Territorial Stigmatization: local community forces and positioning of schools in the field of education

Bolette Moldenhawer

Department of Media, Cognition and Communication, University of Copenhagen

Abstract

In this presentation the point of departure is the important presumption of our EDUMIGROM research project that schools are shaped by the communities where they are embedded. The overall question of inquiry will be the structuring of schools in terms of how the selected communities are marked by socioeconomic and colour-coded exclusions and inclusions. Using the material from different countries the positioning of schools will be discussed when speaking of a school situated in so-called ghetto-areas, characterised by the outside world as ‘problem territories and problem populations’ and differentiated along gradients of class, place and ethno-national origin. What are the characteristics of territorial stigmatization and how are the children, the parents and the professionals defined relationally – as targets for educational and integration programs? Beyond illustrative examples from the country specific cases some concluding remarks will be drawn about the symbolic work around the schools associated with space, place and different ethno-national and social categories in order to improve their position in the field of education.