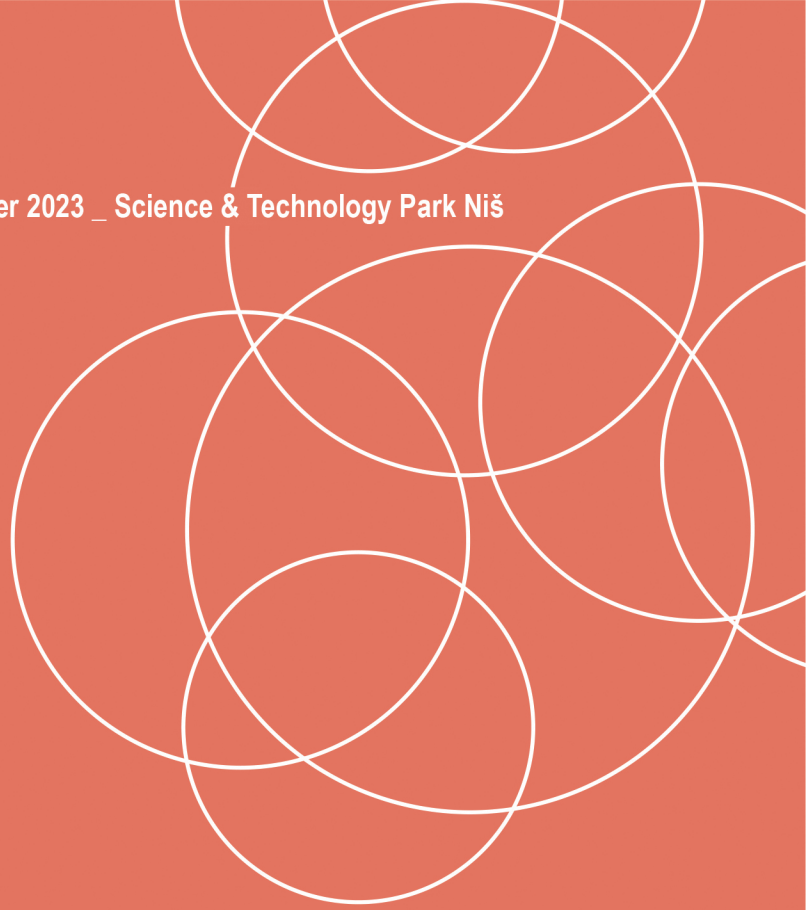




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THE EXPERIENCE OF TERRITORIALITY IN THE LIVING SPACE

Đorđe Alfirević¹, Sanja Simonović Alfirević²

Abstract

Territoriality is a term that is widely used in science and other areas of human activity. Usually, this term refers to a pattern of behavior of a person or group that is based on the need to control the physical space, object or idea. It can also be seen as the user's level of tolerance and willingness to share the same spaces and content with other people. Although the phenomenon of territoriality has already been researched to a considerable extent in the field of architecture, there are fewer studies in which the presence of territoriality has been analyzed in residential spaces. The subject of this research is the experience of territoriality in the domain of residential spaces, specifically in an apartment or a house.

The research starts from the analysis of the reference literature in which territoriality in residential areas was discussed, and then moves on to the analysis of the presence of territoriality among users in characteristic models of housing units (apartment for singles, for families with one, two and three generations and for coliving communities). After the synthesis of the obtained information, different levels and intensities of the experience of territoriality arising between users, facilities and visitors in the previously mentioned housing models will be compared.

The aim of the research is to examine which aspects influence the emergence and change of the intensity of the experience of territoriality in the residential space, as well as to reconsider the view that the experience of territoriality in the residential space is always present, but of different intensity depending on whether a reaction occurs to the presence of visitors, facilities or other users.

