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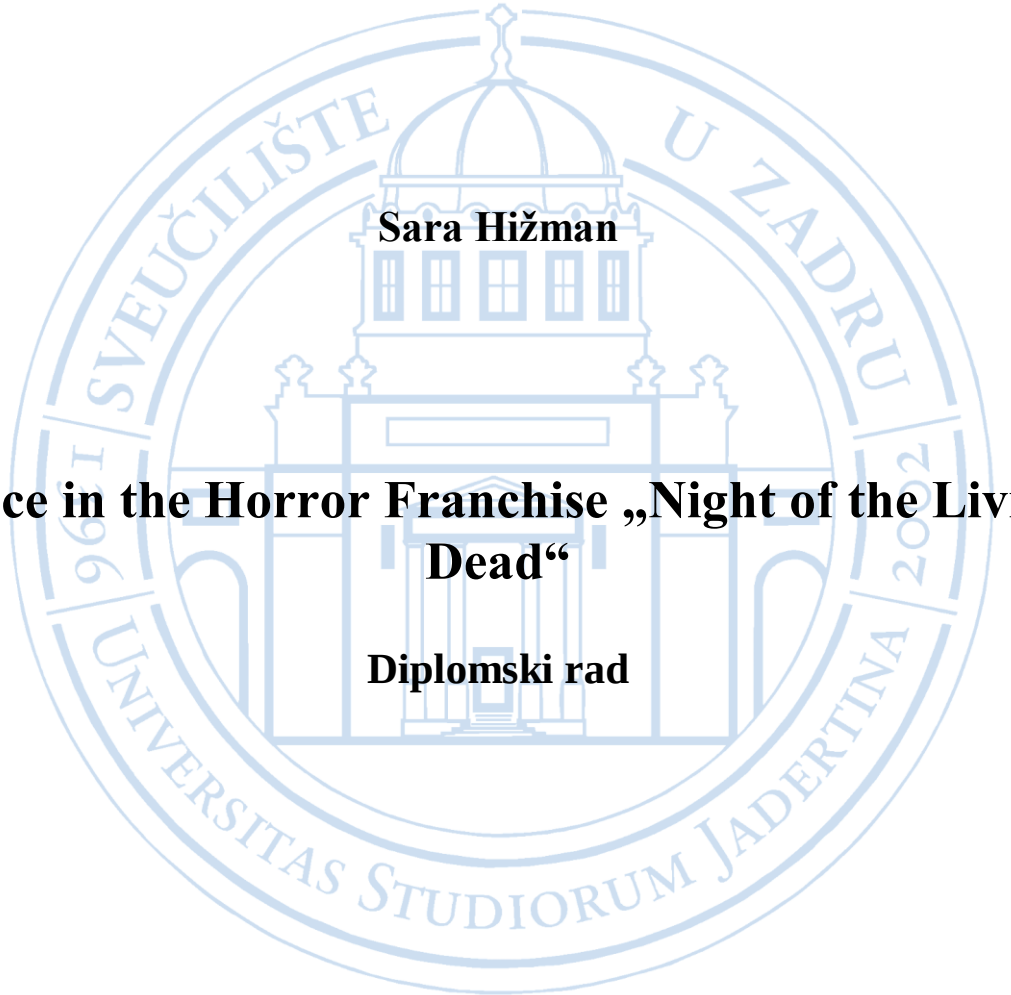

Sara Hižman

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Diplomski rad

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Zadar, 2024.

Izjava o akademskoj čestitosti

Ja, **Sara Hižman,** ovime izjavljujem da je moj **diplomski** rad pod naslovom **Space in the Horror Franchise „Night of the Living Dead“** rezultat mojega vlastitog rada, da se temelji na mojim istraživanjima te da se oslanja na izvore i radove navedene u bilješkama i popisu literature. Ni jedan dio mojega rada nije napisan na nedopušten način, odnosno nije prepisan iz necitiranih radova i ne krši bilo čija autorska prava.

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Zadar, 27. kolovoza 2024.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Modern literary studies focus increasingly on spatial elements' role in literature and film. The spatial turn recognises the material aspects of society and culture, emphasizing the significance of space and place in theory and methods (Ryan et al. 2). The shifting of the focus from narrative aspects to spatial ones was recognised in the late 20th century and has been increasingly prominent in literature and film. The influence of places on characters, narratives, and themes were the fields of research by scholars Michael Foucault, Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, Doreen Massey, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Gaston Bachelard, each contributing to our understanding of how connections of spatial aspects influence cultural and social processes. Furthermore, the teratogenic foundation provides the setting, atmosphere, and context for the readers and viewers, and the spatial turn emphasises the significance of environments, landscapes, and places, considering how they affect and reflect cultural, social, and psychological aspects of the narrative.

When the spaces are destroyed by external factors such as natural disasters, pandemics, alien invasions, mass hysteria, nuclear war, climate change, or some other severe change in the surroundings, an apocalyptic space is created. Such spaces provide scarce food and water resources, lack access to medical care, and pose health risks due to various diseases and radiation, extreme weather conditions, and collapse of transportation and safe hideaways. The apocalyptic motif is a deeply embedded cultural metaphor that has persisted for several millennia. It is now used by environmentalists as well as conservatives. While many apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic narratives are portrayed as dystopian, they frequently contain modern utopian ideas. Essentially, apocalyptic stories seek an ultimate resolution while also exploring sequential possibilities (Murphy 234).

The horror genre delves into the human psyche, attempting to find explanations for the reactions and fear caused by phenomena such as witches, vampires, ghosts, zombies, possessions, murders − and anything else that can be considered *abject* or the *Other*. While the *abject* presents a figure or a presence that evokes repulsion and revulsion caused by grotesque and taboo imagery that leads to the blurring of lines between the self and another being, the *Other*, in a similar fashion, represents the depiction of entities that do not belong to the common world but are alien and unlike the modern man, and that often embody the anxieties and fears that all people have in common.

A great example of representation of abjection and Otherness would be a blood-thirsty, flesh-hungry, and brain-starving creature that preys on the living and presents „the apocalyptical last thing," along with its letter „Z" which is the last in the Latin alphabet (Wöll 4). The genre of the dead, who can also be called the undead, walkers, geeks, biters, ghouls, and many other names, or most commonly, zombies, exemplifies postmodern concepts and stylistic methods, including intertextuality, self-referentiality, irony, and inversion of standard narrative strategies, and focuses on body politics and identity (Wöll 1-2). While various sources influenced the zombie genre, its definitive origin is George A. Romero's 1968 film *Night of the Living Dead*. Although the term „zombie" is not used, the film is where the zombie image first gained its significant impact (McFarland 23). Romero's unexpected artistic skill and the film's commercial success played a key role in the widespread adoption of the zombie image, making it a profound cultural phenomenon (McFarland 24). The *Night of the Living Dead* franchise includes the sequels *Dawn of the Dead* (1978), *Day of the Dead* (1985), *Land of the Dead* (2005), *Diary of the Dead* (2007), and *Survival of the Dead* (2009), along with *Twilight of the Dead* that is *to be announced*.

This master's thesis aims to explain the director's selection of scenes and dialogue topics by first providing a theoretical foundation based on the theory of space in literature and film presented by various scholars, philosophers, sociologists and architects. The apocalypse affects the protagonist's perspective on nature and civilization, which have been contaminated by the Other, the very being that previously rendered them welcoming and secure − people. This paper is intended to clarify the constantly changing character of boundaries, which undergo continuous shifts dependent on the placement of the antagonist, exemplified by the zombie, hence producing a space that is never completely closed or safe. When the environment poses a „threat," it compels individuals to actively engage in shaping the storyline, as it impacts both human and zombie characters and reveals their traits through their actions. The paper will examine both the subjective and objective elements of the apocalyptic space portrayed in the film, as well as the methods adopted by the film crew to depict it. In addition, it will delve into the director's rationale for choosing particular scenes and dialogues. Finally, emphasis will also be put on the examination of the psychological elements of the apocalyptic setting and the effects of the continuous search for safety on the characters' mental health. This method allows researchers to find a connection among seemingly unrelated ideas and theoretical concepts, constructing a theory that can then be supported by evidence and examples, all that while stimulating imagination, much like how *Night of the Living Dead* franchise uniquely combined various influences to shape the zombie genre. From my personal viewpoint, this type of research

shows that connecting imaginative artistic fields such as film, philosophy, and architecture with a more classical understanding of literary theory can offer a new viewpoint and different unexpected analyses of certain artists' creative freedom.

In the first part of this master's thesis, the theoretical framework will be analysed, summarising points that are valid for the topic and which will later be used to discuss the film's scenery, shots, and dialogue in detail. In the first part of the thesis, „Space in Literature and Film," the geography of narration and important terms, e.g., mental maps and cityscape, and dichotomies like urban vs. rural, amateur vs. professional, will be explained. This section will include explanations and typologies by Mikhail Bakhtin that are based on the theory of the chronotope which represents the connectedness of time and space, the *outsideness* of the author, *horizon* and *environment*, *abstract* and *concrete* spaces, and so on. Certain chapters that present and explain spaces and their possible philosophical understanding in the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* will be summarised in the second part of the theoretical introduction, „Bachelard's Philosophical View of Space." However, only spaces and concepts that are important and presented in the films will be covered; house and its parts, cellar, attic, house in relation to the universe, hiding places such as corners, windows, doors, and the outside-inside relationship. Lastly, the horror genre's films and their apocalyptic settings will be commented on in the „Scenery of Horror and the Theory of Zombie," which will serve as a reference point for the analysis of the thesis topic, followed by a short explanation of the nature of the zombie, its function as the Other and an abject being, and its role as an agitator of an apocalypse.

The main part of the thesis „Analysis of Spaces in *Night of the Living Dead* franchise" will consist of seven concepts, which will be analysed in detail, providing one or more views on the spatial aspect, philosophical concept or chonotope. The field of research consists of six zombie horror films, which were listed earlier and will be examined by watching the footage, reading the script, and reviewing additional content. The seven spaces that will be discussed are a room in a house and its corners, openings like doors, windows, and thresholds, then the cellar and the attic, following with roads, vehicles, and bridges, then an island, communal places and, lastly, a city and its borders. While observing them as spaces presented in the horror films by George A. Romero, they will be analysed based on their ability to function as a hiding place, a place of safety, their traumatic aspect as a place of horror, their role that is the opposite of a haunted house, their protection against the Other, and other psychologic, philosophical, architectural, and sometimes practical functions. Lastly, the conclusion will offer a synthesis of all mentioned phenomena.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Space in Literature and Film

There are two essential ways in which the crossing point between space and narrative can result: „On one hand, it can be an object of representation, on the other, it can function as the environment in which narrative is physically deployed, or, to put it differently, as the medium in which narrative is realized“ (Ryan et al. 19). „While narratologists are best equipped to deal with the first of these issues, geographers can make significant contributions to narratology by drawing attention to the second“ (Ryan et al. 1). One way we can divide types of storytelling is into „narration and description," a classification introduced by Gerard Genette (Mitchell 92). While the narration is focused on the temporal functions, the description's function is to shift the literary work's focus on the spatial aspect, however, these two processes do not have the same status and place in the world of writing (Mitchell 92). While narration „has a central and prestigious literary pedigree“ and is the centre of attention in genres such as the novel or the epic, description is auxiliary, though necessary and independent (Mitchell 92).

