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“Ecological” overall concepts as emotional cultural technique at the limits of predictability

This article examines whether the (re)production of overall concepts which address the “ecological” crisis could be understood as cultural technique. For this purpose it is referred to a model of planning practice that conceptualizes planning as oscillation between irritation and confidence. With the examples of *Sustainability* and the *City of Short Distances* it is argued that the use of such overall concepts is an emotionally operating cultural technique. Finally the article focusses on the underlying aspects of power. Due to the fact that those overall concepts do not meet their own expectations, they have an unjustifiable, ideological character. Thus their sedative power turns into a depoliticizing effect. In consequence – even unconsciously – (re)producers of such concepts contribute to stabilize relations of power. This requires a critique, questioning the ideological character of those overall concepts. However, thereby the limits of predictability in planning are reached.

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