

RaumFragen: Stadt – Region – Landschaft

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Landscape Conflicts



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RaumFragen: Stadt – Region – Landschaft

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Im Zuge des „spatial turns“ der Sozial- und Geisteswissenschaften hat sich die Zahl der wissenschaftlichen Forschungen in diesem Bereich deutlich erhöht. Mit der Reihe „RaumFragen: Stadt – Region – Landschaft“ wird Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftlern ein Forum angeboten, innovative Ansätze der Anthropogeographie und sozialwissenschaftlichen Raumforschung zu präsentieren. Die Reihe orientiert sich an grundsätzlichen Fragen des gesellschaftlichen Raumverständnisses. Dabei ist es das Ziel, unterschiedliche Theorieansätze der anthropogeographischen und sozialwissenschaftlichen Stadt- und Regionalforschung zu integrieren. Räumliche Bezüge sollen dabei insbesondere auf mikro- und mesoskaliger Ebene liegen. Die Reihe umfasst theoretische sowie theoriegeleitete empirische Arbeiten. Dazu gehören Monographien und Sammelbände, aber auch Einführungen in Teilaspekte der stadt- und regionalbezogenen geographischen und sozialwissenschaftlichen Forschung. Ergänzend werden auch Tagungsbände und Qualifikationsarbeiten (Dissertationen, Habilitationsschriften) publiziert.

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In the course of the “spatial turn” of the social sciences and humanities, the number of scientific researches in this field has increased significantly. With the series “RaumFragen: Stadt – Region – Landschaft” scientists are offered a forum to present innovative approaches in anthropogeography and social space research. The series focuses on fundamental questions of the social understanding of space. The aim is to integrate different theoretical approaches of anthropogeographical and social-scientific urban and regional research. Spatial references should be on a micro- and mesoscale level in particular. The series comprises theoretical and theory-based empirical work. These include monographs and anthologies, but also introductions to some aspects of urban and regional geographical and social science research. In addition, conference proceedings and qualification papers (dissertations, postdoctoral theses) are also published.

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Landscape Conflicts: Introduction

Karsten Berr, Olaf Kühne and Lara Koegst

Abstract

Conflicts about what can be socially understood as ‘landscape’ are as numerous and ambiguous as the terms ‘landscape’ and ‘conflict’ themselves. This concerns fields of conflict such as ‘rural areas’, ‘city and urban landscape’, ‘energy landscapes’ as well as ‘digitalization and media’. Often, such fields of conflict manifest different claims, inscriptions, and interpretations of what can or may be seen together as ‘landscape’. For some years now, several conflict-theoretical approaches have been developed not only in spatial sciences but also in landscape sciences. In this anthology, an exemplary selection of theoretical approaches to ‘landscape conflicts’ is presented and practical examples in the mentioned fields of conflict are collected.

Keywords

Landscape • Conflict • Landscape conflicts • Land use conflicts • Conflict theory • Conflict research • Aestheticization • Moralization

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1 Introduction

Landscape conflicts are caused on the one hand by spatially situated land use competitions (cf. e.g. Bosch and Peyke 2011; Kuhwald et al. 2020), insofar as specific forms of land use (Statistisches Bundesamt 2021; Umweltbundesamt 2020a, b) such as in agriculture and forestry, in nature conservation, in environmental protection and, more recently, climate protection, in settlement, industrial, residential and transport areas, in areas for tourism and leisure, in the field of energy transition (wind farms, biogas plants, power lines, etc.), and in raw material extraction get into conflict with each other. Although land cannot actually be consumed, there are uses that can influence or preclude future uses. Some uses can be combined, such as a former quarry pond in a former raw material extraction area that is now a local recreation area as well as a protected area for flora and fauna. Many uses, however, are mutually exclusive, such as areas protected under nature conservation law with specific facilities of the energy transition motivated by climate policy (such as wind turbines). Against the background of constantly changing social needs and land use, the physical foundations of ‘landscape’ are therefore often under permanent pressure to change.

On the other hand, conflicts are caused or already existing conflicts are exacerbated by the complexity (cf.: Papadimitriou 2010, 2020, 2021) and ambiguity of the term ‘landscape’ (understood here as a special case of ‘space’; cf. Kühne 2019, 2021; Kühne and Berr 2021) with its ‘large semantic court’ (Hard 1969, 1970; Hokema 2013; Kühne 2021). This ambiguity leads to different interpretations and conflicts of interpretation in pre-scientific everyday life, in the use of landscape stereotypes as well as in sciences. Different interpretations are associated with different claims, there is a struggle for interpretive sovereignty and derived evaluations of what can or may be seen together as ‘landscape’ (on the concept of ‘seeing together’: Cosgrove 1984; Greider and Garkovich 1994; Ipsen 2006; Kühne 2006a, 2012, 2017a, 2018a; Leibenath et al. 2013). Given the diversity of interpretations, landscape conflicts are not limited to the economic dimension, but are also intertwined with social, political, cultural, and often aesthetic and moral aspects (Berr and Jenal 2019; Berr and Kühne 2019a, b; Kühne et al. 2021; Kühne, Berr, and Jenal 2022a, b; Walter et al. 2013; Weber and Kühne 2016; Weber, Roßmeier et al. 2017a, b). If one also considers that landscape conflicts are associated with high economic, social, and political costs even before they potentially escalate into violence (Kühne 2020; Kühne and Weber 2018a, b [online first 2017]; Weber et al. 2018), then it is of considerable importance to gain a better understanding of landscape-related conflicts in terms of their origins, progression, dynamics, inherent logic, and possible regulatory processes.