Urban space and rural landscape, suburbs and slums, and indoor and outdoor spaces represent dichotomies of the space in literature and film. Lively spaces of the city or town can become a film set that offers a natural reality of the moment and familiar panoramas of cities and exotic or unexplored towns and their buildings (Rosário, Álvarez 11). The city's impact on society can be observed not only on the physical level; it provides a new lifestyle, institutions, safety, new habits, etc. (Hillier, Netto 3). George Simmel's views on these newly introduced surroundings can be considered negative; he noticed an individual can become stressed from the constant stream of new faces, fast pace of walking, quick interactions with strangers, and overstimulation (Crang, Thrift 60). While city landscape offers a vivid atmosphere and a hectic tempo, rural scenery can offer peaceful, nonviolent, and quiet scenery, it can also provoke fear of the unknown, depending on the author's wishes. Popular cinematic cities like New York, Paris, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Mumbai, London, São Paulo, Rome, etc. (including any type of space or settlement where a video was shot) and their recordings have influenced common people's knowledge and understanding about urban places on film as much as their surroundings (Rosário, Álvarez 11).

In his article „Mapping Urban Space through Amateur Film Archives," Paolo Simoni considers citizens' amateur footage as „their recorded gazes reflecting their ways of seeing, feeling, and getting a visual perception of the urban space“ and presents a collection of those

sequences presenting social practices focusing on the urban environment as „glimpses of a cinematic geography framed through amateur images“ (Rosário, Álvarez 14). Mapping, or drawing a mental map by using film shots of the city, can be linked to Kevin Lynch's 1960 study on the cityscape, which would be „determined by its inhabitants' perception of the urban space, interpreted and read through a set of identifiable physical elements,” as stated in Rosário, Álvarez (14). „Mental maps – often distant from the actual urban cartography – are derived from the dwellers’ descriptions of the locations of everyday life, collected as primary sources that can then produce a geographic visualisation,” explains Simoni in Rosário, Álvarez, verifying that one's understanding of space is very much subjective and that a person can change the space's objective outlines by being influenced by another person's explanation or its own feelings (14). According to Lynch, the five physical elements people use to formulate mental maps and the way people perceive layout of space are: „paths“ which include lanes, streets, canals, roads, walkways, „edges,” such as boundaries, walls, shores, „districts“ which are parts of the city, „nodes“ which include junctions, and „landmarks,” e.g., signs, stores, and buildings (Rosário, Álvarez 14). Lynch provides an essential shift in perspective and he attempts to rebuild a cinematic vision of the city by individuals moving across the scene, which is set in an urban space, and measuring the locations with the camera (Rosário, Álvarez 14).

Furthermore, the concept of „chronotope“ was a pivotal theory analysed by Russian scholar Mikhail Bakhtin and represents an intrinsic interdependence and connectedness of the concepts of time and space and how a literary work is affected by them. „Time becomes, in effect, palpable and visible; the chronotope makes narrative events concrete, makes them take on flesh, causes blood to flow in their veins“ (Bakhtin 258). It creates a cohesive whole affected by each other, and, as stated by Bakhtin, „space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history,” while time „thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible“ (102). On the topic of considering only one part of the chronotope, Bakhtin states that abstract thought can imagine space and time as individual entities and understand them as terms not related to their feelings and values, however, „the living artistic perception“ does not allow such separation (Bakhtin 252). Although space will be the main aspect of this paper's research in the later analysis of the films, it is key to remember that they both create a complex whole.

In his 1995 research on Bakhtin's perspectives on space, „The World According to Bakhtin: On the Description of Space and Spatial Forms in Mikhail Bakhtin's Works,” Vlasov summarized Bakhtin's views on the space element in narratology. He states that the author's *outsideness* (*vnenakhodimost'*) allows the creation of a complete and objective depiction of reality, which cannot be described from the first person's point of view, explained as „*outsid*e

the hero with respect to space, time, value, meaning“ (Vlasov 38). In „Author and Hero...,“ Bakhtin explains a form in which the space is constructed according to the hero's views and his mentality, which makes it unreliable for the reader and the one who analyses the text, for example, Dostoevsky's, Tolstoy's, and Stendhal's characters (Vlasov 39). The opposite form would be the one where the author „takes possession of the hero,” so Vlasov assumes that these spatial forms would be completely dependent on the choices that the author makes, as in Classicist and Ancient drama or Romantic-era forms (Vlasov 39-40). The third type presents a hero who is „an author of himself,” which makes the space around him not significant to his presence or non-valuable for imaginative development (such as the fixed and never-changing background in Sherlock Holmes' apartment) (Vlasov 40).

Bakhtin also makes a distinction between two ways objects that do not belong to a hero's subjective picture can be presented in a narrative: *horizon* and *environment*. *Horizon* can be described from the hero's perspective as an object standing above him and in counteraction to him that presents itself as a subjective spatial element (Vlasov 41). Another way to present space in a novel or a film is to describe it as an *environment* − an individual place that does not „stand over the hero,” but functions independently of the hero and meaning and simply gives boundaries and shape to the world (Vlasov 41).

Bakhtin differentiated types of space on various levels. First, on the level of geographical and historical accuracy; *abstract* is the type of fictional place that does not represent a specific location or country, while *concrete* space correlates to a particular geographical region and can be identified by the readers or viewers (Vlasov 43). An example of abstract space in a film would be Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker* (1979), which is set in and around „The Zone,” a mysterious and heavily guarded area with strange and unpredictable phenomena. The exact location of „The Zone“ is never specified; it is not tied to any specific country, historical period, or geographical setting. An example of a concrete place would be *Dune*'s Imperium and its planets Old Earth, Caladan, and Arrakis, whose position is explained through the films and books because it is essential for the reader's/viewer's understanding of the plot. The second Bakhtin's categorization is based on the type of relationship between the spatial forms provided in the literary work and the hero of the story, which can be either *alien* or *native,* states Vlasov (43). A type of fictional world which presents itself as an issue, an obstacle for the main hero, mostly because of its foreignness and unpredictability, is called an *alien* type, in contrast to a *native* type that presents a hero's homeland, a place that is well-known by the hero (Vlasov 43). The third and last categorization depends on its possibility to be transformed, creating two

categories; *static* space, the one that is „locked“ and unable to change or develop, or a „*dynamic*“ (a term suggested by Vlasov) one, that can be modified or developed (Vlasov 43).

Going back to the topic of Bakhtin's theory of the chronotopes, he also introduced six types of chronotopes in novels, which are mostly defined by their spatial characteristics, and not temporal. In his essay „Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel,” besides the „chronotope of the castle,” „the chronotope of the parlours and salons,” „the chronotope of the provincial town,” „the chronotope of the public square,” he also proposed „the chronotope of the road“ and „the chronotope of the threshold,” theories that will be interesting as literature for comparison when analysing the films (Vlasov 44-45). „The chronotope of the road“ is presented by Bakhtin as sometimes accidental and random, one which introduces characters from various backgrounds, classes, nationalities, and places (Bakhtin 252). Due to the character's motivation to reach a specific location, which later defines the plot, characters that you might never have imagined interacting with do so under these specific circumstances. Bakhtin states that the road in the novel always goes through a recognisable place and not through a foreign land, but it does offer diverse geographical and sociological elements to the reader (the author states that, for example, „slums“ serve as a „social exotic” and not an alien world) (254). Furthermore, Bakhtin describes „the chronotope of thresholds“ as „highly charged with emotional value“ and always symbolic and metaphorical and explains his theory on the example of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (256). It presents a place that conjoins two places of different values, e.g., doorways, halls, staircases, rooms, and entrances (Vlasov 47). He also explains it as „the chronotope of crisis and break in life,” a moment or a place where a critical change is made, the one that changes lives, however, the indecisiveness to step over the threshold symbolizes a fear of change (256).

Another way Bakhtin sees spatial forms is through the lens of grotesque realism. After creating a coordinate system in which he can place structures of spatial forms in this genre, he associates it with the ideological concept of carnival's bipolarity (Vlasov 48). The „second world“ that is created by the phenomenon of the Carnival and by imagination is changing itself by degradation, showing a path towards utopia and a different future (Crang, Thrift 80). The material body changes through Carnival practices that „turn their subject into flesh,” and the body becomes „open to the outside world“ (Crang, Thrift 80). Bakhtin's thoughts on the grotesque body could be an interesting analogy for the body of the zombie, and if we observe it from that angle, this body is constantly interacting with its environment, proving a point that it is „blended with the world, with animals, with objects“ (Vlasov 48). If we analyse a romantic or modernist novel or a film from this grotesque body literary trope viewpoint, the world around

the hero is seen as alien, creating confusion and fear in the hero's mind (Vlasov 48). Furthermore, when defining the topological qualities of a travel novel, Bakhtin states that they are the centre of description and not the hero, who is moving from place to place (Vlasov 49). The author's depictions of towns and countries and the lives of its citizens represent the spatial diversity of the novel (Vlasov 49-50). The space in this type of novel is static, creating a basis for explaining the world's contrasts between nationalities, cities, and countries, while the *novel of ordeal*'s attention is on the hero and his actions towards overcoming an obstacle, while his surroundings present only a background or a setting and cannot change the hero, but only test the hero (Vlasov 50).

It is important to emphasize that chronotopes and other theories on space should not be overly exploited in writing nor strictly understood in that context when reading. Vlasov states: „The most productive way to exploit spatial forms in art is to employ their possible symbolic meanings“ (55). This warns the one who reads or analyses the text not to try and find connections and theorize when the basis is not clear and firm.

2.2. Bachelard's Philosophical View of Space

Gaston Bachelard's lifetime dedication to understanding the poetics of an image and the emotions behind it resulted in the book *The Poetics of Space,* which brought phenomenology to the field of architecture. First published in 1958, the book presents consciousness, physical space, and poetry in a new light and develops a scheme that can be seen as creating Mikhail Bakhtin's chronotopes – a spacetime filled with meaning. Bachelard's work consists of spaces and objects that contain space, and he analyses and creates imagery behind every point he makes. In this section, the author's views on these parts of space and what they can represent will be explained, which will later serve as a theoretical basis for explaining the space in *Night of the Living Dead* franchise.

Starting with the chapter „The House. From Cellar to Garret. The Significance of the Hut," he presents the house as the most intimate inside space, the one that can easily be filled with images of memories (Bachelard 3). He starts addressing the phenomenologic characteristics of the house by stating:

> „For the house furnishes us dispersed images and a body of images at the same time. In both cases, I shall prove that imagination augments the values of reality. A sort of attraction for images concentrates them about the house. Transcending our memories of all the houses in which we have found shelter, above and beyond all the houses we have dreamed we lived in, can we isolate an intimate, concrete essence that would be a justification of the

> uncommon value of all of our images of protected intimacy? This, then, is the main problem“ (Bachelard 3).

