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“I SPY WITH MY LITTLE EYE”

Children’s actual use and experts’ intended design of public space

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Introduction: *intuitive versus calculated uses of public space*

In this chapter, we examine the tension between children’s use and experts’ design of public space, based on the assumption that children actually use it in manners deviating from those originally intended by experts (Reicher et al. 2015; Hendricks 2011). We explore the discrepancies arising therefrom through the concepts of: affordance (the uses space enables by its material and constituent elements as well as the interactions among them and with the environmental settings); relational space (rather than existing independently of objects, persons, and events, space results from their interactions); spatial knowledge (the ways space is perceived, thought of, used, and acted out); and spatial pedagogization (the spatialized rationale buttressing space’s topology and asserting specific discernments and uses). By conceiving public space here as a socially constructed arrangement of multiple material objects (with certain qualities) and actors (with varying degrees of spatial knowledge as well as physical qualities) that is ostensibly accessible to everyone, we pose the question: how can the spatial knowledge of children, objectified in their uses of spatial arrangements, be substantively integrated into the design process? Against this backdrop, we discuss the intervention of a public space located on the outskirts of the city of Lima, which has followed a fairly unorthodox approach toward child participation and seems to have moved from a “prescriptive” to a “responsive” posture regarding what uses to infuse into public space.

Deeming space in "four acts": affordance, relationality, knowledge, and pedagogization

Substances, surfaces, and individuals: intrinsic qualities and latent affordances

James J. Gibson first introduced the concept of "affordance" in his 1977 article "The Theory of Affordances" and further developed it in his book, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (1979). Gibson (1977, 67; italics in the original) sustains that "*the affordance of anything is a specific combination of the properties of its substance and its surfaces taken with reference to an animal.*" Such a definition of affordance points out all action possibilities that, while "concealed" in the surroundings (whether built or natural), exist regardless of the individual's (or, as Gibson puts it, "the animal's") ability to recognize them. Hence, potential actions that something may support only become palpable in relation to a specific individual and its agency as well as competences. In its initial acceptation, affordance, to Gibson, denotes a "material disposition, the consequent of which is specified in human terms"; thus, any given "material thing may have a great many different possible ways in which it can be used. Each one is an affordance" (Harré 2002, 27). These lurking affordances, moreover, are dependent on not only the aforementioned object-individual's agency plus knowledge relationship, but also on environmental circumstances. As cultural sociologist Terrence McDonnell (2010, 1806) points out, the "latent set of possible actions that environments and objects enable . . . are relationally tied to the capabilities of the person interacting with" them. In this regard, a distinction between *qualities* and *affordances*, McDonnell suggests, ought to be made: whereas the former are "inherent and independent characteristics of objects and places," the latter "are made manifest through interactions between audiences, objects and context" (2010, 1806). In this sense, affordances can be seen as the interchanges among the qualities of objects, of immediate settings, and the individuals interacting with both of them. Out of these intersections, in the specific case of public space, emerges a wide array of actions. Individuals, according to their subjective interpretations, establish particular linkages with the elements that make up public space and its immediate surroundings, then giving way to "hidden" affordances. To sum up, in public space substances, surfaces, and individuals coalesce by way of intrinsic qualities and latent affordances—this, we believe, happens inasmuch as public space, far from being absolute and static, results from constant interrelations and their synthesizing among objects, groups thereof, and environments.

