

Abstract

The dissertation under the title *Transformations of the Concept of House (An Analysis of the House in the 20th Century Portuguese Novel)* endeavours to map the concept, portrayal and primarily the transformations of the space of a house, which is at the same time interpreted as an archetypal space universal in the 20th century Portuguese novel. Following the introduction and a summary of various literary theory approaches to the analysis of a house, Chapter 2 focuses in particular on a topological analysis and an analysis of the symbolic space.

The topos of the house is fundamental for thematology and literary topology. A house, representing either a dwelling place, a temporary refuge or a home, is an essential space in the majority of literary stories; it is a certain static counterpart to a literary character, it forms their background or represents an aim to which they are heading. Its organization may reflect a character's nature or emphasize a significant contradiction between the space and the human being inhabiting it. As the role, function, form and significance of a literary character and of other constitutive elements of a narrative text were transformed in the course of the 20th century, the concept of the space of a house also underwent significant changes. Chapter 3 of the dissertation is dedicated to these transformations; using a diachronic perspective, it introduces selected authors of Portuguese prose whose works feature a house as a distinct spatial topos.

The next three chapters provide a detailed literary theory analysis of the selected novels, which aims to find new interpretation perspectives and uncover broader meaning of the literary works. Chapter 4 contains an analysis of Carlos de Oliveira's neorealist novella *A Bee in the Rain* (*Uma Abelha na Chuva*), where the house is portrayed as a permanent battlefield between a man and a woman, as well as between social classes and new and obsolete orders. Chapter 5 is dedicated to Vergílio Ferreira's lyrical reflective novel *Forever* (*Para Sempre*). The novel's protagonist returns to his childhood home. The house, which has been abandoned for years, provokes a need in him to review his life, which leads to a search for the meaning of human existence in general. Chapter 6 looks into Lídia Jorge's postmodern novel *The Garden without Limits* (*O Jardim sem Limites*), which is set in the post-revolutionary period of the 1980s. A house in Lisbon is inhabited by two generations represented on the one hand by the family of the owners living on the ground floor and on the other hand by a certain utopian community of young people living on the first floor. The older generation is trying to settle accounts with the past affected by the life in a dictatorship, whereas the young generation lives only in the present,

in a democratic, globalized and consumerist European metropolis. The lack of any dialogue between the two testifies about the state of the society in that period.

The conclusion summarizes the concept of the dissertation and the results of the literary analysis are put into context with the social political development in Portugal.