

## **ETHOS (ETHICS OF THE PLACE)**

A Greek term meaning order, but also the character of people and places. In the latter sense, *ethos* is related to *genius loci*.

The idea of *ethos* is useful in that it allows us to talk about the ethics of the place, contributing – on an equal footing with aesthetics and philosophical anthropology – to the philosophical approach to the category of the place. The concept of *ethos* is based on the conviction that places have their own character, their own identity, which on the one hand is constantly created in interaction with their users, and on the other - from the perspective of these users – is something already existing. As such, it should be properly understood and treated as a factor to be taken into account in our actions. *Ethos* is therefore closely related to the ethics of the place, understood both as a theoretical reflection on the essence of ethical activity (design, management, conduct), as well as the activity itself.

*Ethos* is therefore a category that can be useful in reflecting on the practical aspects of people's relationships with places where they are located. The concept of *ethos* makes it possible, among others, to introduce a criterion for their assessment (consistency with the nature of the place) and to consider consistence with the nature of the place as a directive in all types of activities.

Taking into account that human activities in the landscape are at stake, the idea of *ethos* (ethics of the place) is connected with the belief that the ideal is not so much non-interference in the landscape as responsible interference, arising from the conviction that the landscape is a sphere characterised by specific features that result from human and/or natural activities throughout history and that as such are worthy of respect.

The idea of ethics of the place can be combined on the one hand with a hermeneutical concept, whereby the landscape is like a text to be interpreted (and not every reading is equally legitimate), and on the other hand - with a concept that perceives in landscapes the causality with which man should come to terms. In any case, there is a conviction that the landscape is a sphere which cannot be fully subordinated to human activities, as well as a sphere upon which no arbitrary meanings can be imposed. The idea of *ethos* and ethics of the place leads to the recognition that the best form of relations between man and the landscape (environment), the best way to interfere in it is a kind of dialogue in which man does not give up his interests, but at the same time does not try to pursue them regardless of the landscape in which he intends to do so.

### **Literature:**

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