Key words: *Architecture, Territoriality, Living space, Apartment, Coliving*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The polemic about territoriality started at the beginning of the 20th century and initially related exclusively to the description of animal behavior³. Prominent researchers who contributed to the clarification of this term⁴ are Conrad Lorenz [1] and Robert Ardrey [2], whose research pointed to an analogous aspect of territoriality in human behavior. According to the psychologist Robert Sommer, territoriality is related to an area controlled by an individual, a family or a community, which implies physical possession and even defense [3]. For this topic, the observation of Proshansky, Ittelson and Rivlin is significant, who claim that "the inner determinant of territorial behavior is (the) desire to maintain or achieve privacy [4]." The observation of psychologists Stanford Lyman and Marvin Scott is very significant because they recognized the existence of four territorial zones: public territories, home territories, interaction territories and body territories [5], which in a sense coincides with Hall's spatial levels that exist around of each individual [6]. Michael Efran and James Cheyne state that when two people interact, they share the space between them. The shared space can be considered a jointly owned territory, i.e. as Lyman and Scott would say "territory of interaction" [7]. Based on the analysis of numerous characteristic scientific interpretations, the following basic characteristics of the experience of territoriality in humans can be stated:

- a) *Sense of control and ownership* - when a person considers the territory his own, he develops a sense of control and ownership over that space;
- b) *Sense of belonging and identity* - people tend to identify with the territory they consider their own, whether it is their home or some other space;
- c) *The desire to defend* - when a person feels threatened, he tends to defend his territory;
- d) *The desire to maintain or achieve privacy* - occurs as a reaction to the presence of a visitor, object or other user;
- e) *Emotional connection* - the territory can be a source of emotional connection and comfort. People often feel more relaxed and secure when they are in an environment they know and consider their own;
- f) Occurs at different levels, which indicates the existence of a hierarchy.

2. TERRITORIALITY IN HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL SPACE

The experience of territoriality has also been extensively explored in architecture, especially in the area of housing.⁵ One of the characteristic researches in this area is the study of Suzanne Marie Barclay, where the focus of interest is the appearance of territoriality in the so-called public housing. Discussing the need for human beings to defend the physical space they inhabit, Barclay states that "The concept of territoriality describes the need to control one's environment, to stake out and defend one's turf. [8]" According to her, one of the oldest divisions of space in history began with the appearance of the "threshold", a physical element that separates the private zone from the public space. Architect Oscar Newman, in his work advocates for the

³ It is believed that the term was first applied in 1903 by the ornithologist Charles Moffat in his work "The Spring Rivalry of Birds", and twenty years later the term began to be applied to the rest of the animal world as well [19], [11].

⁴ See: [2], [6], [5], [20], [7], [26], [4], [21], [22], [23], [1], [24], [25], etc.

⁵ See: [14], [15], [27], [12], [13], [11], [8], [28], [29], [30], [31], [16], [17], [32], [10], [18], etc.

establishment of a hierarchy of space based on territoriality, i.e. for division into: private, semi-private and public spaces. In his opinion, this division encourages territorial behavior among the inhabitants [9]. In the research entitled "The role of territoriality in the spatial organization of the coliving community", the authors point out that the experience of territoriality is the level of tolerance of users and the willingness to share the same spaces and contents with other people, and at the same time the primary parameter from which different concepts of coexistence in shared space arise [10].

Based on numerous researches on the existence of territoriality among individuals and groups on a wider scale, in nature and external, urban or architectural space, it can be stated that there is an equivalent behavior of users in the interior living space, although the spaces of the apartment and house are usually considered to be individual, i.e. private zone [11], [12], [13], etc. Irwin Altman and William Haythorn note the presence of territorial behavior in living space in terms of "degree of consistent and mutually exclusive use of particular chairs, beds, or sides of the table" [14], which Altman will soon characterize as possessiveness towards forms or spaces [15]. This point of view is significant because it indicates the existence of territorial behavior towards forms (objects) and not only towards spaces (premises). At the apartment level, territoriality can be manifested in several ways:

a) *as a need for space arrangement* - a person who experiences territoriality usually likes to arrange his own space according to his affinities and needs, thus giving the space his own personal character;