For this further analysis and philosophical thinking of one's surroundings, a house or any other space must not be considered as an object whose presence and impact can simply be described (Bachelard 4). For an analysis such as this one, it is important to take one's attachment, past experiences, and feelings of safety into account.

Bachelard described the house as „our corner of the world," „our first universe“ and „a real cosmos“ and the way this attachment and safety are created in a man's brain is imagination that builds „walls“ as a comfort (4-5). These walls are only as strong as one perceives them, making the shelter a psychological term. Curtis states this as well: „The house, according to Gaston Bachelard, is partly built in an imagination often at odds with the structural fabric," quoting the author, and adds that the being that is sheltered is the one that determines the borders of its safe place (32). He mentions an old saying, „We bring our *lares* with us," creating a tie with the person we were before we stepped into the house and what is haunting us in the presence, connecting memory and imagination (Bachelard 5). Taking one's subconsciousness into account, he states: „Through dreams, the various dwelling-places in our lives co-penetrate and retain the treasures of former days“ (Bachelard 5). The author views the house in two ways; vertically, with its parts being polar opposites, and it being centralized (Bachelard 17). In this way, he sees the attic as the part that is sheltering from the rain and storms, causing the inhabitant to be relaxed, while the cellar is the „dark entity“ of the house (Bachelard 18). This can be observed in the example of a man hurrying to the attic when hearing a noise in the cellar but realising there was no noise, which shows us that he was too frightened to go into the cellar (Bachelard 19). Bachelard states that fears are easily rationalized in the attic, while they are more mysterious and fraudulent in the cellar (19). When addressing stairways, he concludes that a person always goes down the stairs that lead to the cellar, while we say that we go up the stairs to the attic and that these stairs „bear the mark of ascension to a more tranquil solitude“ (Bachelard 25-26). Another refuge „a dreamer“ can take inside the house is a „hut“ or a „nest“ that is placed in the centre of the house and where he can hope to live somewhere else (Bachelard 31). In the last section, Bachelard stresses the meaning of an isolated house, the one that „stands quite alone on the horizon before one comes to fields and marshlands," and how its solitude is marked by the single light burning by the window (36).

In the chapter „House and Universe," we are offered a different explanation of why a person can feel warm inside a house – because the outside is cold, unsafe, and cruel, which is the exact opposite (Bachelard 39). The house offers a sanctuary from the cold, and if we were to say that

outside is dangerous, then the house is a provider of protection, as will be the case in the later study of the zombie as the villain. Bachelard notices that the winter house is not presented as challenging and that the world inside the house is intensified because of that reason (40). Another situation that is possible is that the house expands and grows, or contracts, depending on the inhabitant's wishes and mind state, creating a protective armour or an infinitive space around the subject (Bachelard 51). The concept of the dream house represents a house in the future, that is bigger and better built than the previous houses, offers a more stable environment, and is desirable by other people (Bachelard 61). However, it has to contain and function as everything that is desirable to the owner; a cottage, nest, corner, etc. (Bachelard 65).

Moreover, the object of discussion in the next chapter is „Corners.“ Bachelard interprets these places where a person likes to withdraw themselves as „symbols of solitude for the imagination“ and as „the germ of the room, or of a house“ (136). Although considered unclean and perhaps unsuitable for a human, it protects from three sides, creates a certain sense of immobility, and also radiates this immobility (Bachelard 137). „An imaginary room rises up around our bodies, which think that they are well hidden when we take refuge in a corner," states Bachelard (137). He goes on to explain the corner as „a sort of half-box, part walls, part door“ (Bachelard 136). We build this construct surrounding us in our heads to make it protect us, and in this way, shadows can represent walls, furniture can act as barriers, and curtains that act as a roof (Bachelard 137). The space we occupy then becomes fully ours, the vacant refuge is filled with a person's thoughts and feelings (Bachelard 140).

Finally, in the last chapter of the book, „The Dialectics of Outside and Inside," the author offers his view on the opposition of outside and inside spaces, which he presents as dividing as positive or negative, and black or white, and even being or non-being when presented to philosophers (Bachelard 211). He argues that thoughts, for a metaphysician, are either open or closed, later connecting it with the concept of „a first myth of outside and inside“ first presented by Hyppolite, who explained: „You feel the full significance of this myth of outside and inside in alienation, which is founded on these two terms. Beyond what is expressed in their formal opposition lie alienation and hostility between the two“ (Bachelard 212). Again, it is stated that the geometrical opposition contains a sense of myth; however, spatial aspects should not be studied in a way where a false intuition would guide the analysis and discussion (Bachelard 212). This spatial analysis cannot be absolutistic, final, and strictly determined by „the dialectics of inside and outside" or any other previously set argumentation (Bachelard 212). When discussing spatial concepts, he addresses doors as „an entire cosmos of Half-open“ – an image

that induces a search for a deeper meaning or essence of being or creates an image of safety, hesitation, eagerness, or temptation (Bachelard 224).

Bachelard selects an interesting section of the prose poem *L' espace aux ombres* written by Henri Michaux to inspect:

> Shade-haunted space
> (Space, but you cannot even conceive the horrible inside-outside
> that real space is.
> Certain (shades) especially, girding their loins one last time,
> make a desperate effort to „exist as a single unity." But they rue
> the day. I met one of them.
> Destroyed by punishment, it was reduced to a noise, a thunderous
> noise.
> An immense world still heard it, but it no longer existed, having
> become simply and solely a noise, which was to rumble on
> for centuries longer, but was fated to die out *completely* as
> though it had never existed.) (216-217).

Through Bachelard's philosophical review of the poem, we can notice that there is a spirit that is wondering as a rumour of its previous self, or its shade, or, as the author states, the one that has lost its „being-there" and that is now a „meaningless noise" (217). Bachelard then discusses whether this new form of simply an echo of a useless noise that bears no meaning is a punishment and explains that the being is condemned to the evil actions that he has no control over anymore (Bachelard 217). The being's horror of silence and unuttered words leads to its decay over the years, slowly turning him into nothingness, however, this process is slow and leaves „a hum of the being" that echoes through space and time (Bachelard 217). In this process, both the inside and the outside become intimate, and every exchange of hostility is „painful" (Bachelard 217-218). This prose poem offers being and nothingness all at once, creating an intimate space that has lost its clarity and an exterior that has lost the void (Bachelard 218). Bachelard then concludes his deep reading of the poem, stating that the nightmare does not stem from the outside image but from the horror of not having shelter through the simple process of *being*, finishing by asking and concluding, „Where can one flee, where find refuge? In what shelter can one take refuge? Space is nothing but a *horrible outside-inside*" (218). Here I have presented one of the numerous of Bachelard's reflections on the nature of space. These reflections can be used to establish a link between a work of literature viewed through the lens of philosophy and a study case, such as the film franchise *Night of the Living Dead*, which will

be done in the main part of the thesis, after considering specific apocalyptic spaces in the horror genre.

2.3. Scenery of Horror and the Theory of Zombie

Horror scenery ranges from the most mundane and typically safe surroundings, such as a quiet neighbourhood of a small town in films like *Halloween* (1978), *Scream* (1997), *Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984), *It Follows* (2014), or *The Strangers* (2008), to various mysterious, unknown, and dangerous places, such as a cave in *The Descent* (2005), a cabin in the woods such as in *The Evil Dead* (1981), speeding transporting vehicles such as in *Train to Busan* (2016), outer space as depicted in *Alien* (1979), old houses such as in the horror series *The Haunting of a Hill House* (2018), and many more. Since the setting in each of these films is familiar to the public, i.e., it is not placed in an imaginary world, we can conclude that these are examples of a monster (that is often an extraordinary character) existing in an ordinary world, while in fairy tales and similar genres, a monster would be an ordinary character that exists in an extraordinary world, as stated by Carroll (52).

However, this world that is presented as intact and orderly in the beginning is often changed through the course of the film, or it is presented as demolished or desolated at the very start, which is the direct result of the villain's presence. The post-apocalyptic opening scenes of *28 Days Later* (2002) or *The Walking Dead* (2005), such as deserted hospitals, empty roads, crashed and abandoned vehicles, and scattered toys, give the viewers a clear image of how the villain's appearance changed the city, making it devastated, vacant, and dangerous by the disintegration of society. The endless activity of a zombie, a lifeless corpse that walks and craves human flesh, is a direct result of the town's emptiness. However, the protagonists of the film and series soon find out the enemy has not moved far and they are in danger. *The undead* attacking creates an everlasting danger that can appear from all sides, behind every object and any border, making safe space rare and only temporal. This can be seen in the third and fourth seasons of *The Walking Dead,* in which the group secures a new sanctuary, a prison that was once overrun by zombies but is attacked; once by a villain called „The Governor," who runs a truck full of zombies inside their fences, and the second time when he does the same, but the damage is irreparable. While the undead were not the cause for the group's loss of the prison, they were a constant threat that came in hand for the Governor when trying to destroy the prison's fences.

The activity of the zombies dictates the postapocalyptic society's movement. It is affected not only by the fear and the threat of being bitten or eaten but by disgust and nausea caused by the smell and look of the rotting flesh, points out Carroll (53). The author recognizes art-horror,

including films like *Alien, Dracula*, and *Night of the Living Dead*, as a genre in which the villain is seen both as a threat and a repulsive being (Carroll 51-55). The threat is not consistent in every film in this genre, though. Zombies' physical state and strength vary from film to film and they are often very slow and teetering, yet they can take down a grown man. However, in *World War Z* (2013), the zombies are fast-moving, which spreads the illness quickly and they are able to go over high walls that function as barricades because their climbing abilities are enhanced when they work as a group.

The zombie species in *Night of the Living Dead* franchise is explained in the first instalment by the TV spokesman:

> „The normal question, the first question is always, „Are these cannibals?“ No, they are not cannibals. Cannibalism in the true sense of the word implies an intraspecies activity. These creatures cannot be considered human. They prey on humans. They do not prey on each other; that's the difference. (...) These creatures are nothing but pure, motorized instinct. We must not be lulled by the concept that these are our family members or our friends. They are not. They will not respond to such emotions“ (*Night of the Living Dead* 01:02:04-01:03:12)

The appearance of hordes of walking corpses overwhelms the limits of social stability and destroys contemporary civilization, and, as Pitetti observes, it does not eliminate the history of humanity nor create a new world (447-448). Romero's films depict zombies which are impossible to destroy with few people left, but are „a symbol of change and death“ (Pitetti 448). The same is the case with survivors who use both historical and new technologies to survive, while the landscape is suddenly transformed by the dead's ravaging, yet remaining a place where constructs of society such as class struggle, racism, and capitalist exploitation used to occur (Pitetti 448). The apocalypse in *Night of the Living Dead* does represent a turning point in humanity's struggle for existence, however, „the survival of old forms and the impermanence of new ones show that this change has not been the complete and definitive transformation of an apocalyptic end“ (Pitetti 448).