Accordingly, this anthology attempts to illuminate conflicts concerning ‘landscape’ from a variety of theoretical and practical perspectives in order to generate a better understanding of their emergence, development, and potential possibilities for regulation. In the following, we first provide some information on the connection between genesis, ambiguity, and moral-aesthetic charging of the concept of landscape (Sect. 2). This is followed

by a brief classification and outline of ‘conflict’ as a research object (Sect. 3) and, finally, we provide a brief overview of the individual contributions (Sect. 4).

2 ‘Landscape’

The visual pattern ‘landscape’ (Cosgrove 1984) displays a special feature that can also affect landscape conflicts within the context of different patterns of categorization, interpretation and evaluation. The patterns of interpretation and potential symbolic attributions to and of ‘landscape’ acquired in the course of everyday, professional, or scientific socialization (Kühne 2024) are the result of a specific art-historical and thus aesthetic history of mediation linked to the concept of landscape (cf. e.g. Berr and Schenk 2024; Burckhardt 1976 [1859]; Büttner 2006; Gruenter 1975; Haber 2006; Hard 1977; Hartlieb von Wallthor and Quirin 1977; Jessel 2005; Kortländer 1977; Kühne 2021; Langen 1975; Müller 1977; Ritter 1974 [1963]; Schenk 2013, 2017; Schneider 2009; Steingraber 1985). Therefore, landscapes are often constructed, interpreted, and evaluated along typical aesthetic differences. This circumstance is reinforced by the fact that an ‘aestheticization of the lifeworld’ (Bubner 1989; Liessmann 2002) is taking place in (post)modern Western societies. According to this diagnosis, the measure of social participation is often no longer solely successful communication and interaction in social negotiation processes, but individual taste preferences based on increased choices (Honneth 1993). This trend is further intensified by the fact that the lifeworld can not only be ‘aestheticized’ but can also be ‘moralized’ across possible (political, economic, social, cultural, ecological, technical, scientific, etc.) issues. In the course of such developments, factual issues are no longer communicated and discussed objectively, but „in the mode of excitement and indignation” (Grau 2017, p. 12; similarly Kersting 2008, p. 10). The consequence can be a “loquacious moralism” (Kersting 2008, p. 11), which, analogous to the phenomenon of ‘aestheticism’ (cf. Kühne, Berr, and Jenal 2022a, b, pp. 43 ff.), is often stylized into a ‘lifestyle’ (Grau 2017), insofar as *moral* choices in the course of the current ‘value pluralism’ (Hubig 2001) enable this. Thus, aestheticization and moralization often go hand in hand in landscape conflicts: a landscape is perceived as ‘ugly’ or ‘beautiful’, for example, while changes to a landscape constructed as ‘beautiful’ or ‘native’ and the actors identified as responsible for these changes (such as governmental organizations, water and electricity providers, etc.) and projects (e.g. electricity grid expansion) are also often labeled as ‘bad’ and ‘morally reprehensible’ (Kühne and Weber 2018a, b [online first 2017]; Walter et al. 2013). If, in addition, the aesthetic-moral judgment is linked to a claim to truth, the traditional metaphysical triad of ‘true-beautiful-good’ (cf. Berr 2020; Kühne et al. 2021; Kurz 2015) is revived. Then, what is *perceived* as ‘beautiful’ and ‘good’ can simultaneously *found to be* ‘right’ and ‘true’ and immunized against criticism from the position of a supposedly ‘right’ or ‘better’ knowledge. This means that a ‘beautiful’ (aesthetically harmonious) landscape is at the same time a ‘good’ (still

‘undamaged’ by technical intervention) and ‘true’ (still ‘authentic’ as undamaged) landscape (Kühne 2018b, p. 50), whose *claim to protection* therefore appears to be morally and cognitively unquestionable in its *claim to validity* (Kühne 2006b; Spanier 2006). This circumstance easily leads to supposedly indisputable positions of the respective landscape conflict that are insensitive to counter-arguments. Possible consequences are ‘paternalism’ (Sofsky 2007), hostile discrediting attempts of opposing positions, which define the conflict adversary as a “pathological case” (Grau 2017, p. 47) as well as discussions that descend to the level of diffuse feelings, sensitivities, moods, and aggressive hostility and, under certain circumstances, into a ‘tyranny of values’ (Hartmann 1926, p. 524). Conflict positions are no longer seen as legitimate and negotiable alternative interpretive options (Dahrendorf 1969, 1972, 1992) with regard to landscape, but are treated as exclusively hostile positions that have to be confronted in the sense of a ‘friend-foe’ scenario (cf. on this Mouffe 2007, 2014).

