies. It then introduces the theoretical and methodological approach of a qualitative case study on children's understandings of well-being from Berlin: firstly, of well-being as a cultural construct, culture as practice and discourse analysis as the approach used in analysing interviews with children. Secondly, of space as a relational and cultural construct that allows the reconstruction of emotional geographies as part of the spatial constitution of well-being. The term 'emotional geographies of well-being' describes the analytical tool that helps to reconstruct the spatial constitution of well-being as a cultural construct in discursive practices that children take part in. The empirical example illustrates this approach and shows how 'belonging(s)' *are* constituted as a translocal and transnational construct in children´s statements. The paper ends with a summary, showing how the findings and the cultural approach might inform child well-being research with a focus on the spatial (re)constitution of well-being in the context of migration and digital technologies.

Places and Spaces in Child Well-being Research

Child Well-being research with a focus on places and spaces is a relatively new area but has gained increasing attention (see Coulton & Spilsbury, 2014; McKendrick, 2014). Similar to the general field of child well-being research most studies have a quantitative perspective and investigate the statistical effects of places and spaces on children´s objective or subjective well-being. International-comparative studies show that the level of well-being differs significantly depending on where children live (e.g. OECD, 2009; World Vision, 2013). McKendrick calls this "geographies of well-being *in* places" (McKendrick, 2014, p. 279). Partly as a result of these findings there is a growing interest in *how* places affect children´s well-being (Coulton & Spilsbury, 2014). Quantitative studies investigate this question by using spatial variables like, for example, the quality of housing and measure their effects on objective or subjective well-being dimensions. Qualitative studies of children´s well-being in contrast reconstruct how meaning is (re)produced in spatial practices and perceptions as part of the social and cultural construction of well-being. The starting point is the assumption that places never have an effect in themselves but that it always depends on the ways in which people respond to their spatial environment in the context of social and cultural orders (see Coulton & Spilsbury, 2014). This shifts the research focus for example to residential mobility, understood as a constant and dynamic process in which

families adapt to changing social circumstances, such as racial segregation and exclusionary zoning (ibid.). In this context Coulton and Spilsbury problematize an understanding of neighbourhoods "as vessels, floating into a vacuum at a point of time, relatively impervious to the social and economic processes that shape them" (ibid. 2014, p. 1308), implicitly referencing a relational concept of space. Akkan, Müderrisoglu, Uyan-Semerci and Erdogan (2018) stress the relevance of neighbourhood perceptions for children´s well-being in an urban environment, too. Using participatory methods and an ethnographic approach, they reconstruct how children in Istanbul perceive their neighbourhood conditions and resources and how they attribute meaning to their experiences in respect to their well-being, using a relational concept of space (ibid.).

Other qualitative researchers reconstruct how children make spatial aspects relevant when they talk about well-being (e.g. Fattore et al 2016). Moore and Lynch (2017) for example reconstruct 6 to 8-year-old children's conceptualisations of happiness in Ireland and show that aspects of the physical environment are a very relevant theme. The analytical focus of these studies is what children say explicitly about valued resources and social goods. Few qualitative studies focus on thematisation as a discursive practise. One of the exceptions is the research by Adams, Savahl, Florence, & Jackson, (2018), a qualitative study in a low SES community in Cape Town, that explores how children conceptualize a Child Friendly City. The study reconstructs how the image of a safe natural space to play is a discursive element of children´s understandings and assessment of their neighbourhood. They discuss these and other findings using the concept of "classed spaces", thus also demonstrating a way of linking discursive and structural analysis in research on children's understandings of well-being.