Not absolute, but interrelated and synthesized: deeming space relationally

For the purpose of our discussion, space is deemed as being deeply entangled with sociality, and, as such, understood as a social product. More specifically, we draw on the *relational* take Martina Löw (2001; 2016) developed on space, in which it is

conceptualized as “*a relational arrangement of living beings and social goods*” (Löw 2016, 131; italics in the original). Social goods, according to Löw, can be primarily *material* and *symbolic*, which in turn underpins the analytic differentiation between one form of social goods and the other (Löw 2016, 130). Furthermore, space is not, in and of itself, a relational arrangement of persons and goods—individuals have to link these elements actively to compose a space. Therefore, “*space is constituted by two processes that must be analytically distinguished: spacing and the operation of synthesis*” (Löw 2016, 135; italics in the original). Spacing, on the one hand, refers to the placing of the social goods and persons in relation to other placements and the operation of synthesis, while on the other, it describes the process through which these elements are turned into one coherent whole; as Löw writes, “*an operation of synthesis 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*” (Löw 2016, 135). While Löw accurately highlights the relevance of both living beings and social goods for the process of the constitution of space, we will focus, in our argument, mainly on the social goods—that is to say, chiefly material goods as the material objects *affording* certain actions in space. In addition to this, the process of the constitution of space is mediated through the individuals’ spatial knowledge, for it comprises how space is perceived, imagined, and remembered. Thus, given the several affordances that crop up, while spacing and the operation of synthesis simultaneously unfold, the way space is effectively conceived and thus constituted varies from one individual to another. In other words, the subjective knowledge of individuals not only renders space relevant and meaningful in variegated manners but also shapes the (inter)action established with its material constituent elements. Consequently, the veiled affordances of material objects (i.e., ensembles of social goods) involved in any given process of space constitution theoretically allow different spaces, made out of the same material components, to be constituted. Space, in brief, is interrelated and synthesized through the individuals’ spatial knowledge.

Experiential, sensory, and motoric bodily practices: the bedrock of spatial knowledge

Drawing on the sociology of knowledge, knowledge can be understood “as socially mediated meaning” (Knoblauch 2019, 26). Hence, “action is dependent on and defined by knowledge” (Knoblauch 2019, 26). To put it another way, our world-views are strongly defined by what we know. Spatial knowledge, in that regard, comprises “the subjective or individual experiences and perceptions of space” as well as “imagination, emotions and affective reactions related to space” (Löw and Knoblauch 2019, 11). Moreover, it is usually, though not exclusively, acquired by dint of sensorimotor systems as individuals move around, through, and experience the world. It develops, sequentially, in three phases: (i) *landmark knowledge* (based on characterizing and unique spatial features); (ii) *route knowledge* (the habitual movements and paths that order and unite landmarks); and (iii) *survey knowledge* (quantitative in nature, it responds to the ability to simultaneously interrelate diverse

locations characterized by landmarks; as a result, one becomes capable of short-cutting and detouring) (Siegel and White 1975; Montello 2001). In the midst of such landmark–route–survey sequences, institutional knowledge resources—such as those produced and conveyed in and by families, science, schools, standardized rule systems, or art—are fed into the constant production of spatial knowledge.

Likewise, there is arguably a parallelism between the construction of landmark–route–survey sequences and the process by which hidden affordances of the elements making up space are disclosed. While moving through and within spaces, individuals not only associate spaces (to create routes) but also, through interactions with their material elements, show their concealed affordances. Provided that spatial knowledge is, in and of itself, subjective, it ought to physically, linguistically, or materially become objectified in order for it to be analyzed. To that end, it should be taken into consideration that spatial knowledge conflates single spaces ("referential locations") and systems that are built thereof ("landmark-based routes") while also deriving "from actual experience within a space" (Pick Jr. 2001, 9682). Spatial knowledge, to wit, arises, by means of experiential, sensory, and motor aspects of bodily practices, from the entire host of actions that are performed in, on, from, with space: appropriating, using, interacting, traversing. The myriad actions that individuals perform, particularly regarding public space, are mediated by their capacity to spot latent affordances embedded in its material components, which, as aforementioned, enables different spaces to be concurrently constituted. Material arrangements of public space—and their concomitant affordances—are likewise swayed by the rationale with which they are imbued, which attempts to assert specific perceptions and uses: that is to say, the spatial pedagogization of public space.