3 ‘Conflict’

Conflicts in general, especially social conflicts (Dahrendorf 1972; for a general introduction to theories of social conflict: Thiel 2015; specifically on Dahrendorf: Kühne 2017b; Kühne and Leonardi 2020; Leonardi 2014), are part of everyday experience; they manifest themselves at all times and in all conceivable social constellations as an “ubiquitous and ever-present phenomenon of human existence” (Pfetsch 2005, p. 3). In the research literature, they are therefore described as an “everyday experience for every human being” (Niedenzu 2001, p. 174), and are indeed thematized in “all social configurations of the past, present, and future” (Pelinka 2016, p. 17). Accordingly, conflicts can be assigned to differently scaled levels, ranging from a micro-level of interpersonal (Simmel 1908) and intrapsychic (Freud 1988 [1930]) conflicts of the individual (as conflicts of interests, norms, values, or roles) via a macro-level, on which disputes and conflicts arise between individuals, groups, societies, or states over influence, positions, power, wealth, and other goals or goods (for example, already in Marx and Engels 1990 [1845–1846]) to a middle, meso level, in which conflicts about access to and distribution of symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1984, 1989) are focused. Conflict *research* examines the reasons for the emergence of potential conflicts, asks about the actors involved and the objects of conflict, and explores the ‘modalities of conflict’, the means chosen, and the possible ways of dealing with, managing, resolving, regulating, and evaluating conflicts (cf. Pfetsch 2005, pp. 3 ff.).

Conflict *theories* explore these different dimensions of potential conflicts in the context of their impact. Thus, for example, psychological, social scientific, philosophical, or political science conflict theories can be differentiated depending on which causes, actors, or objects of conflict are at the center of consideration (Diendorfer et al. 2016). In conflict theories, the ‘social’ can basically be thematized as ‘consensus or conflict’ (Bonacker

1996). Accordingly, an early division was between theories that focused on integration and preservation of the social status quo (e.g. Habermas 1983, 1991; Parsons 1991 [1951]) and those that emphasize (conflictual) change in society (e.g. Dahrendorf 1969, 1972, 1992; Krysmanski 1971). It is now obvious that no social science theory can do without the concept of conflict given the currently increasing ubiquitous phenomenon of ‘conflict’ (Bonacker 1996; Niedenzu 2001). Instead, the question is whether and how conflicts can contribute to a positive further development or improvement of social conditions, however this may be defined.

In spatial and landscape-related conflict research, the motives and actions of the actors are thematized, but without evaluating the significance of conflicts with regard to societal development (Reuber 1999). However, when discussing the reasons for emergence, meanings and goals of conflicts, different positions can be found: In the conservative tradition, spatial and landscape conflicts are seen as problematic disruptions of lifeworld, social, or political routines that need to be appeased, mediated, or resolved by consensus (cf. Kühne 2017a). In a neo-Marxist reading, spatial conflicts are seen as symptoms of an ‘incurably sick capitalism’ (Blotvogel 2000), which can only be eliminated by a radical social upheaval (revolution) (Belina 2003; Davis 2004; Soja 1998). Historically, however, both approaches have proven to be unrealistic or unfeasible (Kühne et al. 2021; Kühne, Berr, and Jenal 2022a, b). Socially relevant, therefore, seems to be the question of how spatial and landscape conflicts can be regarded as social normality and as productive, and how they can be brought to a nonviolent and not necessarily consensual (resolving) settlement (Dahrendorf 1972). In the current literature on spatial and landscape conflicts in general and in particular, the aforementioned aspects are more or less explicitly addressed (cf. for example: Artuković et al. 2018; Berr et al. 2022; Berr and Jenal 2019; Bues 2019; Kamlage, Drewing et al. 2020a, b; Kamlage, Warode et al. 2020a, b; Knoepfel and Gerber 2008; Kühne 2006a, 2018a; Kühne, Weber et al. 2022a, b; O’Neill and Walsh 2000; Otto and Leibenath 2013; Weber 2018; Weber et al. 2018; Weber, Jenal et al. 2017a, b; Zilles and Schwarz 2015).