Children's Emotional Geographies

The last two decades mark an emotional turn in the larger field of human geography that developed into the field of Emotional Geographies (Anderson & Smith, 2001; Davidson, Bondi, & Smith, 2007). Beyond its interdisciplinary background in feminist theory, the field of Emotional Geography is interested in "the spatiality and temporality of emotions" (Bondi, Davidson, & Smith, 2007, p. 1). At the same time a growing interest in children´s knowledge, perceptions and experience of places and spaces emerged in the field of Emotional Geographies, similar to developments in the New Social Studies of Childhood (NSSC) (Holloway & Valentine, 2000; Hörschelmann & van Blerk, 2011). This common interest led to the formation of the branch of Children´s Geographies (see McKendrick, 2000). The distinction between Children´s Geographies and Geographies of Childhood helps to systemise the variety of studies that have emerged within these fields. While Children´s Geographies focus more on the spatial practices of children as actors, Geographies of Childhood concentrates more on the analysis of (spatial-)structural aspects of doing childhood (see Schreiber, 2015, p. 10). Blazek (2018) advocates for a dialogue focussing firstly, on how emotions maintain and uphold generational order, secondly, on the spatial contexts of children´s emotional geographies and thirdly on methodological reflections.

While the field of Children´s Geographies has been primarily inspired by the premises of the NSSC, the field of Children´s Emotional Geographies has intertwined with the New Wave of Childhood Studies

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(NWCS) (Blazek, 2018; Kraftl, 2013; Spyrou, Rosen, & Cook, 2018). This New Wave does not see itself as a counter movement to the NSSC, but rather as an additional effort in stressing critical thought around the concepts of 'voice', 'agency', and 'politics' (Kraftl, 2013). Ryan (2011) states that the NSSC have driven their mono-channelled conceptualisation of children as actors to a point of reification. Lee and Motzkau furthermore argue for studies that move the conception of childhood at their centre beyond a 'bio-social dualism' (Lee & Motzkau, 2011). While Children´s Emotional Geographies strongly emphasise methodological premises regarding the positioning of children beyond a bio-social dualism, there seems to be as yet no systematic reflection on the manifold spatial theories those studies are based on.

Blazek's academic ethnography (2018) is a pioneering approach introducing studies on children's emotional geographies in "particular spatial realms" (Blazek 2018, p. 2) such as the "family, school, citizenship, and community." (Blazek 2018, p. 10). Nonetheless, his map of spatial contexts of CEG does not tell us much about how space and spatiality is conceptualised within the field. A somewhat closer look reveals that approaches dealing with children in their family, institutions and within community settings are often based on territorial understandings of space or spatial metaphors while relational concepts of space are primarily emerging from studies that conceptualize children as 'glocal' (Swyngedouw, 1997) citizens. It is in particular these studies which point to the lack of theoretical foundation of the spatial and cultural concepts within the wider field of Children´s Emotional Geographies (see Mee et al., 2009, p. 772; Wood & Black, 2018, p. 6).

Studies that evolved within CEG offer analytical and theoretical perspectives that are helpful for research on the spatial dimension of children´s well-being. Wood and Black (2018) introduce a conceptual framework that stresses the understanding of citizenship beyond the notion of the nation state and move beyond a territorial understanding of space. Un/Belonging, understood as children´s cultural praxis of doing geography, is a key concept used by the authors to analyse the spatial, relational and affective dimensions of young people´s sense of citizenship. They suggest a reconceptualization of citizenship beyond the notion of the nation state, based on belonging as a "feeling, a sense and a set of practices" (Wright 2015, p. 392, cited there: p. 1) in times of the "fluidity of membership" (Baumann 2016, p. 23, citied ibid, p. 1). Furthermore, we can observe a growing interest in children´s imagination of 'the other (nation)' (Holloway 2000) and about the process of "moulding" (Millei, 2018, p. 133) children's sense of citizenship in institutional contexts. Such approaches are inspired by Doreen Massey´s concept of a "progressive" or "global" sense of place and stress the importance of breaking the dichotomy of global and local (see Millei, 2018, p. 133). Furthermore, the work of Cindi Katz 'Growing up Global' (2004) cautions against the (re-) production of methodological nationalism and (post)colonial power structures within childhood research (see Abebe, Aitken, Balagophalan, & Punch, 2018). Murray and Mand (2013) furthermore explore the multi-scalar notions of children´s belonging, focusing on intimate global ties, such as in the case of children with transnational backgrounds, by exploring children's emotional experiences within changing environments. With their concept of "emotional landscapes in-between" they stress the processual dimension of space and thus focus on children´s "emotional engagement in mobile space" (Murray & Mand, 2013, p. 75).