Curbing perceptions, uses, and sentiments: spatial pedagogization

The pedagogy that underpins space refers to the spatialization of the rationale that advances arrangements in order to establish specific perceptions and uses of space—at times in a subtle manner, at others, more bluntly. Eventually, space is subject to a "pedagogization." This term stems from the educational sciences and has been employed to, by and large,

indicate the steady expansion and increased depth of educational action during the nineteenth and particularly the twentieth centuries . . . [which] not only concerned the increase in the number of child-raising and educational governmental bodies and the greater range of child-raising and educational processes but also encompassed the ever-increasing central role of the pedagogical in the society.

(Depaepe et al. 2008, 14–15)

The influence that "the pedagogical" has exerted is not limited to the formal processes and arenas (e.g., school curricula and classrooms). Contrariwise, it cuts across

all strata of society and, as such, public space has been ostensibly instrumental to pedagogizing societies in addition to being seen as a setting for learning and co-education (Pike 2011; Visscher and Bouverne-De Bie 2008; Rodó-de-Zárate and Baylina 2014). This is seen in the case of children growing up in countries throughout the so-called Global North and their forms of play in urban areas, which, as Kathrin Hörschelmann and Lorraine van Blerk (2012, 104–105) explain, have undergone the effects of, on the one hand, commodification, rendering “objects, places and even relationships or less tangible aspects of life . . . ‘purchasable’” and, on the other hand, “the increasing institutionalization of afterschool leisure time.” Moreover, the spatial pedagogy of public space seeks to establish not only acuties and usages but also feelings. For example, the “development of managed adventure playgrounds and parks mean (sic) that, through the constructed nature in the city, children are being encouraged to engage with the natural at the same time as removing parental fears and anxieties” (Hörschelmann and van Blerk 2012, 103). All things considered, the spatial pedagogization of public space seems to neglect aspects of affordances and therefore the simultaneous constitution of spaces. Uses are prominently defined through the discipline of design and are often meant to be pervasive and univocal. Be that as it may, the “disruptive” uses that children make of public space suggest otherwise. We next look into the tension between children’s actual use and experts’ intended projection of public space.

Children’s advertent spatial knowledge vis-à-vis experts’ pedagogical design of public space

As our research hypothesis, we propose that children, in their interaction with the material constitutive elements of public space, make diverse latent affordances visible and relevant, thereby objectifying their spatial knowledge. Moreover, the diverse interactions between children and the material elements that constitute public space and its immediate context tend, markedly, to diverge from the underlying spatial pedagogization of experts’ designs. From a general standpoint, as shown in Figure 22.1, at one of the poles along the continuum of the affordances of the material elements that make up public space, design experts objectify their spatial knowledge and intended uses in their yet-to-materialize *abstract* designs. Experts thus attempt to predetermine not only the way in which each individual element of public space is to be perceived and used, but also the combination among them and in conjunction with the surrounding settings. Therefore, public space embodies a spatial pedagogization that is ultimately asserted, once designs are materialized, in the realm of *concrete* space. At the opposite end of the continuum, children begin to interact with the already materialized pedagogization of public space and consequently enable potential affordances to come into play. Thus, the spatial knowledge of design experts signals an understanding of public space as something that, by being malleable, fixable, and tamable, makes it possible to establish a specific topology and its *exact* perception and use. The spatial knowledge of children, on the other hand, indicates, via *advertent*, intuitive practices

FIGURE 22.1 A continuum from intended (by design and planning experts) to unintended (prompted by children) affordances of public space

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and appropriations an open-ended imagination of public space and any given topological (pre)disposition thereof. All in all, children, by using public space as they see fit, constitute a different space than that of the experts, depending on different stocks of spatial knowledge. In the next section, we explore, in the wake of a progressive intervention of a public space on the outskirts of the city of Lima, Peru, how children can be integrated into a participatory design process in such a way that experts' intended design and children's actual use of public space come closer together.