The zombies' origins are often unknown continents or outer space, and such is the case with *Night of the Living Dead* franchise, where radiation from Venus created the first zombie, which is the basis for Carroll's conclusion that „what horrifies is that which lies outside cultural categories and is, perforce, unknown“ (57). However, one point Cohen makes in his article *Undead (A Zombie Oriented Ontology)* is that „the zombies of the apocalypse never quite break from anthropomorphism“ (409). He explains that zombies have no need for shelter, they do not know how to build, yet they are autonomous and live inside the same boundaries as humans

(Cohen 409). Their lack of identity serves as proof that they are „the ultimate foreign Other“ (Morrissette 15). The zombie's exterior is proof of its Otherness, a concept that describes anything outside of human norms, and, in horror, refers to the monstrous. Along with its monstrosity, a zombie differs from a human by lacking reason, feelings, and empathy, and, as Wöll states, „zombies generate meaning through their difference from us“ (3). Wöll adds that dichotomies of rational and ingrained, orderly and deviant, and empathetic and merciless are examples of how a zombie's Otherness is depicted, since it is based on the difference that is „essential to meaning; without is, meaning could not exist“ (3). The zombies' Otherness and abjectness that threaten the human sense of self when faced with the walking, rotting bodies is what lies at the heart of the zombie genre. This change in the way of existing and humanity's surroundings is what is represented by the zombie apocalypse, states Romero in his 2008 interview, and continues: „And the stories are about how people respond or fail to respond to this“ (Morrissette 2014).

3. ANALYSIS OF SPACES IN *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* FRANCHISE

3.1. A house, a room, a corner

Browning explains that „the survival space“ in *Night of the Living Dead* functions if more survivors occupy the same place and defend it against the common enemy that threatens from the outside (44). The term presents an important and common concept in the horror genre, along with previously mentioned abjectness, Otherness, nature of the zombie’s hunger, etc. (Browning 44). The first such hiding place that appears in the franchise *Night of the Living Dead* is a house. In the first instalment, Barbara comes across an isolated house when running from zombies. She does not hesitate – she runs for it, opens the doors, and enters without knocking. This action sets the tone from the early start of the film; in the apocalypse, there are no rules. She immediately rests her head on the kitchen door, however, she becomes aware of the new and possibly dangerous situation she has found herself in. Barbara runs into a shadowy, dark, quiet room, but quickly returns to the room she already knows is empty and, therefore, safe − the kitchen. However, the kitchen contains the first sign of the apocalypse, which are scattered things that symbolise chaos, disturbance, riot, danger, and finally, cataclysm. The start of the film is an indication that the rupture that separated the future from the present happened and that there is no going back (Pitetti 447).

Barbara's confusion and franticness are presented by her running around the house after seeing two zombies through the window. Although the doors are closed and the zombies do not see her, their instinct is guiding them to her. However, when Ben appears at the door and makes the house safer just by his presence, she stops looking at the exits but concentrates on the house and its floors. Barbara's relationship with and reactions to space are the most emphasized out of all the characters', since she is not emotionally composed nor collected. In this moment, the house is not her home in the slightest if we take Bachelard's definition of the home into account, although, it does serve as a temporary safe place. As he states, and as has previously been quoted: „we shall see the imagination build „walls“ of impalpable shadows, comfort itself with the illusion of protection...“ (Bachelard 5). What we can see through the film is the characters' attempts to come to terms with the situation they have found themselves in and a search for a safe place that will correspond with their mental image of the building.

However, very few of the characters manage to find such a place because of the severity of the danger. For example, in *Diary of the Dead*, when hearing about the epidemic on the TV,

Ridley states, „If I'm gonna wake up dead, it's gonna be in my own bedroom. (...) Yeah, it's a f***ing fortress“ (*Diary of the Dead* 00:09:18-00:09:33) and later through the radio: „Look, if you need anything, like a place to chill, whatever, get your ass down here, man! We're having a blast!“ (*Diary of the Dead* 00:48:17-00:48:27). In this case, his view of his home and the actual physical size match. However, the house gets overrun in the end, which is an indicator that big walls and a fence do not have to be a guarantee of safety. This later presented a disappointment to Ridley, when they arrived at his house and the fence and the main doors were opened. His coping with the tragedy of his home being overrun by zombies was to hide it and fill the house with new friends, knowing he would soon be dead because he was bitten. His dream of his house being the perfect sanctuary was shattered, and he could not admit it to his friends. The house assumed an even greater meaning after the start of the apocalypse; it is a physical representation of Bachelard's dream house − the one that can survive the present moment and offer a future. This house is bigger and more structurally sound than previous homes, offers isolation from the enemy, and is desired by other groups of survivors.

A house that was *alien* to the heroes of the story at the start became more and more *native*, by the definition of Bakhtin, through its exploration and the protagonists' decision to stay there longer (Vlasov 43). Such was the example of the shopping mall in *Dawn of the Dead*, however, that space will be considered in the later segment „Communal spaces.“ A smaller-sized building that was explored through the same process was the previously mentioned white house in *Night of the Living Dead*. Again, Barbara's actions, including walking around, touching everything, and leaning against the walls and woodframes, are an indicator of her wish to familiarise herself with the newly entered house. Ben, on the other hand, takes much less time to get acquainted with the house. When he enters the house, he is clear-headed, ready to take action and secure the place by breaking apart furniture, collecting wooden boards, putting up a double door, and nailing it into the wall. The house then becomes secure because of his quick actions. Thus, we can conclude that the *nativeness* of the house is based solely on the character's familiarity with it. On the other hand, if we consider Barbara's feelings towards the house and the outside, we can see that she felt safer and more sheltered in the house, since the outside contained a threat, but the inside only contained a possible threat.

As mentioned earlier, the chapter „House and Universe“ presents the house as a shelter from the cold and dangerous outside (Bachelard 39). The same is presented on the radio news in the first instalment of the franchise; „We urge you to stay tuned to the radio and TV and to stay inside at all costs“ (*Night of the Living Dead* 00:35:50-00:35:55) and „Tell the people, for God's sake, to get off the streets. Tell them to go home and lock their doors and windows up tight

(*Night of the Living Dead* 00:36:23-00:36:31). The concept of a home is emphasised throughout the fifth instalment, *Diary of the Dead*, where students try to get to their houses and their families, along with Ridley. Although they all live in Pittsburgh, they want to return to their hometowns of Scranton, Queens, Harrisburg, San Antonio, etc. Debra states: „It's funny. You spend so much time resenting your parents, separating yourself, building your own life, but as soon as the s*** hits the fan, the only place you want to go is home“ (*Diary of the Dead* 00:13:37-00:13:45). However, two characters' answers stand out. Professor Maxwell and Tony say that they have no place to go. Interestingly, along with Debra, they are the only survivors at the end of the film. Since the concept of home is so highlighted in this instalment, this might be an indicator of the apocalypse's cruelty towards anything dear to the human race, such as the place of memories, warmth, and safety. This is the case in other instalments, too.

An example of a place where these feelings towards safe places can be found is *Dawn of the Dead*'s mall's upstairs room, and possibly *Land of the Dead*'s *Fiddler's Green*. Although the first scenes of the mall in *Dawn of the Dead* presented it as dangerous, with writings like „Danger, high voltage“ and scenes of zombies roaming, it became a safe place for the group when finding a top floor, secluded from the two shopping mall floors consisting of small and bigger shops with glass doors and storefronts where the zombies were roaming freely. Near the end of the second sequel, the group of survivors is living a slow and quiet life in the upstairs secluded room. While Steven is shuffling through their collection of gramophone records and putting on music, pregnant Francine is cooking, and Peter is grabbing drinks. The scene shows them in their living room and kitchen, containing a TV, radio, house plants, a sofa, a lamp, a coffee table, chairs, darts, a fridge, hot water, etc. Some tensions are caused by living in such a small place and spending every second together. However, they created a domestic atmosphere by putting things from the mall into their space. When fighting the raiders that are after the mall, Steven says: „It's ours. We took it. It's ours“ (*Dawn of the Dead* 01:59:07-01:59:13), emphasising that they will not easily give up their home. Furthermore, the second example of a potential home can be found in *Land of the Dead*. Although the elite building *Fiddler's Green* was never the home of the characters, Cholo had a dream of living there: „What do you got, Riley? Nothing. I am going to have my own place, man. (points at the picture) My own goddamn place,” and Riley responds, „You're dreaming, Cholo. They won't let you in there. They wouldn't let me in there. We're the wrong kind“ (*Land of the Dead* 00:18:59-00:19:07). This is also an example of the dream house; surrounded by big walls, an army of soldiers, with unlimited power and food, high above the ground, far away from zombie growls. The secret hiding in the mall and *Fiddler's Green* both get overrun in the end, forcing their inhabitants to

leave and enter an outside space that presents a grave danger, just as the chapter „House and Universe“ explains.

However, although *Fiddler's Green*, a building known as the luxurious, well-presented resort in the time of the apocalypse, is a great option for a hideaway, the threat of human beings becoming zombies can never be stopped. As any human becomes a zombie, regardless of whether they were bitten, all humans are a threat to other residents. Such was the case with an older man who has hanged himself in one of the apartments. Although he was hanging from the ceiling, his son came running to help him, waking him up and causing him to fall down on him and bite him. This Otherness can appear at any time in the centre of the building and continue spreading through it quickly, causing many deaths that spread exponentially. In the zombie world that Romero created, Otherness lies inside all humans. Death is, in this case, not only tragic but also dangerous when being entrapped.

Furthermore, the house's levels will also be discussed in the later part of the analysis, however, I would like to bring attention to the main floor as the safest in the case of *Night of the Living Dead*. Ben, the last survivor, is the one who considers the ground floor the safest. Although others, including Barbara, urge him to stay in the basement, Ben does not change his opinion. Tom concludes rationally, „There's lots of spaces we can run to up here“ (*Night of the Living Dead* 00:48:36-00:48:38). The ending of the film is unexpected; after hearing voices from upstairs, Ben walks upstairs from the basement and is shot through the window. The danger of the world outside the house is proven once again. Romero's smart choice of an ending like that cannot be a coincidence, after emphasizing Ben's opinion on the main floor throughout the film. This statement can be reaffirmed by Bachelard: „Common-sense lives on the ground floor, always ready to engage in "foreign commerce," on the same level as the others, as the passers-by, who are never dreamers“ (147). Ben's logical, practical, and rational nature is the reason he survived the longest, however, perhaps this was Romero's attempt to tell the viewers what he was missing in this new apocalyptic world was a dose of dreamery.