4 ‘Landscape Conflicts’: Overview of the Contributions

The term ‘landscape’ as a ‘tinted’ (Schenk 2002, p. 7) or ‘compositional’ (Ipsen et al. 2003, p. 13; cf. Kühne and Bruns 2013) term with a broad ‘semantic court’ refers to different spatial ‘objects’, ‘phenomena’, ‘structures’, ‘uses’, ‘changes’ or ‘processes’. Accordingly, the contributions in this volume address ‘landscape’ under different keywords such as ‘rural spaces’, ‘city and urban landscape’, ‘energy landscapes’, ‘digitalization and media’.

The contributions of the first thematic block deal with different theoretical foundations for the identification, analysis, description and explanation of typical aspects of landscape conflicts. Olaf Kühne (2024) starts with basic considerations on landscape and

conflict, especially with regard to the complexity of the object 'landscape', which can be constructed and normatively charged very differently in different linguistic and social contexts, given the ambiguity of the concept of landscape. This also complicates the regulation of landscape conflicts and often modifies them from factual and procedural conflicts to identity and value conflicts. Fivos Papadimitriou (2024) conducts a scientometric analysis of a large part of the peer-reviewed scientific literature and examines how the terms 'landscape conflicts' and 'land use conflicts' are used. As a result, according to Papadimitriou, it becomes epistemologically incorrect to use these two terms interchangeably without due caution. In a 'neopragmatist' perspective, Laura Leonardi (2024) addresses the transformation of social conflicts in complex and globalized societies. The contribution culminates in a justification of the choice of the concept of colliding scales and lateral oscillation as a tool for answering questions about the production of social conflict. This concept appears promising when applied to the connection of mutual implication between scale conflict and scale solidarity. In Stefan Körner's (2024) contribution historically reconstructs how National Socialist landscape design brought about a scientific of professional principles, which enabled the emergence of modern landscape planning as a state planning discipline after the Second World War. Landscape architecture and open space planning opposed this development, each from its own perspective. Beyond this historical reconstruction, the article can also be read as a vivid example of landscape conflicts on the scientific level of landscape constructions and corresponding struggles for interpretive sovereignty.

The contributions to the thematic field of 'Rural Areas' deal with landscape of different types and scales, ranging from the coastal landscape in southern Louisiana, chalet villages in the Austrian Alps, the protection of biotope networks in Germany, the effects of windthrow and bark beetle infestation on tourism in the Bavarian Forest National Park, to conflicts between sustainability goals. In the first article in this thematic area, Anna-Maria Weber (2024) examines Louisiana's hybrid coastal region, which is subject to the reciprocal influence of land and water and is affected by progressive erosion and increasing land loss due to a combination of various natural and anthropogenic processes. The article is able to show that personal encounters and one's own experience have a significant impact on awareness and perception of land loss. The contribution by Michael Mießner and Matthias Naumann (2024) is dedicated to the phenomenon of gentrification not in the city, but in chalet villages in the rural Alpine region. The authors show how such real estate investments lead to conflicts regarding the sealing of landscapes, about the availability of housing in rural areas, about the increase of real estate prices as well as conflicts with local residents about ecological impacts. Melanie Mahler (2024) traces the connection between commitment to nature conservation and a post-materialistic attitude using the example of an empirical social study and socio-economic evaluation of a biotope network project. In doing so, the author also encounters the phenomenon that moral values and norms are often introduced into conflictual disputes and declared to be the decisive or sole standard of evaluation and standardization, which often leads to a

redirection from factual and procedural conflicts to identity and value conflicts. Thomas Michler and Erik Aschenbrand (2024) examine natural disturbance events, in particular, the large-scale death of trees as a result of windthrow and bark beetle infestation in the Bavarian Forest National Park, and the question of the extent to which conflicts in the context of tourism are caused by different interpretations of the associated landscape changes. Contrary to the assumption that the disturbance events lead to negative impacts on tourism, such conflict no longer play a relevant role in the Bavarian Forest. The attractiveness of the Bavarian Forest National Park area has even increased for visitors, but other conflicts are arising instead.