Tahuantinsuyo Park: experts and children meet halfway

Tahuantinsuyo Park is a section of a larger central public space in the neighborhood of La Balanza, located within the district of Comas in northern Lima, Peru. Both the park and its immediate surroundings have been gradually developed parallel and around the redesign and refurbishment of the *Comedor Comunal San Martín* (a community dining hall)—an institution best described as a mixture of a self-organized neighborhood kitchen (run by a group of women called “the mothers of the *Comedor San Martín*”), a public cafeteria, a multi-purpose room, and a small library, situated in the heart of La Balanza. The dining hall was first adapted based on initiatives put together by the mothers of the *Comedor San Martín* and the members of the artistic association *Fiteca*, who had been reclaiming public spaces throughout the barrio over the years with the aim of promoting cultural activities (theater, dance, and plastic arts) for children and young people. As of 2012, the Coordinadora de la Ciudad (en Construcción) (CCC), a Lima-based architectural

studio founded and headed by Peruvian architects Javier Vera and Eleazar Cuadros Choque, has been leading the growing intervention of the dining room, the park, and its adjacent settings (planned in two phases: 2012–2014 and 2015–2017).

Once the dining hall had been revamped and expanded, its encircling spaces started to be transformed, drawing upon the input of children through a fairly unorthodox strategy. In a first step, called “*Proyecto Semilla*” (“seed project”), wooden sticks were brightly painted and placed right outside the main entrance of the dining room, to “entice” children to come around and see what they would do with them: children started to climb up and down the poles and, eventually, attempted to move boldly from one to another. In addition, benches made out of painted tires were made available to children and a fence was replaced by a dirt ramp leading up to a nearby greenery (see Figure 22.2).

The wooden sticks, benches, and dirt ramps are envisioned not as fixed and definitive, but rather as adaptable and changeable elements making up public space (anew) and thus providing a wide array of “dormant” affordances. In doing so, they not only offer alternative ways for children to devise their practices of play but also invite (or even pedagogize) parents and neighbors to alter their views on, and the ways in which they make use of, the public space right next to the dining hall:

In order to avoid the irruption of automobiles, instead of a fence, a labyrinth of wooden high sticks, where children climb up and down and think up their own games, was used. To keep “potheads” away, rather than policemen, children are keeping them at bay by simply playing with used tires, which they’ve painted themselves. Adults may sit on benches, made out of worn tires and located at the foot of the dining hall, to wait while their children play. Is a green area without a spike fence unthinkable? A small slope proves otherwise.

(Vera 2018, 87; own translation)

FIGURE 22.2 The “seed project”: colorful wooden poles were installed using a worn tire filled with concrete and brightly painted as well. In addition, used colored tires were set right next to each other (to form a “bench”) and at intervals for children to play. Moreover, dirt slopes (in the background) were sown with grass

Also central to the argumentation underpinning the CCC's design principles is the belief that, in order to design public space in Lima,

previous experience . . . allows to see that public space is first appropriated and then occupied. Thus, rather than "physical seizure", what is at issue is its symbolic resignification, provided that, once the function of public space has been transgressed, it becomes a sort of creative device. To that end, prior to recover a space, the sense of what is public must be both redefined and reclaimed; that is, producing public space implies setting positive conflicts off.

(Vera 2018, 89; own translation)

Bearing such aims in mind, designers and planners alike combine aspects of affordance (also in a sense of being surprised by what children are actually capable of doing), designedly knowing (Cross 2006) (having experienced the materiality and design of some of the elements before—here, in particular, the wooden sticks), and spatial pedagogization (prompting change in people's ways of thinking of and using public space).