b) *as a feeling of protection* - a person who experiences territoriality has the need to protect his space from external influences, by locking doors, installing security systems or simply maintaining hygiene and cleanliness;

c) *as a sense of belonging* - a person who experiences territoriality usually associates his home with a sense of belonging and attachment, considers his apartment his personal space and feels comfortable and relaxed in it;

d) The experience of territoriality in the apartment can also be influenced by the *design and organization of the space*, because some spaces may be more open, more visible and attractive to users, while others may be less open and less visible;

e) *The personal experience of space* is also an important factor in the experience of territoriality. For example, a person who feels insecure may have a stronger sense of territoriality and be less open to others.

Although a living space is usually considered as an intimate space of a user or a group of users, different levels of privacy and intimacy can be observed within an apartment or house, depending on the number of users of the space who share certain contents - such as rooms or furniture / equipment. Daniel Steding believes that there are three groups of spaces within the functional organization of a coliving community: primary, secondary and tertiary, each of which corresponds to a different level of privacy or community. A similar classification is proposed by Rachel Osborne, who mentions primary, secondary and tertiary territories [16]. Primary spaces are rooms such as the living room, kitchen, dining room, etc., which are used in common. Secondary spaces are shared, such as hallways, bathrooms, toilets, etc., they are intended for everyone, but are usually not used at the same time. The tertiary group consists of private spaces with the highest level of intimacy and security [17].

The disadvantage of this classification is that the use of the kitchen and dining room is a specific way of sharing space that certain users are not ready for due to hygiene habits, which can cause certain functional problems. Also, these spaces are often not used in groups, but individually and in different intervals, which raises the question of whether these spaces belong to the first or to the second group (shared spaces). On the other hand, the corridor does not belong to the group of intimate spaces, but to another group that users occasionally and jointly use.

In the research "Influence of boundary materiality on the experience of territoriality in housing", the authors analyze the way in which spatial borders produce different degrees of privacy and allow people to control their own activities and the activities of others [18]. The significance of this research is also that territoriality is considered in the residential area, from the aspect of the residential community, building and unit. The authors state that in a residential unit (house or apartment), as the primary level of use of residential space, different levels of territoriality can also be recognized, which are determined on the one hand by borders, while on the other hand they are conditioned by the relationship between the user and the space. The first level is determined by the physical boundary of the private space of the residential unit towards the surrounding public space and indicates the privacy boundary of the household. The second level occurs in situations with a clear division into social and private spaces in the housing unit and marks the presumed hospitality boundary for visitors. This is the limit to which the guest is usually introduced, if he is not well known. In the case of compound living spaces structures, it is usually the border around the family social spaces, such as the living room, salon or cabinet, less often the dining room and kitchen. The third level is determined by the physical boundaries between intimate and family spaces and determines the intimacy boundary between family or household members. A special type of boundary occurs in coliving spaces, the so-called separation boundary, which separates intimate spaces from other spaces that users occasionally share (e.g. kitchens and bathrooms), to which they can be particularly sensitive due to hygienic conditions and the frequency of maintenance [10]. (Fig. 1)