The contributions to the thematic field 'City, Cityscape' deal with landscape conflicts in urban open spaces and urban landscapes, which revolve around visual expectations of urban landscapes, conflicts about inherent logics of different social subsystems, urban planning models of dense settlement patterns, the effects of overtourism on the ecology of a historic city center (Florence), the construction of an inner-city light rail (Tübingen), and around the cultural heritage of a synagogue (Yu Aw in Herat, Afghanistan). An ethnomethodological breaching experiment conducted by Julia Fischer, Anna-Maria Weber, Lisa Holderied, Melanie Mahler, and Linda Baum (2024) shows how much specific visual expectations of urban landscape spaces (here: a botanical garden in Tübingen) can influence the reception, classification, interpretation, and evaluation of an unusual use of space and lead to corresponding conflicts. The contribution by Sven Endreß, Karsten Berr, and Julia Fischer (2024) reconstructs in particular the conflict between the subsystem-specific inherent logics of the social systems economy and administration using the example of a study on development strategies for the expansion of an industrial park, which was conducted in Rottenburg am Neckar as part of an Interreg Agora project. The empirical investigations clearly show how much these inherent logics influence the actions of the participants and lead to conflicts. Jonathan Stimpfle (2024) deals with guiding principles of urban densification in his contribution. Given the fact that development potentials have been largely exhausted, redesign of historic squares is being pursued in many places. The contribution emphasizes that there is a serious discrepancy between the meaningfulness of densification-based transformation on the one hand and the conflicts surrounding it on the other. This tension is examined, and current key conflicts around the transformation of historic urban structures are illustrated. In the contribution by Angeliki Coconi, Matteo Bordacconi, Cosimo Barbagli, and Guido Herold (2024), effects of overtourism on the ecology of the historic center of Florence, in particular the conflicts associated with the redevelopment of the historic center, are described. The focus is on the political, economic, and social tensions between locals and visitors and the constant competition that has led to a deterioration of the quality of life and the inevitable displacement of the local population in recent years. Lukas Schmid and Tim Rothe (2024) use the example of the planned light rail in the southern German city of Tübingen in their contribution to demonstrate how the resulting (urban-)landscape conflict can be regulated in the sense of Ralf Dahrendorf's conflict theory. The focus is on the complicated double role of political

actors, who on the one hand have their own ideas about an (urban) landscape and, on the other hand, are supposed to act as a neutral authority in the conflict resolution. Abdul Majeed Noori and Huda Mahmood (2024) examine in their contribution the disputed cultural heritage of the Yu Aw Synagogue in the city of Herat in Afghanistan and the conflict situation that has arisen, particularly between religious groups, over the acquisition of the Yu Aw Synagogue. It shows how the complex range of transnational and international religious activities between Islam and other religious traditions is an integral and even constitutive part of the history of a local civil society, and how determining intercultural and international negotiations over (religious) self-definition can mitigate conflicts.

The politically decided ‘Energiewende’ in Germany produces so-called ‘Energy Landscapes’ in the course of its implementation, which leads to considerable conflicts due to the associated spatial changes. This thematic field includes contributions on the importance of citizen participation in corresponding negotiation and communication processes, on conflicts in the context of wind energy use in border regions, on energy landscape conflicts and the politics of scale around photovoltaic parks in Germany, and on an exemplary conflict around e-mobility, forest clearing, and planning law in a suburban landscape near Berlin. Jan-Hendrik Kamlage, Julia Uhlig, Marius Rogall and Jan Warode (2024) address conflicts in the three central transformation fields of the energy transition—grid expansion, wind power and biogas. They elaborate similarities and differences in the causes of conflict on the basis of current research literature and analyze possible courses of action for conflict management through dialogue-oriented information and participation processes. The important role of citizen participation in conflict management, differences in scope, structure and uniformity of the transformation fields as well as the necessity of a professional and context-sensitive design of information and participation processes for joint solutions of all actors involved become clear. Alexandra Lampke and Florian Weber (2024) deal with conflict-prone negotiation processes around wind turbines that can arise in border regions due to diverging (national) energy policies and different New Energy priorities. Using the example of the German wind farm Gersweiler-Klarenthal near the French border, the contribution examines how and with which results wind energy can be negotiated across national borders. The negotiation processes also show that these conflicts can also have positive effects, expressed in the desire to promote Franco-German cooperation. Benedikt Walker’s (2024) paper examines photovoltaic parks and develops a relational and multiscale understanding of energy landscape conflicts. In this perspective, energy landscapes are embedded in and produced at multiple scales. Conflict therefore result from politics of scales, as actors attempt to control the development of energy landscapes at multiple scales. In turn, landscape conflicts can alter scalar relationships. Markus Leibenath (2024) examines and discusses a landscape conflict from the perspective of ‘agonistic pluralism’ and in the course of a discourse analysis, which was triggered by the plan to deforest a section of forest in Grünheide (Mark) near Berlin in February 2020 in order to build a so-called Gigafactory of the Tesla company. The analysis shows three main discourses that differ in the specific concerns that are represented and rejected.