The growing interest in transnationality and hybrid belonging within the field of Children´s Emotional Geographies helps to dismantle the relationship of geopolitical power relations and young people's self/world relations. These relations can no longer be analyzed at the dichotomizing levels of micro- versus macro as Sue Ruddick's (2003) work on the restructuring of childhood in the process of globalization shows. She deconstructs how constitutive elements of globalization, such as risk discourses or the need to modernize, are being (re-)produced within western concepts of childhood that uphold and sustain capitalistic systems and furthermore become a discursive element of global childhood concepts.

A Cultural Analytical Approach to Children's Well-being

The Berlin: "Children´s Understandings of Well-being Study"

The research reported in this paper is part of the Children´s Understandings of Well-being Study (CUWB) that is mentioned in the introduction of this special issue (see also Fattore et al., 2019. One of the fieldwork sites is located in Berlin, Germany. This research involves children 8 to 12 years of age who attend an open-door leisure center in the district of Berlin-Kreuzberg. After WWII, the district became mainly home to marginalized groups like workers, old people and Turkish migrants. Later in the 1970s and 1980s it was 'discovered' by students, squatters and urban activists and has now changed into a largely gentrified district, with a high percentage of people with Turkish migrant backgrounds of the third and fourth generations, middle class families and (young) professionals (see Hochmuth, 2017). Most of the children who join the open Child Center live in a public housing block nearby for families with a lower income. Many have a migrant background from regions in Kosovo, Lebanon, Syria, Somalia, from where they or their families have migrated recently. The qualitative study was conducted between 2014 and 2017 and included semi-structured interviews about important places, people and activities; participatory observation including situational interviews, recorded city walks through the 'Kiez' (the local word for the neighborhood), 'digital walks' using a web mapping service and a video project. During the semi-structured interviews – on which we focus later in the analysis – the children were invited to draw on paper or to build with wooden blocks, as tasks to support them talk about important places, people and activities. All together 30 children were involved.

Well-being as a Cultural Construct

The Berlin CUWB study starts from the assumption that well-being is a cultural construct and therefore takes up cultural-analytical approaches on well-being, knowledge and the social. The question of normativity and cultural contingency is one of the main challenges in child well-being research (see Andresen & Betz 2014; Ben-Arieh & Frønes, 2007; Camfield, Streuli, & Woodhead, 2008; Fattore et al., 2019; Fegter & Richter, 2014). While in some instances definitions of well-being are made explicit (for example referencing the UN Convention on Children´s Rights or the Capabilities Approach), often well-being is defined implicitly, through the indicators that are used to measure child well-being (see O'Hare & Gutierrez, 2012). The underlying concepts of a good childhood reflect norms and values that evidently differ between and across

populations and that are embedded in culture and society. This is sometimes acknowledged when, for example, in the 2015 PISA report on student well-being, the authors note that variations in students' reports of life satisfaction or happiness across countries might be influenced by cultural or local interpretations of what defines a happy life (see Fattore et al., 2019). But often the normativity and cultural contingency remain implicit, which is becoming increasingly an object of debate (Andresen & Schneekloth, 2014; Fegter, Machold, & Richter, 2010; O'Hare & Gutierrez, 2012). Kitayama and Markus (2000) for example argue that:

> Just as people cannot live in a general way and must of necessity live in some set of culture specific-ways, a person cannot just 'be well' in a general way. The very nature of what it means to be well or to experience well-being takes culture-specific forms (Shweder, 1998) (…) What counts as 'well-being' depends on how the concept of 'well' and 'being' are defined and practiced. (…) It is not just that different things make people happy in different cultural contexts - this is obviously the case. More significantly it is the ways of `being well' and the experience of well-being that are different. (Kitayama & Markus 2000, p. 114-115).