Over a period of three to four years (2015–2018), the space was increasingly intervened upon and, as children took it over, adapted as accordingly as possible. (It is worthwhile underscoring that, while teenagers and adults started to signal preferences, they were not as straightforward and upfront as those of children—though members of the CCC did not, at all, disregard them.) The wooden climbing poles were eventually replaced by more durable metal structures (some of them are now climbing frames, and swings were added here and there), the benches put together using tires are now parallelepiped elements made out of concrete, and the surface adjacent to the community dining hall entrance was refurbished, integrating mosaics co-designed with children, which somewhat hint at a distinction between where to play and where to walk by. Furthermore, members of the CCC, when asked about the most striking disjuncture between what they had envisioned and what children have displayed in situ, were surprised by children's marked preference for using dirt slopes for climbing and sliding and, in so doing, wrecking newly planted green grass and flowers (Lima's weather is extremely dry and green areas are therefore highly cherished, particularly in settlements throughout its disenfranchised periphery). As a result, the intention of proving, as pointed out by Javier Vera earlier, that a green area could stand alone without a "protective" fence had to be revised and ultimately modified—the green areas were substantially reduced to give way to concrete slanted surfaces that were equipped with climbing ropes or turned into ramps (see Figure 22.4). Such "gymnastic" and incremental material transformations of the public space continued, and a couple of new "concave pipes," encouraging skateboarding, emerged alongside several stands meant to create a small amphitheater (where small concerts and theater plays are organized periodically). In addition, a third concave surface has been constructed opposite the stands as a sort of backdrop. The park will eventually be connected to the main entrance of a nearby elementary school through a set of stairs, which are also envisioned to function as potential stands.

The steady and piecemeal intervention on and transformation of Tahuantinsuyo Park, when seen through the threefold lens of affordance, relational space, and spatial knowledge, reveals more than meets the eye with regard to its process of spatial pedagogization—which in turn arguably constitutes a catalyzer for the refiguration of public space. First of all, designers of the CCC imprint the diverse constitutive elements with specific affordances (for instance, the poles are suggestively “offered” to children to climb up and down) and their spatial knowledge is synthesized *a priori* in the form of the “coherent” overall redesign of the park (see Figure 22.3)—though such a process of spacing and synthesizing, as has been explained, is susceptible to the enhancements children may provide. Hence, the spatial knowledge of children, chiefly their “performative” articulation, could be integrated, not without suffering adaptations, into the future phases of implementation. To put it another way, children’s actual enactment of their spatial knowledge—which could be regarded as their spacing and synthesizing—revealed the pitfalls underlying the design experts’ pedagogization of the park inasmuch as they challenged its imbued—and brought to the fore other “hidden”—affordances. This becomes particularly clear in the case of the aforementioned dirt slopes: instead of caring for, or even nursing, the newly planted grass and flowers, children identified a possibility for sliding and climbing, thus expressing a different perception of space (and, more specifically, of the affordances offered by its material constitutive elements) than that of the members of the CCC. In effect, children constituted another, quite distinctive space than the one imagined and projected onto the abstract space of the initial design. Interestingly enough, despite being somewhat pitted against the expert’s pedagogical design of Tahuantinsuyo Park, the children’s adroit spatial knowledge provided for other demands that would normally be entailed in the intervention of any given public space (e.g., budget, timeline, mix of interests, etc.). Far from being downplayed as a delaying or even irrelevant factor, this was seriously considered by the CCC designers. Consequently, children’s relational take on public space (by climbing up and down the poles, using the dirt slopes to slide, and running aimlessly throughout the park, children were producing *their* space through experiential, sensory and bodily practices) has been aptly—for it is not definitive—drawn upon to develop the space further, all the while trying to inscribe the unintended affordances the children made visible into its actual materialization.