In the last thematic block ‘Digitization, Media’, the authors examine the conflict potential or conflict constellations in or with regard to digitization and political conflict regulation in rural areas, cartographic media as mediators in landscape conflicts, past and present (landscape) conflicts around mobile network expansion in Germany, and the social construction of urban landscapes in TikTok videos. Olaf Kühne and Jan-Hendrik Kamlage (2024) start with a discussion of the digitalization of rural areas, which on the one hand enables participation and involvement, but on the other hand makes it more difficult for people who do not have access to digital infrastructures or the symbolic capital that is the basis for the ability to participate. In addition, the distinction between post-rural and post-urban spaces is proposed, which are characterized by overlapping developments and ambivalences that defy generalist assessments. Dennis Edler, Luca Zilt, Jule Drews, Katrin Reichert, Marco Weißmann, Julian Keil, Annika Korte, Frank Dickmann (2024) demonstrate whether and how cartographic media can be used as mediators in landscape conflicts. Their thesis is that new cartographic media based on augmented and virtual reality can not only serve to capture a planning project, but also as a communication tool to mediate and work out compromises in case of conflicts between different actors. These new digital media can be used more flexibly and processed more intuitively by non-experts in planning processes. Julia Dittel’s (2024) contribution deals with the establishment and further development of mobile technology, which was accompanied by corresponding conflicts, and focuses on two central phases of the development of mobile technology in Germany: from 1998 to 2002 during the introduction of UMTS/3G and from 2018 to 2021 in the context of the expansion to the 5G standard. Within the framework of a discourse-theoretical perspective and methodology, the results show that the increasing use of mobile communications is accompanied by a growing acceptance of the technology, even though concerns about the effects of electromagnetic fields on the human body remain. Albert Roßmeier’s (2024) contribution examines Echo Park Lake in downtown Los Angeles as the subject of a multi-layered urban landscape conflict about divergent spatial needs, demands, and ideas. The focus is on the question whether and which aspects of these spatial conflicts can be found in TikTok videos about Echo Park Lake and which ideas of landscape underlie the videos.

The overall view of the contributions once again shows (as already in Berr and Jenal 2019) the diversity of landscape conflicts in the fields of conflict, the occasions and reasons for their emergence, the character of the conflict, in their respective course, their respective dynamics, their inherent logics and possible regulatory procedures, and many other aspects. Given the irreversible and by no means decreasing changeability and need for change in all areas of life and the accompanying inevitability of conflicts of all kinds, a fortiori also landscape conflicts, it can be assumed that also in the future further landscape conflicts will arise in their diversity according to relevant aspects—including conflicts that we cannot yet imagine and accordingly cannot anticipate and which will continue to pose

major challenges for both practice and scientific theory. Therefore, it is definitely worthwhile and sensible not to let the research on this topic rest, but to continue to drive it forward.

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Part I
Theoretical Foundations



Landscape and Conflict—Some Basic Considerations

Olaf Kühne

Abstract

Landscape conflicts have intensified in recent years—especially in the context of the expansion of facilities for the generation and management of renewable energy. They gain a particular complexity through the ambiguity of the object ‘landscape’, which is constructed very differently in different linguistic and social contexts—usually with very different normative charges. This ambiguity and different normative charges make it difficult to regulate landscape conflicts, especially when moral devaluations of the other conflict party arise from them. In addition, the state or parts of it appear as a conflict party, so that it cannot function as an independent third instance or can do so only to a limited extent. Accordingly, landscape conflicts are often transformed from factual and procedural conflicts into identity and value conflicts, which are more difficult to regulate.

Keywords

Landscape • Social conflict • Neopragmatism • Landscape theory • Ralf Dahrendorf • Energy transition • Wind power

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1 Introduction

Landscape conflicts occur in different spatial contexts, between different social groups and in different intensities. Nevertheless, there are common features and specifics that distinguish them from other social conflicts. They are not constitutively focused on space alone, but on a specific interpretation of space that is highly normatively charged: landscape. Scholarly attention to landscape conflicts (among many: Aschenbrand and Michler 2020; Buizer et al. 2015; O’Neill and Walsh 2000) experienced an intensification, particularly with the rise of conflicts over the physical manifestations of the energy transition (Breukers and Wolsink 2007; Bues and Gailing 2016; Eichenauer and Gailing 2022; Gailing et al. 2019; Mels 2014; Rygg 2012; Wolsink 2007). In the present anthology contribution, the specifics of landscape conflicts shall be elaborated, but also possibilities for their regulation shall be presented. For this purpose, it is necessary to first deal with the concept of landscape. Due to its complexity (in the sense of the variety of relations within a system; see in detail: Papadimitriou 2010, 2020, 2021), I will refer here to the concept of landscape derived from the three-world theory of Karl Popper (Popper 1979, 1996; Popper and Eccles 2008 [1977]), the theory of the three landscapes (Koegst 2022; Kühne 2020, 2021a; Kühne and Koegst 2023b; Kühne and Leonardi 2022; Wolf 2020), which then not only provides a framework to present different theoretical perspectives on landscape as actualized in landscape conflicts, but also different conflict positions in landscape conflicts. Before turning to landscape conflicts, there is a preoccupation with social conflicts, here in particular with Ralf Dahrendorf’s conflict theory, which on the one hand is of central importance in the study of social conflicts (Brüsemeister 2007; Niedenzu 2001; Thiel 2015), on the other hand, has proven itself in the research of landscape conflicts—far beyond the research in the context of the Energiewende (for example, in: Berr et al. 2022; Jenal et al. 2021; Kühne 2019a; Kühne, Schönwald, and Jenal 2022a, b, c; Weber et al. 2018; Weber 2019b). Building on the then developed understanding of landscape, like that of social conflict, the paper then addresses the specifics of landscape conflicts, their similarities, but also their differences. This is followed by a conclusion that addresses the challenges that arise from landscape conflicts.