When observing how a corner challenges a person, we can use Bachelard's definition of a place that offers a secluded and secure refuge through its half-box construction. In the first scene of *Day of the Dead*, we are met with the protagonist Sara, who has a dream of sitting on the floor (technically, not a corner) of an empty room with her head down, leaning against the wall. Tens of zombies' hands grab her through the wall. Later, while sleeping on the floor in a sitting position, she has a nightmare that she is in the same position against the wall and that her boyfriend's guts fall out of his stomach. When Sara wakes up, her boyfriend is awake, sitting on the bed and thinking, leaning his head into the corner. He admits he is afraid, and they have

a fight that leads to a breakup. Firstly, if we observe Sara's surrounding space in both scenes when sitting on the floor, as Bachelard's corner that is explained as „a sort of half-box, part walls, part door," the wall behind her back and the floor are „walls," while the rest of the opened space is „the doors" (137). In the first scene, there is no danger in real life, since she is actually dozing off in a helicopter, away from the enemy. The white room with no windows or doors presented in the opening scene is what Bachelard imagined; a corner in an imaginary room where a mind places itself, thinking it is hidden. In her state of sleeping, you could say her conscience is completely unaware – she might as well be in a cage, not only in a corner, which is also the case since the room has no openings. Secondly, the latter scene represents Sara's return to a place of safety – the corner – which once again results in a nightmare. The safety of the corner she puts her mind in is not strong enough against the enemy's influence on her psyche. While in the first scene, the zombie's hands reached her through the wall once she came close to it, in the second scene, the abjectness caused by the zombie was already in the room with her. Romero's choice of these scenes is to represent that the refuge one uses to escape is determined by its emotional state. Sara's boyfriend is a victim of this refuge, too. He offers his thoughts a place to dwell in the corner, however, his rash decision to leave his supporting girlfriend is an example of how seclusion can impact a person negatively.

These, however, were not the first appearances of corners in Romero's franchise. The second film of the franchise, *Dawn of the Dead,* opens with Francine sitting in a corner of a TV studio, murmuring and sleeping lightly until she wakes up from the nightmare. While the TV news interviews play, reporting about the zombie threat, her colleague asks if she is still dreaming. Again, the corner did not offer Francine enough peace, and, as Bachelard stated, „the silence of our thoughts," which happened to be audible, quite literally in this case (137). The sleep presented itself as a temporary place of relief, however, it ended with a dream, or nightmare in this case. Sara's colleague's vision of a dream as the only place where bad things could happen confirms the collective fear that delves into the private human imaginary space.

Another example of a corner can be seen in the second film of the Romero franchise. While the special police are making their way through the building by killing zombies, one apartment gets opened, and one policeman screams, „Not that room! Not that room!" (*Dawn of the Dead* 00:09:37-00:09:38). More zombies appear in that room, and one policeman is being distraught, slow, and indecisive. His lack of action leads to the creation of a dangerous surroundings for everybody in that apartment. He instinctively withdraws into a corner, while a zombie without a foot follows him there. He stays there, and after seeing all the horrors that other people have gone through, he decides to shoot himself in the head. Once again, we can find a similarity

between a corner that the young policeman has retreated into and Bachelard's corner that is „lived in“ and which „tends to reject and restrain, even to hide, life“ (136). This corner was the policeman's temporary place from which he observed the killings taking place in the room, a place where he could reconsider the state of the world from what he sees at that moment and where he has a certain peace to make a decision regarding his existence and possible suffering the future could bring. Although he is not in a safe place, his slow reactions and hesitation show his mind is busy thinking about the possibility of ending his life. He seems as though he is „stuck“ literally and in his thoughts, which can be connected to the immobility that the corner provides, as mentioned by Bachelard (137).

3.2. Doors, windows, thresholds

As was previously mentioned at the start of the analysis, Bachelard is interested in the relationship between the inside and outside of the doorway, viewing them as interchangeable and reversible intimacies, instead of focusing on the exchange itself;

> “Being is alternately condensation that disperses with a burst, and dispersion that flows back to a centre. Outside and inside are both intimate − they are always ready to be reversed, to exchange their hostility. If there exists a border-line surface between such an inside and outside, this surface is painful on both sides” (217-218).

Both doors and windows represent a place of interchange of danger and safety. A closed door can be a sign of safety, but can also represent danger, depending on the contents of the room. However, a dangerous room can easily become safe once the threat is gone – which can be associated with what Bachelard is referring to, saying that the outside and the inside are “always ready to be reversed” (218). Such was the case when zombies managed to get inside the house, “contaminating” the safe place and forcing the characters to escape to safety. An interesting example from *Night of the Living Dead* is Barbara’s encounter with new characters on the inside of the house. While she thought the place containing danger was only the outside of the house, she watches in terror as a door is being opened and a hand reaches around it, into the room. The suspense that Romero created goes on to emphasise the changing nature of space and the human understanding of it, and the door (and windows) represent a moment of exchange between two places.

Furthermore, the fact that Ben started breaking up furniture and removing interior doors in order to use the pieces to barricade the windows and exterior doors shows that he viewed the whole floor as a unity that is not fragmented. The only hazardous place he perceived was the actual outside, which he could see through the windows. This is also evident by his reaction when he is left outside and „breaks down the door and savagely beats Harry for trying to keep

him outside with the undead“ (Paffenroth 32). The outside is not seen as dangerous when on the second floor. The characters then use second-floor windows as a means of communicating with the outside that threatens them. For example, Harry must throw burning cocktails from the window to draw the attention of the zombies so they can run away in the meantime. The ending of the first instalment leaves the audience shocked. When Ben finally comes out of his hiding place in the cellar, he peers through the window to see what is the source of the sounds he is hearing. One member of the posse spots him, and thinking he is a zombie, shoots him in the head. The end of the life of a brave *last man standing* is destroyed in a second. The hoard in the house destroyed the wooden boards nailed into the window frames, opening the space to strangers and enabling the outside people to influence the world on the inside.

If we consider Bakhtin's chronotope of the threshold, we can notice that Romero used thresholds as places where a change in the plot is made. For example, at the beginning of *Survival of the Dead,* the viewers are introduced to the locals of Plum Island. When Patrick O'Flynn enters and says he needs to check if everything is okay, the mother of children who are later revealed as zombies in the upstairs room shoots in the air. She is standing on the threshold and points the gun at the locals, knowing they will kill her zombified children if they cross the threshold and get upstairs. He threatens so the locals kill her. She falls back onto the staircase's handrail and slowly falls to the floor. This can be seen as her defending the threshold that leads to the stairs with her life. The staircase presents a love for children but also denial and delusion that she wants to live with until a cure is found. However, the locals with guns wished to destroy that dream of the old life. As soon as she heard the sound of opening doors, she ran for the gun, making the room they entered a dangerous zone that threatened the upstairs children's room. The threshold represents a place of conjoinment of inner rooms, a safe space with her two children, and the living room, an outside space that easily be excessed and can cause endangerment. Although the woman is only a minor character, her death leads to O'Flynn getting to the upstairs room and meeting Muldoon, whose fight guides the course of events.

Another example worth discussing is that of Captain Henry Rhodes' death in *Day of the Dead*. While running from Bub, an interestingly intelligent zombie, through the corridors of the underground military bunker, the Captain ends up being shot multiple times. He manages to get to one door by crawling on the floor, however, they are locked. He manages to stand up and open another door, only to discover a hoard of hungry zombies behind the doors. Although he gathers the strength not to fall into them and helps himself by holding onto the doors' wood frame, he turns back to the hallway, and Bub shoots him once again. He falls into the arms of zombies, and his body parts end up being dragged all across the floor. In this example, we can

notice two places of similar values, both dangerous for the character. Captain's step into the space of zombies on the other side of the threshold is followed by three high-pitched screams. This scream can also be understood as the Captain's realisation that what he sees in front of himself is his near future and that there is no escape. The act of him turning around towards Bub can then perhaps be seen as a decision to change his immoral and selfish behaviour – a decision to stay in the human zone. While the doors were still closed, the threshold represented a hope for salvation that waited on the other side. However, there lay an even worse ending for him; being pulled apart by zombies. Death by Bub then seemed like a fair punishment. However, he then got shot for the last time and still ended up dying in the worst way possible. Time, when considered as a concept inseparable from space, is important for this scene, since both sides, the hoard and Bub, had to present deadly danger simultaneously in order for the Captain not to have any choice.

3.3. The attic and the cellar

When viewing the house as a vertical being, Gaston Bachelard recognizes the opposition of "the rationality of the roof to the irrationality of the cellar" (18). In this part of the analysis, the mysterious and subconscious primal fear that is provoked by the cellar and consciousness, clear-mindedness, and reason that dwell in the upstairs rooms and the attic will be analyzed on the example of *Night of the Living Dead*. However, spaces in sequels will also be mentioned. Firstly, the house in the first instalment is at the centre of events during the whole film. It is well explored; when the zombies come close to the house, Barbara decides to carefully explore the upstairs. Bachelard states that "we always *go up* the attic stairs, which are steeper and more primitive. For they bear the mark of ascension to a more tranquil solitude" (26). She slowly climbs the stairs, only to be aghast by the half-eaten head of a corpse. She frantically runs outside through the doors she locked a minute ago, without even considering the danger outside of the house. Then Ben, who appears out of nowhere and takes her inside, notices she started crying while looking at the stairs, so he goes to see what made her act so frantically. Though startled, his reaction is more collected: "We've gotta get out of here. We have to get where there are some other people" *(Night of the Living Dead* 00:15:02-00:15:07). Barbara's encounter with the upstairs floor is when she starts acting even more anxious, confused, and unbalanced. "In a world with the living dead outside the house and rotting corpses within, nothing "fits" or makes sense to her anymore" (Paffenroth 30). In *The Poetics of Space*, the stairs represent the transition between two states of consciousness, which is also the case in this scene. Barbara, although frightened, can use her logic and secure the rooms on the ground level. However, once she climbs the stairs, she becomes completely distraught – enough to put her life at stake by

going outside. While the upstairs floors would represent the rational mind if we were guided by Bachelard's vision of space, here it is the opposite. Although Barbara's motivation to explore the upper floor was to find security and composure since the zombies would be out of sight, she nearly got herself into trouble when stepping outside. The horror genre here plays with Bachelard's expectations, which is a common way of ensuring the surprise element in this genre. His example of a man rushing to the attic after hearing a noise in the cellar but finding none, which shows that he was too scared to go in, is reversed in this example if we substitute the cellar with the outside (that is supposed to be even more frightening than the cellar). Barbara's experiences with new places are always negative. Such will be the case with the cellar, which will be discussed later.

Other spaces that resonated with the atmosphere or the look of an attic were the elite *Fiddler's Green*'s numerous floors in *Land of the Dead*, which were presented as safe since they were so far away from the main floor and an entrance where zombies could possibly get in. However, once they did, the lift or the stairs were the only ways for the occupants to get out, too, which is known to be an unsafe way of escaping. In *Survival of the Dead*, the scene of a mother defending a threshold that leads to the upstairs rooms is a representation of defending the attic, which Bachelard sees as a place of memories, dreams, and nostalgia. This nostalgia that is keeping her children "safe" from the outside world and from O'Flynn is the mother's reason for living and for hope. Once a threat that the threshold will be crossed appears and her children living in the zone of dreams, nostalgia, and hope will be killed, she puts her life on the line. While the upstairs space works by Bachelard's principles from her perspective, O'Flynn sees the upstairs space as a hazard to the whole island once he senses the mother's overprotective behaviour: "I don't want to go upstairs. I don't want to see what your boys become" (*Survival of the Dead* 00:07:06-00:07:10). In his eyes, the upstairs is dangerous and was never to be used as a safe place. He suggests to the husband angrily and ironically, "You damn stupid fool. You might have stopped this. (…) What you wanna do with her now? Take her upstairs and put her to bed?" (*Survival of the Dead* 00:07:32-00:07:42). This suggests that the upstairs is a dream world. In this place, the wife's dreams and imagination could continue to flourish, but it is said in a sarcastic tone since they are already dead and these dreams could be nothing but nightmares.