In this context we find new approaches emerging from cultural theory that provide theoretical heuristics that do not normatively define what counts as well-being but provide formal definitions. Weisner (2014) for example defines well-being as the "engaged participation in the activities that are deemed desirable and valued in a cultural community and the psychological experiences that are produced by such engagement" (p. 90). This definition still implicitly reflects norms and concepts from specific scientific fields. Nevertheless, what the valued goods and practices are and how they are reproduced on the level of individuals, practices, institutions, etc. remain an object of empirical analysis and lead to a reconstructive approach regarding concepts of well-being.

A crucial aspect of the concrete reconstructive approach is the concept of culture. The Berlin CUWB study works with an understanding of culture as a symbolic order (rather than, for example, an understanding of cultures as homogenous entities) and that culture emerges through practices that permanently (re)produce and order the social world as meaningful (see Hörning, 2004). Part of this dynamic concept of culture as practice is that these practices are neither grounded in intentions or motives of individuals nor in a broader system or structure. Instead they are conceptualized as situated practices, embedded in other practices, in which individuals take part, but not as their authors or originators. It is more the other way round, that the self is constructed through participation and positioning within practices (see Reckwitz, 2002). Following the idea that well-being depends on how well and how being are defined and practiced and that this takes culture specific forms; and applying the understanding of culture as practise, this leads to the object of analysis being the cultural practices of meaning-making that children take part in. The empirical question is how these practices (re)produce the value of goods, as well as the self and subject positions. The specific approach of the Berlin CUWB study - within these praxeological approaches towards culture - is a discourse analytical approach, referring to Foucault, especially the 'Archaeology of Knowledge' (Foucault, 1972).

Discourse is there defined as a performative practice that systematically forms the objects and subjects of which they speak. In a praxeological reading this leads to a focus on the performative (iterative) practice of relating and differentiating objects, classifications and subject positions in the acts of speaking (see Wrana, 2015).

Interviews with children about their important places, people and activities are then a surface of discursive practices that produce and demarcate a field of objects, a legitimate position for a subject as well as norms and classification in the act of speaking. These powerful epistemic practices that produce and limit how we see ourselves and the world are neither common sense knowledge that actors can necessarily talk about nor are they implicit practical knowledge based in social experiences of individuals or social groups, instead they refer iteratively to other discursive practices. Therefore, when children talk about experiences in the interviews the discourse analytical focus is on the representation of experience and how it constructs the self (instead of interpreting an underlying experience).

This cultural approach towards children´s understandings of well-being offers some advantages in the context of current debates in childhood studies around voice, agency and reification. One is that the approach allows us to move beyond common sense knowledge and to reconstruct the cultural contexts that children enact in their sayings and doings. Secondly, knowledge on children´s well-being is understood as a social construction, in which children take part. If well-being is the engaged participation in activities that are valued in a cultural community and if this community is understood as a community of cultural practices, in which children take part, then children's sayings and doings are the relevant data source. Thirdly, the praxeological approach and specifically the discourse analytical approach conceptualizes agency as relational and non-substantial. It is part of the analysis to reconstruct how agency arises from the process of taking part in cultural practices. Fourth, the approach provides the possibility to structure the analysis as a reification-sensitive process. This involves two-steps, focussing first on the reconstruction of social differences and categories that emerge through the situated practice and that can be reconstructed from the interview data; and a second step of interpretation using additional theory on social orders or additional data on social contexts (see Diehm, Kuhn, & Machold, 2013; Fattore & Fegter, 2019).

In the Berlin CUWB study this cultural-analytical approach on well-being, knowledge and the social have led to a research focus on:

- the cultural dimension of children´s understandings of well-being;
- the discursive practices, in which children are involved, that (re)produce the value of goods and practices, the norms and concepts of what is good and what is self;
- the relevance of generation, gender or other differentiations in these practices; and
- an additional step that takes into account the social position of the children and additional context knowledge about the children as well as discursive practices.

