

HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS  
DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

*COMMON | PLACES*

THESES of DLA DISSERTATION

Emese Udvardy

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Supervisor:  
Dr. habil. Frigyes König DLA, professor

## **Preliminary Research, Justification of the Chosen Subject and the Main Aims of the Research**

The questions asked within my chosen subject are about ethics by nature and, as a phenomenon, it aims to deal with the background of a part of these issues, touching both contemporary art and interdisciplinary matters. My paper's primary goal is to share knowledge about those concepts and touching points, which deal with the ethical aspect of mankind's existence in space. What interests me is the specific interrelationship between man or a human community and a given space. People, who are in a multi-layered and complex relationship with their environment, as biologically, psychologically and sociologically defined entities; and the space that provides everything with a system of references. Each historic period's experience of space entwined and defined by ethics. The moral requirements and norms that appear in each area of life, become realised in the situations happening in the specific spaces, or when those are left out of consideration. Also, with this turned around, the way the given spaces, as well as special experiences are treated, as the relationships towards this behaviour, also effects the development of moral requirement systems.

## **The Main Subjects and Theses of the Paper**

The text of the dissertation consists of seven larger parts. The first part (Space) provides a possible definition of space and place, as articulated by me. It also touches the question of the person's existence in space, as well as discussing in detail the primarily and basic nature of the experience of space. It deals with the unique aspect of human cognition in which it abstracts space and things inside it into a foreground-background structure. It goes into details about the thus created neutral space-concept and the conflict of the "undergone space"-experience. At the same time, it also examines such concepts and phenomena, that have ethical aspects as well, such as the person's "openness towards the world", the potentiality, control and responsibility given by the possibilities of movement and action, the asymmetry of the near and the far, etc. According to my statement the realisation of our human existence in a moral understanding, can also be comprehended as the constant striving for our special needs to be adjusted to others as well, thereby mutually sharing and shaping our space with them. (*1. thesis*)

The second part (Recognition), as an excuse, handles with the wider context of special existence and orientation. It examines the aspects of the various quantity and quality phases of constructing reality and the effects of making it liveable, the compulsion of human nature of cognition as well as the unclosable nature of this process, which has the qualities of being delayed and fragmented. Next to this, it also goes into the details of the role of language in

this process, and more concretely, its role in the process of the development of special experiences, as well as in putting them precisely into words. In the paper, I reason that the abstract concept of space, the possibility of conceptual thinking and acting creates together a (tentatively shifting) ‘symbolic world’ making people able to navigate even in the most diverse situations (**2. thesis**), as well as assisting in keeping in mind the people and things taking part in these given situations, so that next to their own, they can start from the venture point of others as well, if they wish so. Thirdly, this symbolic world and the constant reflection on it also ensure that these situations and states are not perceived as unchangeable and absolute (**3. thesis**).

The third part (The Individual and Space [Me]) deals with the more specific realisation of all above. It explains the “purposeful usage” of space and the consequences of its acquisition, listing the traits of the experiential space, as well as focusing on the human body as a natural origo and the asymmetry concluding from its role in developing the experiential space (**4. thesis**). Next to this it also discusses geographical shifting, the front-back direction pair, border marking, as well as distance and nearness, leaving and arriving back, and the constant moral baggage of the concept of home / homeliness. It does this relating the subject’s generalised roles in human life, with a strong focus on the natural environment.

The fourth part (Action in Space/Work) examines the interconnected relations between the individual and space through action. It goes into details about action’s role in exponentiating the diversity of reality (**5. thesis**), furthermore the collaboration and the difficulty of moral action issuing from this.

The fifth part (Partnership/Community [Us]) inspects the basic notions of what makes a human group – in accordance to the give space – into a community, and on a larger scale, into a society. This is why it delves into the complex and multi-layered relationship between the individual and the ‘Other’, the presence of strange(r)ness in the individual itself and in its interpersonal relations. The dissertation focuses on the necessary, dynamic tension that is born in the contrast between the known and the unknown. Creating and keeping up this delicate balance faces us with a hard challenge. (**6. thesis**) The partnership, community, habits and character of society are the concepts that point to those various levels where these tasks appear. The analysis of the binding powers of society (envy, hatred, trust, the capital of society) gives a wider context for dealing with this process in more detail.

The sixth part (While Functioning) studies the normative elements of this process, as well as its ethical increments, next to the partially paradoxical process of forming the individual / moral individual and the hazy nature of the essence of human dignity.

Finally in the seventh part (Work area [Activities in The Mural Workshop]) I introduce as my masterpiece, my practical experiences connected to the subjects above.

### **Applied Research Methods**

The complexity of the chosen subject made it necessary to choose as a starting point various approaches, opinions, aspects, ideologies, etc. and different disciplines' reasonings. The research focused on the enumeration and the processing and translating of the referenced primary and secondary literature. It aims to develop such concepts and put these into structured groups that are able to connect and carry various angles and approaches. Next to this, the educational work done in the Mural Workshop ensured constant opportunities during the theoretical research to, although partially, but to transplant this information connected to ethical reasoning, into practise, and – according to the needs – to share it with the course's students.

I considered the present research as the foundation for *another* research (which takes on contemporary art's participative, sociological-political engaged nature, as well as works, practices and life-works that question the requirement system of the creation, presentation and distribution of art works that is embedded into society). The list of Literature at the end of the dissertation also shows this intention of development, but in a fragmented nature.