In *Dawn of the Dead*, the roof of the mall is considered a safe place and also necessary, since it is their escape route. After making it their home, Peter plays improvised tennis there, and Steven teaches Francine how to fly a helicopter. They build their home right under it, in a secluded part that does not go into the mall itself. The "attic" of the mall becomes their home,

a place where Steven and Francine can raise their child and where they can *dare to dream* of a stable future. Bachelard explains: "Even a dreamer dreams rationally; for him, a pointed roof averts rain clouds. Up near the roof all our thoughts are clear. In the attic it is a pleasure to see the bare rafters of the strong framework" (18). Their feeling of safety came from not even being a part of the building since the path to their rooms was hidden. The fact that their attic functioned as a solitary house, with no outside other than the sky above, shows that the best place for hiding from attackers is a place that resembles a box that can only be accessed from above. However, it gets overrun in the end, and Francine and Peter have to escape using a helicopter. It is just one of the many places that get overrun and leave the characters without a home or a place of safety.

Barbara's first encounter with the cellar was also fear-inducing. Paffenroth states: "Part of the power of Romero's film is that the threat is as much within the house as without" (39). Referring to humans in the apocalypse, she continues: "It is not bad enough for our band of survivors that they are surrounded by walking corpses who will never go away until they have torn the humans limb from limb and eaten them alive, for on top of this threat, the humans constantly fight amongst themselves" (Paffenroth 39). When Barbara notices sounds coming from behind the doors that belong to the indoor space, she stops being absent-minded and her reaction to the noises causes anxiety in the viewers. A hand appears and starts opening the doors, and it is unclear whether it is the hand of a zombie or a human. Both options present danger. Two men appear and start calming her down. Her fear was caused by an unknown source coming from underneath the house, and as Bachelard explained, the fears coming from the cellar are more mysterious and fraudulent (19).

Here, Romero used the suspense that was already present, since the threat was coming from the cellar that one imagines as dirty and mysterious, a „dark entity" of the house, as explained by Bachelard, and he heightened it by guiding the actress to act very concentratedly on every movement of the door (18). The new arrivals cause a tense atmosphere. Ben and Harry quickly engage in a heated dispute and compete for dominance over the group, while Tom is the sole advocate for collaboration. Harry wants to return to the basement, while Ben, reminding him of his securing of the first floor, wants to stay. Thankfully, the two sides separate, each in their "safe space." For Ben, the main floor presents the safest place in the house. When he enters a room, he searches for possible exits: "There, this room looks pretty secure. If we have to, we can run in here [points at the room next door] and board up the doors" (*Night of the Living Dead* 00:24:37-00:24:44). While he tries to explain to Harry and Tom that he has boarded up the weak spots, they are persistent with their view of the main floor as unsafe: "You are insane.

The cellar's the safest place. (…) And I'm telling you, those things turned over our car. (…) Now you tell me those... things can't get through this lousy pile of wood?" (*Night of the Living Dead* 00:42:26-00:42:39). Harry's argument of the cellar being the safest place in the house is that there is only one door that leads to the cellar, and therefore, that is all they have to protect, but on the main floor, there are many windows and doors that have to be protected. Harry insists: "But down in the cellar, there's no place to run to. I mean, if they did get in, there'd be no back exit. (…) We can get out of here if we have to. And we got windows to see what's going on outside. But down there, with no windows, if a rescue party did come, we wouldn't even know it" (*Night of the Living Dead* 00:43:44-00:43:59). Ben conludes, saying what the cellar is a death trap. Harry's death is ironic in this way, since during a fight, he was shot in the chest by Ben, and he fell down the stairs leading to the cellar. He died there, along with his wife and daughter.

The cellar's depth and darkness represent the unconscious parts of the human psyche and a place where the mind acts irrationally. Harry's stubbornness led to his family being killed at the end of the film. However, Ben, contrary to what he was insistent on during the majority of the film, goes down into the cellar and locks himself in there. The doors are now barricaded by "the zombies, who now have complete control of the upper floor that he had worked so hard to secure" (Paffenroth 33). The cellar offered him a temporary hiding place, however, it was the last one to be chosen as the "safe place." The film's unexpected ending is met once he steps outside of the basement, onto the main floor, which he considers the safest, and is shot from a distance. This is another example of Romero subverting the viewers' expectations − a procedure that always increases the number of characters killed in the case of horror.

Furthermore, we can also see how the centre of the house is presented as the safest. Barbara is the one that sits in the centre of the house, while the whole living room is set in front of her. The space that creates the distance between her and the outside walls generates this feeling. Bachelard explains that the centre of the house has a "magnetic force" that offers protection (31). The positioning of a warm place filled with people and the contrasting cold atmosphere of the outside puts the emphasis on the centre of the house that keeps the warmth in the circle (Bachelard 31). This creates a "nest" or a "hut" that presents a place that offers the most comfort to characters who become dreamers when searching for a sanctuary (Bachelard 31). In this example, most characters avoid windows and doors because the thought of them being close to the roaming creatures outside makes them feel unsafe.

Additionally, the entire underground military bunker in which *Day of the Dead* is set can be regarded as a single, expansive cellar. The bunker's restricted and complex layout generates

a sense of claustrophobia, reflecting the characters' mental states and the progressively more serious situations among the characters. Sara and her friends are able to find solitary spaces that provide solace, such as the man-made oasis constructed in a camper van called *The Ritz*, placed in a cave. However, the tension between the military and the scientists becomes unbearable. Luckily, the underground bunker is expansive, so they can distance themselves and find solitude elsewhere. John perceives the cave's components as remnants of the human race's heritage, which is nearly instinctual: “This is a magnificent fourteen-mile tombstone!” *(Day of the Dead* 00:45:16-00:45:20). Romero also employs the dark cave spaces as locations where characters can easily become lost, thereby establishing an enigmatic horror-themed atmosphere. By examining the bunker through Bachelard's cellar concept, it is evident that Romero's characters, including Captain Rhodes and Miguel Salazar, belong to this category. The stress caused by the bunker's isolation and the apocalyptic circumstances serves to further emphasize Captain Rhodes' authority. His leadership becomes tyrannical as he employs violence and threats to enforce his desires. Ultimately, the bunker's demise is the consequence of the remote and enclosed underground environment, which exacerbates his irrational fear and desire for dominance. The dark bunker, rather than providing a secure refuge, becomes a confinement that ensnares Rhodes within his own insanity and ultimately leads to his demise through acts of violence. Miguel, Sara's boyfriend, is a dedicated soldier at the outset of the film; however, the stress and zombie threat emanating from the bunker are wearing him down. Paranoia, stress, fear of an attack, and the bunker's brutality are the causes of his breakdown. Miguel lowers the gate as the zombies swarm him, attracting them to the entrance. This enables the zombies to inundate the bunker and overwhelm Captain Rhodes and his men.

3.4. Roads, vehicles, bridges

The first scene of the *Night of the Living Dead* franchise is of an empty country road with one vehicle. After Barbara and her brother's first encounter with a zombie, she runs back into their car and locks the doors, making the vehicle the first safe place or a hiding place presented in the film. The zombie violently tries to open the doors, and after being unable to do so, proceeds to grab a brick and throw it in the car window. He reaches for her, but luckily, she holds the „break release“ lever. She manages to escape, but the car crashes into a tree, and she is forced to run out of the car. However, this move gave her time to exit the car through the passenger doors and gain some advantage. Although Bachelard's concepts cannot be connected to vehicles, Bakhtin's chronotope of the road can offer us an understanding of vehicles as agents of change of position and plot, since the road is seen as a place of meeting with other characters and new situations for the characters to be involved with. The vehicle provided a temporary

sanctuary with its glass doors and firm metal structure; however, the unusually clever zombie managed to break the limits of Barbara's safe place, forcing her to move the car. The place became safe once it was moving, which is the case with most vehicles in the franchise. Stationary places have to provide other characteristics, such as strong doors, thick walls, and stable structures, while the vehicle's task is to transport characters from one place to another, and they are the safest in the state of moving.

Another example of vehicles in the franchise are helicopters in *Day of the Dead* and *Dawn of the Dead* which represent a quick and fast way out but are difficult to learn how to drive and require large amounts of fuel that is not easy to require. Motorcycles are present in *Dawn of the Dead* when a group of raiders storm into the shopping mall and shoot all glass doors, which finally makes the place unhabitable. Though they are fast and do not require much fuel, they can easily be stopped when encountering a hoard. Boats are considered relatively safe since the undead are located on land (until *Land of the Dead*). They play an important role in *Survival of the Dead*, where the main character, O'Flynn needs one to get to the island where his daughter lives, however, more on this will be discussed in segment 3.5. *An island*.

Two vehicles that represent a stable life on the road and that offer safety are *Diary of the Dead*'s camper van and *Land of the Dead*'s truck named *Dead Reckoning*, while other cars and vehicles were mostly just vessels from one place to another. The chronotope of the road and the meaning of vehicles can be discussed in these examples. Since the characters of *Diary of the Dead* kept mentioning their homes all over Pennsylvania, it is clear that they did not see the camper van as their home, a place where one can access the calmness of a daydream. However, the camper van was necessary if they wanted to get home, and it offered them a place to live and sleep, not only travel. After one encounter with zombies on the road, Tony complains: „We all should've just stayed at school instead of driving around in the middle of nowhere, knocking fucking people off like bowling pins!“ (*Diary of the Dead* 00:21:42-00:21:46). Before that encounter, they had an accident where Mary ran over a few zombies on the road, causing her to shoot herself in the head due to guilt she felt. Bakhtin's statement that the road always goes through recognisable places then cannot be considered valid in this case since the road is dark, only lighted by the burning cars, and full of zombies. Since we are discussing the horror genre, it is no surprise that the factor of unrecognizable places is emphasized. This road and its obstacles were so extreme that they guided Mary to suicide. On the other hand, it presented a solution to the situation since it was the fastest way to get to the hospital, but then again, it required fuel, and it broke down later in the plot, but the characters worked together to fix it.

The camper van managed to get them to their „dream house," which was discussed in segment 3.1. *A corner, a room, a house*.

While the camper van presented a sanctuary with a feeling of home, *Land of the Dead*'s *Dead Reckoning* offers the ultimate safety on the road. While being heavily armoured, it also protects with miniguns, rocket launchers, firework launchers, and advanced computer mappings. Since it is unique and guarantees safety, it is highly wanted. Cholo steals it, saying: "If it wasn't for this truck, I wouldn't be any different than that poor Mexican bastard out there" (*Land of the Dead* 00:55:54-00:55:59). The truck represents the highest level of safety and mobility in the franchise. However, it can never represent a homely place with a calm and warm atmosphere because of its metal exterior and technical interior. Since the truck has to be managed by at least three people, this creates a sense of various characters and new situations that Bakhtin advocated. He states: "…events as meeting, separation, collision, escape and so forth take on a new and markedly more concrete chronotopic significance" (Bakhtin 134). The soldier that assisted Riley and his two companions become a part of the crew on board, and Riley becomes the man in charge after Cholo, giving a sense of constant change of new characters, and the truck can be considered a reason to bring new characters into the story.