Space and Positionality: Children´s Relational Geographies

While there is a concern about the dichotomy between the biological and social in the new wave of Childhood Studies, we can simultaneously observe critical voices regarding the dualism of materiality and culture in spatial theory. Löw for example argues for a processual-relational concept of space as a "relational arrangement of living beings and social goods" (Löw, 2016, p. 131) that includes the bodies of human beings and animals as a constitutive element, as much as for example buildings, roads, trees or telephones. She bases her spatial concept on Giddens Structuration Theory and broadens its perspective by using selected premises of other social theories, including the habitus-field theory of Bourdieu and the spatial theory of Simmel. In order to reconstruct "what is arranged and how arranging occurs" (Löw, 2016, p. 164) she conceptualises the two processes of 'spacing' (what relates to another) and the 'operation of synthesis' (how does it relates to another). 'Spacing' is the process of "the placing of social goods and people or by the positioning of markings that are primarily symbolic to identify ensembles of goods and people as such" (ibid.). The *operation of synthesis* on the other hand is "required for the constitution of space, that is, goods and people are amalgamated to spaces by way of processes of perception, imagination, and memory." (ibid. p. 165).

Löw and Weidenhaus (2018) also provide a helpful differentiation of space and spatial metaphor, which offers a refinement of Löw's relational theory of space. Spatial metaphors can be used to describe social phenomena, such as "family structures", "communication networks" or "class structures" (ibid, p. 209) spatially. The focus is furthermore on the positionality of people in spatial constitution as socially pre-structured by institutions. Nonetheless, there is only little importance given to the discursive element of space. Löw conceptualizes discourse as a part of consciousness by referring to Bourdieu´s theory of habitus and corporeality. Bourdieu's habitus theory, she argues, does not only focus on "…the dimension of perception and judgement, of evaluative patterns and normative orientations… which she understands as…structured by gender and class…", she furthermore draws on the difference of both, 'practical consciousness' as well as 'discursive consciousness' (Löw, 2018, p. 213) There is a growing number of studies stressing the importance of discourse analytical perspectives within the field of Geography in order to dismantle the relationship between power, knowledge and space (Best & Gebhardt, 2001; Füller, 2018; Glasze et al., 2009). A relational analysis of the complex relationships which constitute spaces, such as in this article, conceptualizes space as both, condition and effect of discursive practice and furthermore as a performative act; an iterative and mimetic practice that is performed from and (re-)produces certain (subject) positions.

Analysis: Translocal Spaces of Belonging(s)

> My most special place is my home(land) country ["Heimatland"], because I always feel so comfortable there and... and when I am there I feel like my... my second home. (*3) Or my fifth, because I have many. What I like the most there is the ocean. I need three colours for it (*7*)

[drawing] Uhm, there...// for example there, there is a path and next to it several buildings, but there is also a lot of sand and stones. Because, it is not like in Germany… the streets... there is no real pedestrian path, but just, like, stones that indicate the way. (*3) So you can actually walk the way however you want. (Faiza (not real name), 10 years old)

The following analysis provides an example of the cultural analytical approach to children´s spatial constitution of well-being. The aim is to provide insights into *how* emotional geographies of well-being as relational spaces are constituted *discursively* when children speak about important places, people and activities. Emotional geographies are conceptualized as a discursive process of the 'relational arrangement of social goods and living beings' (Löw) from the perspective of emotions, feelings or affect. The object of analysis is therefore:

- How does the construction of emotional geographies take place in the interview material when children talk about important places, people and activities?
- How do these constructions produce, legitimate and demarcate the value of social goods, the norms and concepts of what is good, what is desirable and what is self?
- How do the constructions provide speaker and subject positions?
- How are differentiations along generational, gender or other lines constitutive elements of the discursive construction of emotional geographies?