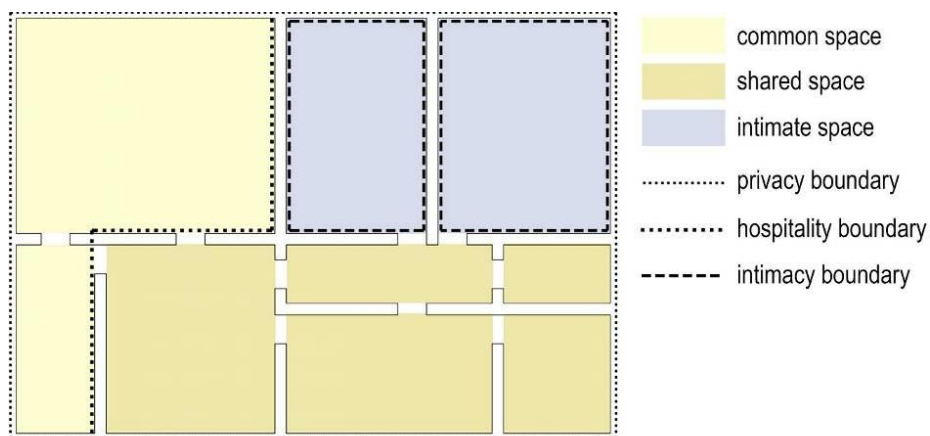


Figure 1. Levels of territoriality in residential space and limits of experience (Source: author's illustration)

3. TERRITORIALITY IN PARTICULAR MODELS OF HOUSING UNITS

3.1. Apartment for one person

Although singles do not share their living space with others, they still feel a certain level of territoriality in their apartment, because they consider it their private space, a place they own and have control over. In addition, even though they spend most of their time in the apartment alone, singles often create different zones within their apartment, which they use for different activities and also perceive as their own. For example, the bedroom can be an intimate zone, while the living room can be a zone for socializing and relaxing. Singles can feel territorially threatened when someone else enters and stays in their space for a while. For example, when they invite guests to their apartment, they may feel uncomfortable if the guests do not respect their privacy or some of their rules. This can be especially evident if the guests do not know the rules that the singles have set for their apartment, which primarily depend on their lifestyle. It is important to emphasize that territoriality is an individual experience and may differ from person to person. While some singles may have a strong sense of belonging and control over their space, others are less attached to their living space and consider it just a place to sleep and stay. For single people, their living space is entirely an intimate zone, because they generally do not share it with anyone, except in situations when they have visitors. In such circumstances, the following categories can be differentiated: a) *social space*, which is intended for visits and which the guest can use freely without disturbing the privacy of the owner, b) *shared space*, which the guest can use conditionally, because the owner can in certain circumstances feel discomfort due to someone else's presence, and c) *intimate space*, which contains the owner's most intimate things in the apartment and is not intended for use or viewing by the guest (Fig. 2). It is important to bear in mind that this is not a universal categorization and that the territorial structure of living space for one person may differ in different cultures and social contexts.



Fig. 2 Experience of territoriality in a living space for one person: 1) Domestic Transformer Apartment, Hong Kong, G.Chang, 2007; 2) Residential neighborhood west of Dr Ivana Ribara street, Belgrade, D.Marušić, M.Marušić, Đ.Alfirević, 2011, competition work; 3) Residential neighborhood in Ovča, Belgrade, D.Marušić, M.Marušić, Đ.Alfirević, 2011. (Source: author's archive).

3.2. Apartment for one generation

Territoriality in an apartment where one generation lives - a married couple, father and mother or grandparents, is expressed in a similar way as in an individual, but it can differ in relation to the dynamics of mutual relations between users, and the layout of the rooms. In such an apartment, the bedroom is usually intended exclusively for the private use of the household members. Precisely because of this, this room usually represents a "sacred place" characterized by intimacy and privacy of the highest degree. The living room is usually a room where the social life of the family takes place, and it is intended for gathering and socializing. However, in the living room, certain parts can be intended for individual use, for example a work space or a space for some activity that one of the household members performs independently. The kitchen and dining room are also common areas, but are often used interchangeably, depending on who is cooking and who is motivated to eat. The bathroom and toilet are used mainly for the private needs of household members. In these rooms, each member has his own equipment, which is why certain segments of the space can be personal. Based on the above, territoriality in this type of apartment is expressed through clearly defined boundaries between common and private spaces, but also through the dynamics of mutual relations between household members. (Fig. 3) In the situation of a visitor's arrival, the territorial structure of the space is similar to that of a residential space for one person, with the difference that the bedroom is completely excluded from the possibility of visiting or use by the guest, because it represents the most intimate part of the apartment. As with the one-person dwelling, this structure of territoriality can vary according to culture, social norms and customs. Also, there can be various situations and circumstances that can affect the dynamics of mutual relations and the arrangement of rooms, for example if there is a need to adapt the space for a new family member or if some unforeseen situation occurs such as an illness or an accident.