After commenting on various vehicles in the franchise, the road itself is to be discussed. In the first instalment, after Barbara gets out of the car and runs through a grove, she comes across a road. She looks left and right, trying to decide which way to go. Since the place is unknown to her, any of those sides is a gamble. However, she might be looking for a passenger that might be able to help her. At the start of the apocalypse, roads are considered safe since they are signs of civilization and a way to escape. Later, once more people are infected, they become dangerous since Romero's zombies follow their human instincts and know roads will be used by humans, which they consider food. Bakhtin's chronotope presents the road as a meeting place, which is what the characters in zombie films usually try to avoid. In *Diary of the Dead,* the group of survivors in a camper van manage to gather information on the danger of main roads on TV and decide to use the alternative: „Using country roads, we hadn't run into any riots or looting" (*Diary of the Dead* 00:35:36-00:35:40). Other than zombies, looters are also a threat on the road. The same survivors come across two vehicles of the National Guard, and instead of getting help, they end up getting robbed. The road is thus a place of encounters with other people, as concluded by Bakhtin. However, in the zombie genre, those encounters are seen as dangerous, jeopardous, and sometimes even lethal.

A bridge is a spatial object most similar to the road, however, it is more valuable since it offers a getaway from places that are difficult to access. In *Land of the Dead*, the town is

boarded by rivers, as a military man explains: „Rivers protect us on two sides. Bridges are all blocked up. The only overland access is here, called the Throat“ (*Land of the Dead* 21:08-21:15). However, when the town gets overrun, there is no way in or out. Bridges are „all bricked up," and Riley and his companions cannot get inside the triangle-shaped centre. Although they have the means to unblock the bridges, they would find themselves „in the middle of it“ if they got across. However, they find a drawbridge that was left up and manage to lower it, using it to their advantage. Unfortunately, they arrive late and are met with scenes of zombies eating the citizens of the town. The bridges were the town's backup plans but were not utilized most cleverly. A bridge can also present a connection between two sides. For example, in *Survival of the Dead,* a river splits the island into two parts, as stated by O'Flynn: „This side has always belonged to the O'Flynn's. The other side... Well, I'm sure you'll be meeting some folks from the other side... Soon“ (*Survival of the Dead* 00:41:46-00:41:54). Since the small bridge is the only path to the other side, it plays a role in the communication of the O'Flynn's and the Muldoons. If that bridge were to be demolished, communication would be undermined.

3.5. An island

In a horror scenario where an outbreak threatens the living, an island can seem like a safe refuge because it is naturally isolated from land. If the island is free from infection, it presents itself as a place where a community can be built. If no new arrivals come to the island, the illness has no way of spreading (except for the dead turning into zombies without being bitten). However, there is also no way of obtaining medical supplies and food other than what is found on the island. Furthermore, the island can turn itself into a death trap if the infection breaks out. Such was the example of the island in *Dawn of the Dead* from 2004, directed by Zack Snyder. An alternative ending is shown after the credits: „The survivors on the boat find a video camera, and document their voyage, which ends with them arriving at an island, only to be attacked and presumably killed there by zombies" (Paffenroth 99). The island on which they arrived proves to be a trap, and the protagonists are likely to be killed by the zombies. However, if the island happened to be free of zombies and sparsely populated, it would have been a safe place with a lot of potential to build a life there.

In *Survival of the Dead,* Plum Island is presented as a home that has to be kept safe, which leads to disagreement between the opposing sides, the Muldoons and the O'Flynns. Since the two families have different ways of dealing with the zombies, the father O'Flynn is banished from the island. His friends decide to stay on the island, stating: "We like it here, Patrick. We think the best way of seeing this through is here on Plum" (*Survival of the Dead* 00:12:29-00:12:34). Since the film showed the early stages of the apocalypse, many people were still on

the island, and every day, new zombies would appear as a threat. However, O'Flynn describes it as an isolated place with the potential to be safe during the apocalypse: "It's a small place, small and under control" (*Survival of the Dead* 00:22:00-00:22:04). This shows that isolation is the key to surviving. The surrounding ocean can be seen as *a wall* that separates the island from danger and that is difficult to cross. The water represents a guarantee of safety in the zombie universe. However, in *Land of the Dead*, we can see that zombies are able to cross rivers, confirming once more the cruelty of the conditions in the zombie apocalypse.

On a bright note, one of the rare hopeful endings in the franchise is set on an island. "The film ends with an upbeat scene that shows Sarah, John, and McDermott safely ensconced on a (presumably) zombie-free island in the Caribbean" (Paffenroth 179). This scene was inspired by John's image of the perfect escape: "Let's get in that whirlybird, find us an island some place, get juiced up and spend what time we got left soaking up some sunshine" (*Day of the Dead* 00:09:22-00:09:29). However, the viewers cannot be sure the survivors have managed to fly away with the helicopter. In this film, the island represents the ultimate sanctuary and a place that is suited for starting a new, happier, and less stressful life. Sarah is seen waking from a dream on that beach, which has been used previously in the film as a way of Romero's creating of an unexpected turn. Therefore, the viewers have no way of knowing whether the scene is real or not, but the island remains the ultimate safe place.

3.6. Communal places

Communal places such as malls, hospitals, and refuge centres offer survivors of the apocalypse hope that their basic human needs, such as food and safety, will be taken care of. In the early moments of societal collapse, people need an answer from the government about the places that can offer them shelter. In the first instalment, TV news reports: „Late reports reaching this newsroom tell of frightened people seeking refuge in churches, schools and government buildings. Demanding shelter and protection from the wholesale murder which apparently is engulfing much of the nation" (*Night of the Living Dead* 00:35:56-00:36:08). Places like hospitals or camps are almost always overrun, such was the case in *Diary of the Dead*. After seeking medical attention at a local hospital, the group of survivors is confused about the state of the hospital and the fact that they cannot find any employees. Soon they discover that the infection has found its way into the hospital, a place that the society considers well-prepared for such situations. The underground bunker presented in *Day of the Dead* is another example of a place that is shared. It offered equipment to the scientists and weapons to the military that kept the bunker safe. However, its function as a cellar was explained in the chapter *3.3. The attic and the cellar.*

The most well-known example of such a place in the franchise is the mall from *Dawn of the Dead*. Although abandoned and full of roaming zombies, its potential is recognised from the start, as explained by Roger: „This place could be a gold mine. We gotta at least check it out“ (*Dawn of the Dead* 00:37:13-00:37:16). The reason that the zombies still have not left the building is that they "act out of habit, reproducing the behaviors of their former, human selves," as explained by Zimbardo (275). He continues: "As the mall-trapped survivors gaze upon the moaning hordes scraping at display windows, one asks, "What the hell are they?" to which another responds matter of factly, "They're us, that's all" (Zimbardo 275).

It is not long before the assets of living in a shopping mall are revealed. The survival group's members return to the role of consumers as they settle into their new home, and the necessity for communal action decreases (Browning 51). Peter, Francine, Steven, and Roger begin to live, shop, and behave extravagantly, wandering from store to store in a manner similar to that of the zombies, searching for new ways to amuse themselves and to pass the time (Browning 51). The survival group's members begin to exhibit behaviour similar to Ben and Harry's in the first instalment which involves gunfire and, ultimately, death (Browning 51). They do not have to shoot in self-defence but in an attempt to take over the mall and clear it from zombies (Browning 51). Roger's behaviour starts crossing the line of fun and becomes dangerous, which results in his death. The mall is then cleared of zombies, however, they are still right behind the glass doors. They became the victims of the capitalistic need and desire to consume, however, both they and the survivors have fallen for the allure of the mall. "Romero suggests that this thread connecting people and place was strong enough to survive their traumatic reincarnation when so many higher order attachments and functions had been stripped away“ (Bailey 96).

Bachelard suggests that there is a lingering presence of places in our memory: „Memories are motionless, and the more securely they are fixed in space, the sounder they are“ (9). His thoughts on dreams, memory, and recollection that are connected to familiar places can also explain the zombies' return to the mall in search of their past lives. The emotional and nostalgic weight of the mall brings them back, just to roam around and feel what they used to while they were alive. When Francine asks why the zombies still come to walk around the mall, Steven concludes: „Some kind of instinct. Memory. What they used to do. This was an important place in their lives“ (*Dawn of the Dead* 00:34:41-00:34:46).

3.7. Cities, borders

At a global level, *Night of the Living Dead*'s and all of its sequels' settings can be considered not connected to a fixed place in the U.S.A. since the outbreak started everywhere around the same time, making it an *abstract* space. If we consider it that way, it goes in line with

geographical indifference, however, it is stated that the first film takes place in rural western Pennsylvania, and the other films' locations are also mentioned throughout the story. So, we can conclude that although the space can be considered *concrete* on the level of objectivity, the location is not very important for the story, unlike space.

However, the movement of borders caused by zombies' migration is important, since it influences the remaining humanity's safety. Zombies' routes create barriers that differentiate the safe from unsafe spaces. “Zombie narratives frequently visualize the instability of (national) borders, weakened in the real world through economic expansion and neoliberal deregulation, as the tearing down of physical barriers erected by human survivors to keep the zombies at bay” (Fehrle 534). Romero used cinematic geography to show the zombies’ territorial power. Even though it is hard to believe that they use mental knowledge and memory to find food, they do. In *Land of the Dead*, Big Daddy even remembered the path to get to the city, which ultimately caused the town’s causalities. Although it is not very convincing that beings with a rotting brain can remember or feel „the dwellers’ descriptions of the locations of everyday life, collected as primary sources that can then produce a geographic visualisation,” as quoted earlier, zombies use mental maps to visit places where humans can be found or to experience feelings that were dear to them when they were human, for example, a shopping mall in *Dawn of the Dead* (Rosário, Álvarez 14). Though zombies are not likely to recognize physical elements that are used to formulate mental maps such as paths, edges, and districts (as explained in Rosário, Álvarez), they return to the places they visited often and where they can relive happy moments (14). The shopping mall is a great example because they are also attracted to lively, colourful, and bright scenes.

The zombies threat both to society as a whole and to individuals (Orpana 154). With its slow walk, the zombie can go for miles, never stopping to fulfil basic human needs, except for hunger, which is their main driving force. In popular culture, as Orpana notices, the „zombie walk“ that is celebrated around the world on World Zombie Day and similar zombie-related events can be related to Bakhtin's vision of the carnivalesque (154). The zombie walk is represented as „the modern representation of the carnivalesque“ with its degradation of the human body, however, Orpana argues that „the zombie subject is excluded from the processes of rebirth and regeneration traditionally associated with carnival culture“ (154). This parade's recreation of a zombie walk can contain as many zombies as possible and take over those it comes across, concluding that „every non-zombie is a potential zombie“ (Orpana 160). The parade transforms the city, too. The horde of zombies leaves a „trail of fake stage blood, gooey brains and rubber body parts,” creating a run-through ghost town haunted by its past.

