

Wealth & Space - Contested geographies of wealth (re-)production in Latin America

Initiative: Perspektiven auf Reichtum: (Aus-)Wirkungen von Reichtum

Bewilligung: 02.04.2023

Laufzeit: 4 Jahre

The project will conduct an analysis of how processes of wealth accumulation use, transform and co-produce land, natural resources, infrastructure, urban-rural relations and other spatial entanglements. By producing insights from and into Latin America, it will develop theoretical and empirical understandings of how the (re-)production of wealth and space is mutually co-constitutive. Particularly, it draws on the rich Latin American traditions of spatial theorisation on wealth (re-)production, from classical dependency theory to (neo-)extractivism, green grabbing, and the racialisation and feminisation of economic exploitation. In detail, the project will: (1) study the economic logics and underlying spatial processes that create the conditions of wealth accumulation through (different forms of) Latin American extractivism; (2) investigate the agency and contestations of key actors in the production of space and wealth; and (3) provide transparency on wealth (re)production in Latin America through creating a Latin American Observatory for Geographies of Wealth and Space in close collaboration with non-academic partners, providing the basis for identifying strategies for egalitarian and sustainable transformations in Latin America. Methodologically, the project combines qualitative and quantitative data from methods such as corporate statistics analysis, social network analysis, and in-depth interviews with different stakeholder groups. The project explores three theoretically founded case studies on (i) the agribusiness frontier and the land-agrarian-urban nexus in Brazil; (ii) the mining-urbanisation nexus in Chile, and (iii) the infrastructure-finance nexus in Mexico, thus covering the countries with the highest concentrations of wealth across Latin America.

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