2 Landscape—Conceptual Approaches to a Complex Term

The concept of landscape is not only associated with a ‘large semantic yard’ (Hard 1969; more recently on this: Hokema 2013), it is also conceived differently in different linguistic contexts or exists only as a fiefdom word (among many: Bruns and Munderlein 2019; Bruns and Paech 2015; Drexler 2013a, 2013b; Makhzoumi 2015; Ueda 2010; Zhang et al. 2013) and includes—with different weighting—material as well as cognitive, aesthetic, functional, and emotional aspects (e.g.: Ipsen 2006; Linke 2019; Weber et al. 2019). Out

of this complexity of understanding what is called ‘landscape’, an extensive theoretical attention has developed to date, to which, in turn, an extensive, overview-providing body of literature with different thematic emphases and in different languages is available (for example: Bourassa 1991; D’Angelo 2021; Howard et al. 2019; Kühne 2019b, 2021c; Paquot 2016; Roger 1995; Winchester et al. 2003; Wylie 2007). As a result of the existence of this extensive body of literature on landscape theory, only a succinct introduction to theoretical versions of landscape as they have gained prominence in research on landscape conflict is provided here. Before turning to perspectives on landscape theory, however, the analytical framework of the theory of the Three Landscapes is presented.

Karl Popper differentiates in his three-world theory into the material world 1, into the world 2 of individual consciousness as well as into the world 3 of supra-individual cultural contents (Popper 1973, 1979, 1996; Popper and Eccles 2008 [1977]). Analogously, the notions of three levels of space can be developed, space 1 emerges from the spatial arrangement of material objects, space 2 from the individual notion of space, space 3 from the differentiated social notions of space. Also, three landscapes 1, 2 and 3 can be conceived accordingly (in this volume: Weber 2024). Landscape on levels 2 and 3 is not only a subset of space, but extends beyond it, for example, when we speak of party landscape and educational landscape. The central difference, however, lies in the constitutive processes of the emergence of ideas about landscape as compared to space. If the development of spatial ideas is constitutively linked to orientation in space 1, landscape emerges as a synthesis guide (especially of visual, but also of acoustic or olfactory stimuli) in the recursive process between landscape 2 and landscape 3, whereby the socialization of landscape conventions from landscape 3 to landscape 2 is of greater importance than the capacity for innovation from landscape 2 to landscape 3. Landscape 3 thus contains especially aesthetic, and increasingly also ecological conventions for interpreting, categorizing, and evaluating space to landscape. These patterns of interpretation, categorization, and evaluation of landscape are again not uniform, but differentiated by modes (these can be denoted by the letters a, b, and c). The a-mode encompasses the strongly emotional landscape experiences of the ‘home normal landscape’ that develops especially during the years of childhood and adolescence, guided by significant others (especially family members, but also the peer group). The b-mode is formed by the commonsense of social landscape conventions. Through school, television, the Internet, books, etc., the social patterns of interpretation, categorization, and evaluation are transmitted to landscape 2, enabling the person to communicate about landscape without loss of social recognition. The c-mode, in turn, comprises subject-specific patterns that are usually acquired through academic study. On the one hand, these patterns strive for distinction from a- and b-modal modes of construction and exhibit interpretive sovereignty competitions among themselves; on the other hand, they are characterized by a high urge for innovation (‘scientific progress’, whereby a distinctive function can also be found here). The result is that—depending on the mode—many different landscapes 1 are synthesized into one space 1,

connected with different normative ideas, in mode a of stability, in mode b of fit to stereotypical aesthetic and ecological ideas, in mode c subject-specific claims, which on the one hand turn out very differently (for example of an agricultural economist and a landscape planner), on the other hand are always characterized by a deficit view (which ultimately also serves to legitimize the *raison d'être* of one's own discipline). Particularly by means of teaching materials, patterns of the c-mode diffuse into the b-mode (for more details on the also empirical basis: Burckhardt 2004, 2006; Kühne 2018a, b, 2023; Leibenath 2014; Nowotny 2005; Stemmer et al. 2020). It is already clear from these remarks that the relations between the modes, but also between the levels of landscape, are—at least latently—conflictual. However, before dealing with social conflicts in more detail, theories are considered that can be used to frame landscape (on the basis of c-modal logics).