Bakhtin's second world, created by the zombie Carnival, is then an alien environment that presents a danger to protagonists who are likely to become a part of it and their bodies to become „blended with the world, with animals, with objects," as quoted earlier (Vlasov 48). If we compare Bakhtin's views of the travel novel and the novel of ordeal, we can conclude that zombie fiction such as *Night of the Living Dead* has more similarities with the novel of ordeal. The hero, for example, Ben from the first instalment, is tested by the villains, in this case, zombies, and the emphasis is put on his actions to survive the night. He approaches the task rationally, unlike Barbara, survives the night, and remains „unchanged" until the morning when the cruel new circumstances still manage to harm him. A composure like that can also be noticed in *Dawn of the Dead*'s main character Peter, who decides to end his life before being devoured by tens of zombies but changes his mind and fights to get to the roof and the helicopter. This can also be considered as „the last trial" for him, and he proves himself worthy of being the survivor at the end of the film. The room where he wanted to commit suicide only to save himself from being painfully eaten alive was the same room where he watched Roger become a zombie. This room can then be considered a „room for dying," at least in his eyes. Furthermore, by Bakhtin's definition, Romero's space is always *dynamic*, one that can always be changed. This presents a great problem for the character – the unending cycle of invasions into safe spaces and searches for new hideouts. In the franchise, the space surrounding the hero can be understood as his *horizon*. By Bakhtin's definition, the space in such a novel is in counteraction to him and is subjective. The spaces in the films are important for the characters' survival and have to be able to change if the character is in a vulnerable situation. In other words, the characters' lives depend on the space that surrounds them.

When imagining a town, Bachelard's vision of an expanding house whose size depends on the inhabitant's will can serve as a metaphor. Since the *Fiddler's Green* in *Land of the Dead* is surrounded by rivers, blocked bridges, fences, walls, and electric barricades, the citizens consider it as a whole that is protected. For the occupants of *Fiddler's Green*'s elite skyscraper, the safest place in the town is their warm and comfortable rooms placed high in the sky. However, many people live out in the open, right behind the fences, and if the fences were breached, they would be the first to get bitten. For the *Fiddler's Green* elite, the house's size is just as big as their building and perhaps their block. On the other hand, the people living in the surrounding area see their part of the city as „a slum," unshielded and vulnerable. For them, they live on the margins of the city and society, which is cold, harsh, and dangerous. Once there has been a breach, the citizens are left on their own and their surrounding spaces become smaller. „This concept of the "shrinking fortress" is a mainstay of the subgenre, finding

expression in virtually every zombie film, whether on a small scale as in *Shaun of the Dead* (a pub) or on an epic scale as in *Land of the Dead* (an entire city)“ (Perron 219). The horde of the living dead is bound to walk or crawl toward the secure human locations by “pushing against the boundaries” before eventually succeeding in invading the secured spaces (Perron 219).

However, although the city in *Land of the Dead* is secured by fences and guards, densely populated large towns that have just been overrun are the epicentre of the outbreak. Cities are presented as the most dangerous places to be: “Don't try to come into any major city, where there are reports of violence, looting, killing. Small towns tonight are like ghost towns, as most people have fled for their lives, believing that this might be the beginning of some sort of Armageddon” (*Diary of the Dead* 00:35:22-00:35:33). On the other hand, later in the apocalypse, large communities offer a stable lifestyle and more security. *Land of the Dead*’s city is the greatest example of stability on a higher level. For example, when Riley asks Slack when was the last time she was outside of the town, she says she has never been out and that she has lived her whole life in the city (*Land of the Dead* 00:56:46-00:56:56). Since places in this franchise have lasted a day, six months, perhaps a year, as a sanctuary, the city can be declared as the longest standing place. However, Riley sees the fences not only as a guard against the zombies. When getting ready to head out of the city, he says, “You're worried about being locked out. Now, you see that? I can't help but think we're all locked in. I'm looking for a world where there's no fences” *(Land of the Dead* 00:22:21-00:22:28). Riley sees the situation differently since he travels outside the city often and knows more about the political state in the *Fiddler’s Green*. As stated by Pitetti, “the hordes of monsters that had initially seemed to be agents of eschatological finality are explicitly presented as a crowd of abject subalterns, an avatar of the oppressed peoples who figure so prominently in any clear-eyed account of the historical present” (448). When Big Daddy works his way to “shatter this corrupt and suffocatingly privileged space,” referencing *Fiddler's Green*, the viewers are left with a feeling of justice once he breaks through the glass doors of high society (Lowenstein 110).

4. CONCLUSION

In this master's thesis, a connection between spatial theories by Mikhail Bakhtin and Gaston Bachelard and the space presented in the horror franchise *Night of the Living Dead* directed by George A. Romero is discussed. After reviewing theories on spatial elements and their impact on characters, it can be concluded that a certain connection can be found between them. The Otherness of the zombies kept the characters inside places, and the outside represented danger but an escape, too.

Regarding specific places represented by the titles of the sections, a house represents a safe space where characters can potentially build a future and survive through the apocalypse. However, each segment affects the characters differently. A safe-looking house with thick walls that presents *a dream house* might pour faith into the characters' hearts, but even such places get overrun. Bachelard explained that we sometimes comfort ourselves „with the illusion of protection“ (5). It can be concluded that some characters, e.g., Barbara, needed more time to „trust“ the place, and others, e.g., Ben, considered elements of the surrounding space rationally and quickly. In *Night of the Living Dead*, the house is presented as a home by the media, and in *Diary of the Dead*, most characters want to go home once the danger appears. However, in *Dawn of the Dead*, a home was built by the characters, and it was represented by a shopping mall storage room where they lived peacefully for some time. A corner that Bachelard explains as a hiding place where the mind can peacefully daydream is presented as a place where characters search for comfort; however, a corner offers them nightmares or suffering.

Furthermore, doors represent a place of interchange of danger and safety, as mentioned earlier, and are used to their advantage by the characters. The thresholds are presented as places of change and places where two different spaces interact, as proposed by Bakhtin. Although characters hope there is a bright change waiting behind the threshold, they are awaited by death or tragedy. From Bachelard’s viewpoint, the attic and cellar are the two vertical opposites of the house, the attic representing rationality and nostalgia, while the cellar represents the subconscious and the repressed. In *Dawn of the Dead*, survivors make an attic their home that has access to an escape route, however, examples of attics being presented as hazardous because they contain zombies can be found in *Night of the Living Dead* and *Survival of the Dead*. The cellar is a place from which danger appears in multiple instalments, and which leads the characters to perform violent actions even against the living. Although it provided shelter for the night to Ben, it brought death to the family of Harry, who believed in its security the most.

Vehicles like cars, trucks, camper vans, helicopters, and boats can offer protection to characters, too, and, although not frequently used, they are methods to evacuate, get to permanent sanctuaries, and protect them. Bakhtin's chronotope of the road, which is presented by important encounters and the development of the characters, is also immanent in the films. However, most encounters with zombies or humans result in troublesome situations, and the road itself presents an obstacle to getting to a sanctuary. That is why a sturdy vehicle like *Dead Reckoning*, distractions like fireworks, many guns, or luck are needed to survive any roads, especially the main ones. Places that are connected to land by a bridge are more secluded and therefore safer, but bridges represent a connection between the two sides, which is needed for an escape. An island can be seen as the safest place in the apocalypse since it offers isolation, however, if there is a source of infection on the island, it can spread very quickly and trap the survivors. Both cases are shown in the franchise, so it can be considered a double-edged sword. Communal places such as hospitals, malls, and refuge centres are places that offer secureness and safety, along with food and medication. However, these places often get overrun due to the magnitude of the zombie apocalypse, or they are run through by groups of survivors and destroyed, like in *Dawn of the Dead*. While the survivors are constantly trying to find a sanctuary and resources by using vehicles and roads, the zombies, who are supposed to be brain-dead, use their mental maps, too. Finding a city filled with people is what they strive for, however, they are often well-secured and divided by barriers such as fences or rivers, as seen in *Land of the Dead.* Furthermore, the space that Romero creates is *dynamic* and can be understood as the hero's *horizon*, as explained by Bakhtin, because it is in counteraction with him.

Although the topics seem to not correlate at first glance, the theory of space by Bakhtin and Bachelard proved to be a great basis for observing how film directors choose to show the spatial aspect in their films and what they could represent. In the future, such analysis can be done on other films or series that potentially hide such an understanding of space, for example, *Black Christmas* (1974). Discussion on different spaces of the mansion in the film *Ready or Not* (2019) can also be done. Analysis and the meaning of the space of „hell," which is oftentimes mentioned in the franchise *Night of the Living Dead* can also be considered.

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6. SPACE IN THE HORROR FRANCHISE „NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD“: SUMMARY AND KEYWORDS

In the master's thesis named „Space in the Horror Franchise *Night of the Living Dead*,” space in George A. Romero's seminal horror franchise *Night of the Living Dead* is viewed through spatial theories of philosophers and literary critics Mikhail Bakhtin and Gaston Bachelard. The meaning of Bakhtin's chronotope of the road as a dynamic place where different people meet and the chronotope of the threshold that presents a transition between two places of different values can be noticed in the franchise. Bachelard's notions of the shelter provided by the house and a room, refuge offered by a corner, boundaries drawn by doors and windows, the rationality of the attic, and the irrationality of the cellar can also be identified. With the knowledge of Bachelard's view on space, other spaces can be described: an island as either a haven or an entrapment, and communal places and cities as resources of supplies or foci of the disease. Bakhtin and Bachelard's space theory can help us understand how directors use space in their films and what they can represent.

Keywords: space in film, apocalypse, *Night of the Living Dead*, George A. Romero, horror, Otherness, chronotope

7. PROSTOR U HOROR FRANŠIZI „NOĆ ŽIVIH MRTVACA“: SAŽETAK I KLJUČNE RIJEČI

Diplomski rad “Prostor u horor franšizi *Noć Živih Mrtvaca*” predstavlja prostor u značajnoj horor franšizi Georgea A. Romera *Noć Živih Mrtvaca* koji se sagledava kroz prostorne teorije filozofa i književnih kritičara Mihaila Bahtina i Gastona Bachelarda. U franšizi se može uočiti značenje Bahtinova kronotopa ceste kao dinamičnog mjesta susreta različitih ljudi te kronotopa praga koji predstavlja prijelaz između dva mjesta različite vrijednosti. Mogu se identificirati i Bachelardova značenja prostora; zaklon koji pružaju kuća i soba, utočište koje nudi kut, granice povučene vratima i prozorima, racionalnost tavana i iracionalnost podruma. Pomoću Bachelardova viđenja prostora, mogu se opisati i drugi prostori: otok kao utočište ili zamka, a društvena mjesta i gradovi kao izvori potrepština ili žarišta bolesti. Bahtinova i Bachelardova teorija prostora može nam pomoći razumjeti kako redatelji koriste prostor u svojim filmovima i što oni mogu predstavljati.

Ključne riječi: prostor u filmu, apokalipsa, *Noć Živih Mrtvaca*, George A. Romero, horor, Otherness, kronotop