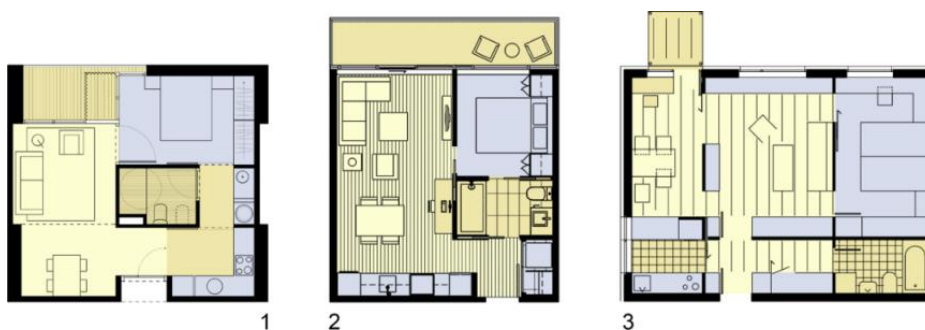


Fig. 3 Experience of territoriality in a living space for one generation: 1) Housing for the elderly and CAP in the 22, Barcelona, Gina Barcelona Architects, 2020; 2) MC2 Housing, Vancouver, James KM Cheng Architects, 2018; 3) Residential neighborhood in Ovča, Belgrade, D.Marušić, M.Marušić, Đ.Alfirević, 2011. (Source: author's archive)

3.3. Apartment for two generations

In an apartment where two generations live, territoriality manifests itself in a different way compared to an apartment where only one person or one generation lives. Since a larger number of family members use the space at the same time, privacy and intimacy are more compound topics that are treated differently

compared to other housing situations. When designing such an apartment, the rooms are often organized so that there is a clear boundary between the space used by one generation and the space used by the other generation. For example, the parents' and children's bedrooms can be located at opposite sides of the apartment, and common rooms like living room, kitchen and dining room are used by all persons in the house. As a rule, sleeping rooms are intended for individual use, so parents and children usually have their own personal rooms that are adapted to their needs. However, common rooms can be where the family's social life takes place, which can pose a certain challenge in maintaining relationships between family members. In a housing situation where two generations live, there is often a sense of belonging and ownership of the space or parts of the space. Given that family members know each other and have long-term relationships, the sense of territoriality can be stronger and manifest differently in relation to situations in which people who do not know each other. (Fig. 4) The specificity of this model is that the parents' room and the room for two children are perceived simultaneously as personal and as a shared space, which is especially evident in the children's room shared by two brothers, two sisters or a brother and sister (the most complicated situation). It is important to keep in mind that long-term relationships and closeness between family members can lead to a stronger sense of belonging and ownership of space, which can be a source of conflicts if an adequate balance between privacy and shared spaces is not achieved.



Fig. 4 Experience of territoriality in a living space for two generations: 1) Block 21, Belgrade, M.Čanak, L.Lenarčić, M.Mitić, I.Petrović, 1965; 2) Block 61 and 62 the southern part, Belgrade, D.Marušić, M.Marušić, M.Miodragović, 1978; 3) Block 23, Belgrade, 1974, B.Janković, B.Karadžić, A.Stjepanović (Source: author's archive)