Given we are using the theoretical and methodological heuristics of *space as a relational construct* (Löw 2001, 2008) and *discourse as practise* (Wrana, 2015) this leads to the analytical questions of *how discursive practices of spacing and synthesis* reproduce emotional geographies:

- Which elements are part of the *discursive spacing* of social goods and living beings when children talk about important places, people and activities? Which objects and subjects are made relevant in these statements?
- How are these elements set in relation to each other through – for example – practices of classification, evaluative differentiation or rhetoric as part of discourse as practise?
- Which valued social goods emerge through these discursive spatial constitutions?

Questions of *synthesis* as the process of connecting goods and living beings through processes of perception, ideation, or recall (see Löw 2008, p. 35) are:

- Which perceptions, ideations and recollections are made relevant in the statements and how do they connect the objects and subjects?
- How is the self-constructed through these discursive relational arrangements?
- Which speaker and subject positions emerge through this spatial constitution and become un/intelligible, il/legitimate and un/speakable?

At the beginning of this section we included a quote by Faiza who outlines her "Heimatland" [home country], as her most special place. If we analyse it using the above questions we see that spatial objects such as *Heimatland*, "many (homes)", "the ocean", "several buildings", "a lot of sand and stones", "streets", "a (no real pedestrian) path", "stones (that indicate the way)" and "Germany" are positioned in discursive relation to each other. Furthermore, the spacing includes *a self* ["when I am there", "I have many (homes)"] and an indefinite collective group by using the indefinite pronoun "you [can actually walk the way however you want]". Most of the objects are allocated to the *Heimatland*, by the term 'there is' ("there is the ocean", "there is a path", "there is a lot of sand and stones", "there is no real pedestrian way"). *Heimatland* is constituted through this as rich in details, in contrast to the other three unspecified homes or 'Germany'. Thus, the relation between these three parameters (*Heimatland*, Germany, other homes) is a differentiating one through the degree of details.

A connecting relation is built through the use of the semantics of 'home'. *Heimatland*, Germany and three other unnamed places are categorized as "homes", that the speaking self declares are hers. 'Home' emerges through this as a translocal concept, that is not (necessarily) referring to one single place. An inner-differentiation of this translocal space nevertheless takes place. The term 'Heimat' refers to an emotional relation of belonging between people and places (often in regards to places or regions where people grew up). In Faiza's statement it emotionalises the home country especially and allocates a special position to it within the emotional geography of homes.

A third spacing process occurs in the form of relating the objects in explicit contrast to each other. Whereas three of the homes remain - as already outlined - unspecified, Germany and the *Heimatland* are continuously contrasted to each other, for example: "Because, this is not like in Germany… the streets... there is no real pedestrian path, but just, like, stones that indicate the way. (*3) So you can actually walk the way however you want." The evaluative differentiation - as part of this spatial constitution – (re)produces the value of a (spatially) non restricted mobility. At a later point in the interview it is the value of ongoing discovery and variety that is (re)produced through the process of evaluative differentiation: "Something I really enjoy about this country is that there are always new things to discover, things that don´t exist in Germany." This process of evaluative differentiation not only (re)produces specific valued goods and practices, it also links their value to their absence somewhere else. In other words, what is meaningful and important "there" refers constitutively to the presence or absence of qualities 'here'. The values are therefore relational values that derive only from the specific interrelation between localities within the transnational spaces.

We see this also in the construction of the value of media and technology access. When the interviewer asks Faiza if there is any other important place, she answers "My home. … But it is only my special place because it has technical devices and in Somalia there isn´t". This is followed by the evaluation: "They have been stuck like in the 19th century, because they are lacking many things there". This construction of Somalia as underdeveloped and backward in contrast to Germany occurs several times, for example when Faiza says "you actually have to get used to it, not to be in front of the TV every day… not to

have WiFi […] You could also say that Somalia is like the mediaeval times." The categories that place and differentiate Somalia and Germany here – historical, development and progress categories – constitute the use of media and technology not only as valuable but also as an expression of being modern, contemporary and dynamic, and the speaking self as a modern subject.