The case of Tahuantinsuyo Park, rather than being exclusively the outcome of professional design expertise, embodies an iterative process of materializing, appropriating, and adapting, along with a course of action underpinned by a trial-and-error principle, whereby both designers and children willingly learn from each other. Moreover, the redesign of the park, as already stated, has not yet been completed. In fact, it may well be said that it has reached an open-ended stage. Moreover, among various fairly unexpected upshots, other users have responded quite well to the physical alteration to which the park has been subjected thus far. For example, the metal structure that the wooden poles were turned into is used by teenagers to exercise, while adults have also grown fond of the park’s

transformation and have made it their stomping ground (to be sure, as members of the CCC commented during our fieldwork, there are neighbors who criticize these actions, though a number of bystanders were ultimately won over by the whole process). The park furthermore seems to already represent a referential location within the landmark-based routes of people living nearby (most likely due to the existence of the communal dining hall) and, as such, is imbued in their spatial knowledge. However, spatial knowledge comprises not only implicit and habituated practices (such as traversing the park every day), but also, as the children boldly demonstrated, an array of sensory and motor aspects embedded in bodily practice. Including it as a central factor in redesigning and intervening upon the park meant paying attention and reacting to what the children exhibited was feasible using the constitutive material elements of public space. All things considered, the tension between the children's ability to foresee, seize, and disclose dormant affordances by means of their singular spacing and synthezizing, and design experts' explicit and implicit pedagogical design of public space, seems to have given rise to a third, alternative course, which has allowed designers and children to meet halfway.

FIGURE 22.3A Poster showing the location of Tahuantinsuyo Park (top left), a picture documentation (bottom left) and an isometric display (bottom center) of the different phases of intervention, a diagrammatic representation of the evolution of the "seed project" (above the isometric drawing), a zoning and overall site design (top right), and two sections of the design (bottom right)

Source: © CCC Archive

FIGURE 22.3B The picture evinces how children bring to the fore hidden affordances of the holes dug out to erect metal, instead of wooden, poles, yet again testing the limits of the envisaged design and its gradual materialization

Source: © CCC Archive

FIGURE 22.3C Children are playing hopscotch on the dirt, rather than on the concrete surface next to it, which is arguably more suitable for it

Source: © CCC Archive

FIGURE 22.4A Children sledding on one of the concave concrete surfaces next to the stands

Source: © the authors

FIGURE 22.4B Metal poles and frames: a more durable stage of the “seed project”

Source: © the authors

FIGURE 22.4C Children climbing up and down slanted concrete surfaces

Source: © the authors

Conclusion: learning to spy with their little eye—toward a “child-responsive” design process of public space

In this chapter, we have examined the relation between children’s use and experts’ design of public space through the concepts of affordance, relational space, spatial knowledge, and spatial pedagogization. As children use the constitutive material elements of public space in divergent and unexpected fashions—often quite differently than intended by design and planning experts—we pose two questions: (i) how can children’s spatial knowledge be more substantially and meaningfully integrated into the design process, and (ii) how can the notion of spatial pedagogization, which is intrinsic to the planning and design of public space, be taken into account more consciously by planners and designers?

Children and young people show through their set of bodily actions that they not only perceive space differently but also see other qualities in its material objects and thus potentially use them in a manner that was not expected by designers and planners. The many “dormant” affordances children are able to “awaken” indicate that there is never just one predetermined, univocal, and unequivocal use of public space, but rather that the ambiguity of material objects—and thus of the resulting spaces—always allows for other uses and spatial constitutions. After all, public space is, *par excellence*, the domain of multiplicity. The unforeseeable uses of spaces, made visible through the affordances children render relevant, compose a dimension that designers and planners cannot fully foresee as they undertake their professional work, more often than not departing from a quite distinct knowledge base—one that regards space as malleable, fixable, and tamable. The designing and planning of public space are therefore always faced with the conundrum of finding a middle ground between being able to make proposals for its use, based on experts’ knowledge, and actively incorporating how people may eventually use the material objects of which public space is composed together with any arrangements thereof. We also have to acknowledge, in this regard, that the described tension between the spatial knowledge of children and young people and that of design and planning experts very much applies to other social groups in public space (e.g., the elderly, homeless, street vendors, etc.). Furthermore, children and young people obviously do not share an entirely common spatial knowledge. Rather, stocks of spatial knowledge among children and young people (as well as other social groups) are shaped by categories such as age, class, and gender. It goes without saying that all of them possess a distinct form of spatial knowledge, with which other hidden affordances are brought to the fore. While it is virtually impossible to anticipate and accordingly stipulate every single potential affordance the diverse users of public space may render significant during the design and planning phase, such an “impossibility” may well be tackled theoretically through the concepts of affordance, relational space, spatial knowledge, and spatial pedagogization. In practical terms, as the case of Tahuantinsuyo Park shows with a focus on children, it would then be feasible to open up a different pathway to the design and implementation of projects of public space intervention.