3.4. Apartment for three generations

In an apartment where three generations live, territoriality can be expressed in different ways depending on the dynamics of the user relationship and the layout of the space. There are usually clearly grouped common rooms, such as the living room, kitchen and dining room, which are used for shared activities and socializing, while there are also rooms intended for intimate activities of each generation, for example bedrooms. Grandparents, as the oldest (third) generation, usually have their own room or part of the apartment where they can retreat and have privacy. Parents and children usually have separate bedrooms, while the living room, kitchen and dining room are used as common areas. In three-generation apartments, the layout and way of using the space is often adapted to the dynamics of life and the

needs of each generation. For example, parents often adapt to the schedule of school and extracurricular activities of children, but grandparents may also have their own rituals and habits that affect the way the space is used. Territoriality in such apartments can also be manifested through certain boundaries and rules that are established in order to maintain privacy and harmony between generations. For example, a certain room may be considered "sacred" and each family member must respect the privacy of whoever uses it. Also, certain rules for the use of common rooms can be established, as well as rules of behavior in accordance with that. (Fig. 5) Three-generation apartments, as larger residential structures, usually contain at least two bathrooms or a bathroom and a toilet. In order to prevent potential territorial problems, it is recommended that each generation has a separate bathroom within the zone of their room. The exception is children's rooms, which can have a shared bathroom. This way of organizing the space also enables the existence of different generations in the apartment, because each of them has its own space that it can use according to its needs. Also, it would be useful to note that children's rooms with a shared bathroom are often a practical solution, especially if the children are close in age, so that their activities can be coordinated. However, in the case when the children are not close in age or when there is a significant difference in their habits and needs, separate bathrooms are a preferable option.



Fig. 5 Experience of territoriality in a living space for three generations: 1) Block 11, Belgrade, M. Vujović, 2010; 2) Interior Golić, Belgrade, Đ. Alfirević, S. Simonović Alfirević, 2018 (Source: author's archive)

3.5. Apartment for coliving community

In coliving communities, territoriality is expressed in different ways compared to the traditional way of living. Coliving communities are typically designed to enable the sharing of common space and resources, which can influence the way territoriality is experienced and expressed. Members of a coliving community usually have their own private rooms, which are considered intimate space, while shared space is considered common space. Common space may include a kitchen, living room, recreation areas, workspaces, and other similar rooms. In such communities, members are often expected to feel comfortable using the common space and to actively participate in common activities. Furthermore, in coliving communities, the emphasis is on shared values and lifestyle, so members can feel a greater sense of connection with other community members and less evident individual territoriality. (Fig. 6) For example, some members may consider certain parts of the shared space as "theirs" because they have used them more frequently (e.g., a chair in the living room or a seat at the dining table) or because they have been the ones to arrange and maintain them (such as the shared kitchen area or bathrooms). Other members

may be less attached to specific parts of the shared space and may perceive them merely as a place for communal use, thus not understanding why another member is so protective of that area. These differing interpretations of ownership over the common space and resources can lead to conflicts. Therefore, it is important to establish clear rules and guidelines in coliving communities regarding the usage and maintenance of shared space and resources, which can help reduce conflicts and feelings of territoriality.

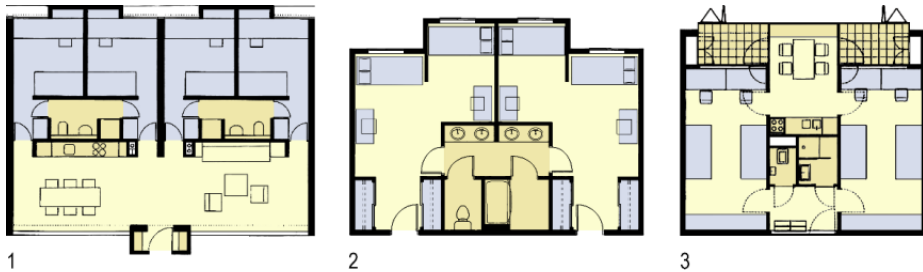


Fig. 6 Experience of territoriality in a living space for coliving community: 1) Casa dell'Accademia, Mendrisio, C.Barchi, J.Könz, L.Molo, 2006; 2) Casas del Rio, Albuquerque, Todd & Associates, 2015; 3) Student Housing Poljane, Ljubljana, M.Bevk, V.Perović, 2006. (Source: author's archive)

4. DISCUSSION

The experience of territoriality in residential spaces depends on several different factors, primarily on: a) the size of the space, b) the structure of the space, c) individual differences among space users, d) environmental characteristics, e) cultural factors, and f) the relationships among household members. This study primarily focused on the first two, the physical factors of residential space.