In terms of perceptions, ideations or recollections (as part of the spatial process that produce specific subject and speaker position) the interview is rich with statements that position the self in relation to objects and valued good. Somalia is, for example, outlined as a place where she 'is' ["when I am there"], where she 'feels' ["I feel like my //…// second home"] and a place that has things that she 'likes' ["What I like most there is the ocean"]. Being, feeling and liking are the modes in which the self relates here mainly to different places. The description of the home country is presented as a memory of an experience, which puts the self at the centre of the spatial construct. The self is linked physically (e.g. "when I am there") and emotionally to the objects and subjects she speaks about ["I feel like", "What I like"; ""Something I really enjoy about this country …"). Through the semantics of "my home" and "my homeland", the self is constructed as belonging to the places that are classified as 'home' and 'homeland'. As these spaces of belonging are constituted as translocal spaces, the self is constructed as embedded in *translocal* emotional geographies of belonging. The focus on valued feelings and experiences which are linked to places "there" (and not here) position the self at the same time as a *longing* self, whose positive sense of self depends on the translocal spaces of be*longing*.

In line with findings from other interviews with children who share a first or second generation migration background, there are some similarities that can be summarized as starting points for further analysis:

- The countries from which the children or their families migrated are in all interviews a central element in the discursive constitution of emotional geographies. Without the interviewer raising the topic of migration explicitly, in every interview the child mentions their country of migration as an important place.
- We also see *how* this specific figuration (re)produces valued social goods and practices as well as norms and concepts of the self. For example, in an interview with Jamilah, 10 years old, when the interviewer asks "Can you think of another situation at home where you felt really well?" Jamilah´s answers "When we are flying to Lebanon, to my father´s mother". So, the ways in which countries of migration are discussed in relation to other objects and subjects, (re)produces *belonging* as a translocal and transnational construct and the self as translocally and transnationally at home, with a sense of belonging that is not limited to one place.
- Analysing the translocal and transnational spaces of belonging(s) across several interviews in more detail, shows further how and which valued goods and practices are produced through evaluative differentiations. In the interview with Faiza it is the value of unrestricted mobility (in public), but also of sensations, variety and discovery that is (re)produced through the spatial construction of the 'Heimatland', in contrast with Germany. In other interviews the value of spending time with family members or the value of being somewhere on one's own were

(re)produced as valued goods and practices through evaluative differentiations. Also to be located and to have a located self-understanding is reproduced as a valued good, especially by using terms like 'Heimat'.

- Further analysis also shows how the practise of contrasting the country of migration with places in the 'here and now' produces the value of social goods through constructions of the local. It is always a relational value that refers to constructions and evaluations of the local (self). 'Translocal spaces of belonging(s)' as a cultural practice that children participate in, need to be reflected as a *local* practice that produces images and concepts of the self via a translocal space, but always in relation to a local self-positioning.
- What is also often a characteristic is the practice of highlighting positive aspects about the countries of migration and only briefly stating the absence of positive qualities 'here'. This dynamic in the relational spatial constitution might (re)produce 'a legitimate cultural practice of drawing (indirect) attention' to the absence of qualities in the here and now. It could be interpreted as a tactic of (indirect) critique, that the children participate in. A question for further analysis would be how this situated practice refers to the positioning of children within generational, ethnic or other orders within society.
- How the countries of migration are spaced and positioned in relation to other objects and subjects can also be seen as a kind of 'heterotopic spacing' in the sense used by Foucault (1966/2014: Countries of origin are ascribed 'utopian' qualities as they are often attributed with valued goods and modes of being, which are absent in discussions of the here and now. At the same time, they are 'real' places as the self is constructed as physically and emotionally connected to them. What is a characteristic of heterotopias – and what we also see as part of children´s translocal emotional geographies of well-being – is that they offer positions of the self that set the self in a relation of difference to itself. The self "there" is different to the self "here", which produces an alternative position of the self, a different way of being which emerges through and as part of the spatial construction (see Magyar-Haas & Fegter, 2018). These heterotopic spaces emerge only temporarily in the acts of spacing and synthesis when children talk about their countries of migration, which is another heterotopic element. From the perspective of education (Bildung) the ways how children speak about countries of migration are therefore an important cultural practise of the self – through which a potentially different self becomes speakable and thinkable.