Widespread—and frequently updated in landscape conflicts—is an essentialist understanding of landscape (see in this volume: Körner 2024). Here, landscape is ascribed its own essence, which lies behind the current manifestations. According to this conception of landscape, this 'essence' is characterized by natural processes or by a centuries-long mutual specific imprint of culture and nature. The essentialist approach to landscape is strongly normatively charged, as all processes and structures that do not correspond to the 'essence of landscape', i.e. are accidental, are rejected (see more: Eisel 1982; Koegst 2020; Schwemmer 2004; Weber and Kühne 2019). This notion of an 'essence' lying behind appearances is rejected by positivist landscape research. For them, landscape (commonly interpreted as landscape 1) is an object that can be recorded by measuring, weighing, and counting, divided into landscape layers (such as land use, climate, geomorphology), processed and modeled by means of geoinformation systems. The descriptive to analytical access associated with this is not very normatively charged (e.g. Leser 1991; Poschlod 2017). Since the "collected' observations must be inductively generalized by the mind" (Eisel 2009, p. 18) to form a synthesized picture of landscape, there is no incommensurability to constructivist approaches to landscape, as there is between these two on the one hand and essentialism on the other. Constructivist approaches, which have considerable importance in the study of landscape conflicts (in this volume: Dittel 2024; Endreß et al. 2024; Fischer et al. 2024; Lampke and Weber 2024; Leibenath 2024; Mahler 2024; Michler and Aschenbrand 2024; Roßmeier 2024; Weber 2024), see—as already indicated above—the constitutive level of landscape especially at landscape 3, sometimes also in combination with landscape 2. This concerns especially the social constructivist approach to landscape, where these interactions between landscape 2 and landscape 3 are in the focus of interest, partly also the question, which function elements of space 1 have for the generation of landscape 1 based on a-, b-, and c-modal conventions (among many: Aschenbrand 2017; Koegst 2020; Kühne 2019c; Stemmer 2016). The discourse-theoretical approach to landscape focuses more on landscape 3 by examining which discourses with which relations struggle for discursive hegemony over landscape (in this volume: Dittel 2024; Lampke and Weber 2024; Leibenath 2024; Noori and Mahmood 2024); conflict is a

constitutive variable here, which is why this approach has considerable currency in landscape conflict research (Leibenath and Otto 2012; Weber 2018, 2019a). Landscape can also be understood from the perspective of Niklas Luhmann's autopoietic systems theory (1986) understand it as an object of communication processes (in this volume: Endreß et al. 2024) that becomes relevant when the individual social subsystems are resonated by landscape-related issues, such as the subsystem economy when money is earned or lost with landscape (for example, in tourism) or in politics when, for example, votes are won or lost with landscape issues (Kühne 2014; Lämmchen 2023). The focus of this theory is accordingly on landscape 3. In contrast, phenomenological landscape research focuses on the relationship of landscape 2 to landscape 1, when the individual experience of space as landscape becomes the research topic (in this volume: Fischer et al. 2024). Here, atmospheres have a special significance as a variable between the person and space interpreted as landscape (Endreß 2021; Hasse 1993; Kazig 2007; Rebay-Salisbury 2013). From critical perspectives, the power-relatedness of landscape is particularly thematized (in this volume: Coconi et al. 2024; Mießner and Naumann 2024); this applies on the one hand to the inscriptions in landscape 1, but also to the definitional sovereignties in relation to the patterns of interpretation, categorization, and evaluation in landscape 3, as well as their normalization, whereby they are not questioned (Cosgrove 1984; Kühne 2008; Mitchell 2002; Zukin 1993). Because power relations are often at the root of social conflict, the relevance of this perspective to landscape conflict research becomes clear. Before we turn to this, however, we first deal with social conflicts.

3 Conflicts—the Perspective of Dahrendorf's Conflict Theory

Social conflicts are part of every society (Dahrendorf 1972), whereby a conflict is said to be social "if it can be derived from the structure of social units, i.e., if it is supraindividual" (Dahrendorf 1972, p. 24). Social conflict was a central subject of social science research early on (in review: Bartos and Wehr 2010). Already Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels dealt with them and saw them—macrosociologically—as triggers for revolutions. Accordingly, social conflicts were of central importance for social development. A development that should lead almost by natural law to the classless society (Marx and Engels 1990 [1845–1846]). Georg Simmel took a micro-sociological perspective. As a driving force for social conflicts he saw on the one hand the instinctuality of human beings, on the other hand the different interests of people in relation to certain objects (Simmel 1908). Similar to Marx and Engels, Simmel understood social conflicts as non-dysfunctional, in contrast to Talcott Parsons (1951). Again macrosociologically, the latter understood conflict as a disruption of the functional structure of society. With his habitus and capital theory, Pierre Bourdieu combined the micro- to macrosociological perspective, addressing the conflictual nature of the distribution of symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1984, 1989).