Space size - the smaller the residential space, the more likely household members will feel cramped, which can lead to increased territoriality and a sense of protectiveness. This is particularly evident when household members have less space than they need for comfortable living. However, if household members are satisfied with the size of the space and do not feel cramped, then a smaller space will not necessarily lead to increased territoriality. On the other hand, a larger residential space can provide individuals with a greater sense of privacy and intimacy, empowering them to create their own personal zone. However, if household members utilize space larger than their basic living needs, then a larger space will not necessarily result in a stronger sense of territoriality.

Space structure - the physical layout of the space and the types of rooms can influence which parts of the apartment are considered private and which are shared. Additionally, room size, ceiling height, the number of windows in a room, the presence of a balcony, and other physical elements can affect the intensity of the experience of territoriality, as individuals are less likely to share or give up favorable conditions in a space where they feel comfort and pleasure.

Individual differences among users - each individual has their unique experience of territoriality and a sense of privacy, which can be related to their personal preferences and past experiences.

Environmental characteristics - if the residential space is located in an unsafe environment, it can intensify the sense of territoriality. Additionally, features of the

environment, such as proximity to shops, parks, or other significant locations, can influence the sense of territoriality.

Cultural factors - tradition, customs, and learned values can influence the experience of territoriality. In some cultures, privacy and individuality are highly valued, while in others, communalism and connectivity are emphasized more.

Interpersonal relationships among household members - if the relationships within the user group are positive, it can lead to a less pronounced sense of territoriality, while negative relationships can intensify the sense of territoriality and the need to protect one's private space.

The intensity of territoriality can be stronger in individuals (singles) who feel more connected to the space they inhabit, while it may be less pronounced in others who share the space, as they may be less attached to the shared or rented space. Ownership (or occupancy) relationships can also have a significant impact on the intensity of territoriality, such as in the case of shared living spaces or when an individual lives in a rented apartment they do not consider their own. By analyzing characteristic models of residential spaces, different levels of territoriality among users can be observed, which are summarized in the table

Table 1. Comparative representation of territoriality levels in characteristic models of residential units (Source: author's archive)

		Characteristic models of housing units				
		1 person	1 generation	2 generations	3 generations	coliving community
Room type	Entrance part					
	Wardrobe					
	Toilet					
	Workspace					
	Salon					
	Living room					
	Dining room					
	Kitchen					
	Storage room					
	Service					
	Hallway					
	Bathroom					
	Room for 1 person					
	Room for 2 persons					
	Terrace / loggia					
Legend:		common / social space,	shared space,	intimate space		

5. CONCLUSION

Based on everything previously mentioned, it can be concluded that the experience of territoriality in residential spaces is compound and multidimensional. Its intensity can vary depending on numerous factors, including the size of the space, the structure of the space, the number and relationships among household members, as well as the relationship of individuals with the space and resources. This experience can have positive effects such as a sense of security, intimacy, and belonging to a family or community, but it can also have negative effects, such as

excessive protectiveness and, in extreme cases, aggression. Therefore, it is important to consider the factors that influence the experience of territoriality when designing and organizing residential spaces in order to create functional, comfortable, and pleasant living environments. Further directions for research on this topic are numerous and could focus on the influence of culture and social norms on the experience of territoriality in residential spaces or on studying the impact of the physical environment, such as nature, greenery, and lighting, on the experience of territoriality. Additionally, research could explore the development of new methods for measuring the experience of territoriality in residential spaces, including the use of technology and measurements of physiological responses. Considering the initial standpoint that the experience of territoriality is always present in residential spaces but can vary in intensity depending on whether it occurs as a reaction to the presence of visitors, objects, or other users, it can be provisionally confirmed. However, it is important to empirically verify and validate the conclusions from this research.

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