To that end, it must be acknowledged that the formalization of public space is predominantly based on experts' spatial knowledge. This knowledge gets objectified and spatializes all the while a pedagogy. Every form of design and planning—and their materialization—is therefore a kind of "pedagogization." As reviewed in the case of Tahuantinsuyo Park, planners and designers "invite children to play" with enticing elements to see how children react and what they make of and with them. Modifications to the originally envisioned design are undertaken subsequently, seeking to adapt the materialities and arrangements of public space accordingly. During this process, the choice of sticks at the beginning also creates certain possibilities and generates tension between an a priori spatial pedagogization and the children's "obstinate" uses, which render other affordances. In addition, there is the question of further concealed or conspicuous spatial pedagogical intentions and aims planners and designers have and how they are made operative within the planning and designing process. Designers and planners of the CCC, for example, intended specific uses and came up with corresponding spatial arrangements for "public life" to thrive organically. Yet, the understanding of "public life" designers and planners possess will surely differ, to a lesser or greater extent, from that of everyday users of public space. For children, public life may well simply mean the freedom to do what they please. Hence, both the legibility and limits of spatial pedagogy's goals are, in effect, challenged—the trick is then to devise mechanisms to respond to, and not deter, such challenges. In this case, experience functions as a catalyst: members of the CCC had already tried out similar actions in other locations and projects in Lima (e.g., the wooden poles). As a result, designers and planners build up over time and through iterative experimentation an epistemological basis that translates into child-responsive design decisions (as opposed to head-on and blatant *prescriptive* spatial pedagogization).

All in all, the analytical added value of critically assessing, through the lens of affordance, relational space, spatial knowledge, and spatial pedagogization, planning and design processes fosters a user-responsive design and planning of public space. That is to say, a change in the posture of design and planning practitioners toward a praxis more strongly connected to material elements, users' interactions with them, and the interplay between the arrangements of the constitutive material objects in public space and the (immediate and larger) context in which they are set up. This would require, among other things, giving up masterplan-concept thinking, refraining from focusing almost solely on qualities of objects and places as though they were inherent and independent entities, and revisiting the dictum "form follows function," which designers and planners reverse all too often in practice. Therefore, the myriad hidden and overt affordances of space becomes an integral part of designing and planning processes, which in turn prompts a shift of emphasis from an approach based on an expert's vision of a fixed product to an open-ended sequence of possibilities. Furthering such a shift is far from an easy task, for it would involve, on the one hand, reconsidering the language and means of design and planning communication (e.g., 3-D renderings and illustrations tend to present a ready and finished vision of conceived projects). On the other hand, for research purposes, it would require promoting accompanying research, instead

of a post-reconstructing process of planning and designing. At the same time, interventions in as well as alterations of public space, led and propelled by participatory design and planning processes, need to be reexamined, as spatial refigurations and also as a mutual synergic learning process for participants and experts alike, since they are “not only an institutional phenomenon (sociogenesis) but also [affect] subjects themselves (psychogenesis)” (Knoblauch and Löw 2017, 11). When the “affected subjects” happen to be children, designers and planners may well lead the participatory process according to the children’s game precept “I spy with my little eye”; rather than guessing, have children, as in the case of Tahuantinsuyo Park, physically display what it is that they can see that neither designers nor planners ever could.

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