Conclusion

The analysis demonstrates how the value and devaluing of the home country (from where the children or their families migrated) derives from a specific positing of the local self as well as from evaluative differentiations between here and there along categories of unrestricted mobility and sensation, but also of technological process and belonging. This demonstrates how the children´s conceptualisations of their home country as part of translocal spaces of belonging(s) reproduce and shift broader discourse on migration and

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cultural identity. Constructing belonging as a translocal and transnational concept provides a powerful intervention into current discourse around 'roots' and citizenship. Spatial cultures of well-being become therefore visible as 'political' practices, in which children participate. At the same time, it is not necessarily a critical intervention into hegemonic discourse. The analysis of Faiza´s interview shows how the constructions of her 'home country' is involved in (post)colonial and national discourse by differentiating Somalia and Germany along norms of progress and being developed as opposed to being backwards, which are established (post)colonial practices of othering 'Africa'. This continues when she later says: "And there is no snow, because Somalia is in Africa and Africa is a warm country". This discursive production of Africa as a country on the one hand and as warm and underdeveloped on the other hand is part of hegemonic representations of the African continent (with 54 recognized states and very different social, economic and climactic conditions).

The construction of underdevelopment as part of constituting media and digital technologies as valued goods is quite interesting and requires further investigation as it provides an idea of how cultures of well-being are (re)figurated under conditions of digitalisation. When Faiza says "one actually has to get used to it, not to be in front of the TV every day, n… not to have Wi-Fi", everyday space is already normalized as structured through digital technology and the self is positioned as a subject of digital cultures (who needs time and practice to adjust to not having access to the internet). The differentiation of Somalia and Germany along these lines shows how established forms of othering through technological discourse connect here seamlessly and become part of digital cultures and through this also part of cultures of well-being.

The following summary aims to point out some relevant aspects of these findings for child well-being research. Starting from the assumption that well-being is a cultural construct, approaches that analyse the spatial dimension of cultures of well-being and that reconstruct emotional geographies as cultural constructs provide fruitful insights into how children participate in the spatial constitution of well-being. Countries from which children or their families migrated appear in our research as a central figurative element of children´s emotional geographies and the analysis provides first indications of how the value of specific goods emerge through evaluative differentiations as constitutive parts of these emotional geographies: for example, the value of unrestricted mobility (in public) or the value of translocal and transnational belonging.

For child well-being research this implies that investigating children´s subjective well-being requires transnational perspectives, and that a methodological nationalism in research design needs to be critically questioned. At the same time, it draws attention to the relevance of local contexts in which children are embedded, as valued practices (of the self) emerge through 'translocal spaces' in which the 'local' positioning of the self plays a central role.

For child well-being research on children´s homes and places, the explorative findings on translocal and transnational spaces of belonging(s) might further inform findings from quantitative studies: by showing that place is important for identity, but that home isn´t necessarily only one place nor that belonging is limited to one location. This might also support reflections in how far translocal concepts of home and

belonging are already captured in scales and questionnaires or in how far these might produce a cultural bias in research.

For research on child well-being and places and spaces the findings indicate not only how children participate in the spatial (re)figuration of well-being but also how they participate in broader discourses on citizenship, "roots" and cultural identities and how they gain agency through this participation in spatial discourse. The findings on the translocal constitution of belonging and on (post)colonial categories are relevant in this context. However further investigation is required on how the discursive connection of technology and progress in processes of othering (Africa) continues as part of digital cultures and how children take part in reproducing and shifting these meanings through understandings of well-being. This would provide fruitful ways of connecting child well-being research with current debates on digital childhoods (Danby, Fleer, Davidson, & Hatzigianni, 2018), on 'roots and routes' (Christensen & Jensen, 2011), the transnational and translocal (see Hunner-Kreisel & Bühler-Niederberger, 2015) and the value of postcolonial perspectives for childhood research (Nieuwenhuys, 2013) in an integrating way.

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