

Architectural Dynamics in Tolkien's Novel, The Hobbit: A Literary and Cinematic Perspective

Tolkien'in Hobbit Romanında Mimari Dinamikler: Edebi ve Sinematik Bir Perspektif

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the dynamic relationship between architectural elements and narrative construction in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* (1937) and its cinematic adaptations directed by Peter Jackson. By focusing on both literary and cinematic mediums, the research illustrates how architectural elements shape world-building, character development, story progression, and thematic expression. The fantasy genre, with its capacity for intricate spatial constructs, provides fertile ground for this exploration. Through textual analysis and spatial reading, it becomes evident that Tolkien's strategic use of key locations such as the Shire, Erebor, and the Woodland Realm adds depth to the narrative. These spaces, integral to the story, reflect the cultural and moral values of their inhabitants, influencing the plot's direction. In parallel, Jackson's films reinterpret these architectural spaces, using cinematic techniques to enhance their visual and emotional impact. The adaptation showcases how architectural elements merge with narrative and character development, offering a distinct experience to viewers. Both the literary work and the films were compared through categorization and visual analysis to reveal differences and commonalities in spatial representation. This study adopts an interdisciplinary approach, blending literary analysis, film studies, and architectural theory to provide new insights into the role of architecture in storytelling. It highlights how architectural principles are translated into narrative devices in literature and visual representation in film. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted relationship between architecture, literature, and film, and calls for further interdisciplinary exploration to fully appreciate the impact of spatial dynamics in narrative art.

Keywords: Literary space, architecture and literature, architecture and cinema, The Hobbit, Tolkien.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, J.R.R. Tolkien'in *The Hobbit* (1937) adlı eserindeki ve Peter Jackson tarafından yönetilen sinematik uyarlamalarındaki mimari unsurlar ile anlatı inşası arasındaki dinamik ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Hem edebi hem de sinematik medya üzerine odaklanarak mimari unsurların, dünya kurma, karakter gelişimi, hikâye ilerleyişi ve tematik ifadeyi nasıl şekillendirdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Karmaşık mekânsal kurgulara olanak tanıyan fantastik tür, bu keşif için verimli bir zemin sunmaktadır. Metinsel analiz ve mekânsal okuma yoluyla, Tolkien'in Shire, Erebor ve Woodland Realm gibi kilit mekânları stratejik kullanımıyla anlatıya derinlik kazandırdığı açıkça görülmektedir. Hikâyeye entegre edilmiş bu mekânlar, sakinlerinin kültürel ve ahlaki değerlerini yansıtarak olay örgüsünün yönünü etkilemektedir. Paralel olarak, Jackson'ın filmleri, bu mimari mekânları yeniden yorumlayarak, sinematik teknikler kullanarak görsel ve duygusal etkilerini artırmaktadır. Uyarlamalar, mimari unsurların anlatı ve karakter gelişimiyle nasıl birleştiğini, izleyicilere farklı bir deneyim sunduğunu sergilemektedir. Edebi eser ve filmler, mekânsal temsildeki farklılıklar ve ortak noktaları açığa çıkarmak amacıyla kategorize edilerek ve görsel analiz yoluyla karşılaştırılmıştır. Bu çalışma, edebi analiz, film çalışmaları ve mimarlık teorisini bir araya getirerek disiplinlerarası bir yaklaşımı benimsemekte ve anlatıdaki mimarinin rolüne ilişkin yeni iç görüler sunmaktadır. Mimari ilkelerin, edebiyatta anlatı araçlarına, filmde ise görsel temsile nasıl dönüştüğünü vurgulamaktadır. Bu araştırma, mimari, edebiyat ve sinema arasındaki çok yönlü ilişkiyi daha derinlemesine anlamaya katkıda bulunmakta ve mekânsal dinamiklerin anlatı sanatındaki etkisini tam anlamıyla takdir edebilmek için daha fazla disiplinlerarası keşif çağrısında bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yazınsal mekân, mimarlık ve edebiyat, mimarlık ve sinema, The Hobbit, Tolkien.

Introduction

Authors may use spatial cues in various mediums to meet various narrative expectations. These cues can manifest as background information, delineating the environment, or as symbolic representations of a character's inner psyche, cognitive processes, ethical standing, or cultural milieu. Frequently, this involves employing detailed spatial descriptions, which render the presence of architectural elements nearly inescapable within literary compositions. As a result, these spatial elements shift from merely providing context to becoming an active foreground, directly interacting with and profoundly influencing the storytelling process. This interplay is essential in shaping the reader's experience and understanding of the narrative (Havik, 2006; Pallasmaa, 2011).

Space holds a significant place in cinema too by supporting characters, creating an atmosphere for the screenplay, and hosting the audience as an essential part of the storyline. From the perspective of architecture, it creates new opportunities to experiment with extraordinary representations (Beşışık, 2013).

Considering this framework, the primary aim of this paper is to dissect and explain the intricate connections within the interplay of architecture, literature, and cinema in order to reveal the robust influence and meaningful contributions of architectural narrative and spatial intricacies in shaping a compelling, well-organized narrative. It also aims to underscore the immense potential for inspiration derived from these elements, highlighting the notion that design is not merely a supplementary aspect but rather a central component of storytelling in both literary and visual artistry.

While there are other genres rooted in realism, the fantasy genre has been selected as the primary focal point to explore a broader range of creative possibilities. Because this genre offers unique opportunities due to its capacity to establish distinct universes independently from the constraints of our everyday reality (Todorov, 2017), it may help to enrich this interdisciplinary analysis. In this context, J.R.R. Tolkien, who transformed the fantasy genre by moving it beyond the atmosphere of children's literature and taking a stand against claims of escapism, has been chosen along with *The Hobbit*, one of his earliest publications.

J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit* has been adapted into visual forms of arts before. Among these adaptations, the most prominent and the one that revived the work's popularity is Peter Jackson's *The Hobbit* trilogy. These films, made following the success of Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, garnered widespread acclaim from a broad audience. The reasons behind this success include the impact and fame generated by the earlier *The Lord of the Rings* films, as well as Tolkien's serious world-building skills and the faithful adherence to the original work (Karaduman & Fitöz, 2021, p. 1543). By successfully translating Tolkien's rich universe onto the big screen, *The Hobbit* trilogy rekindled interest in fantasy literature. For these reasons, and to maintain the research's coherence, Jackson's adaptation of *The Hobbit* has been selected as a case study for this work.

A comparative analysis was conducted to examine how spaces are adapted and portrayed differently in the cinematic version than the original text in order to assess the impact of the visual medium on space representation and interpretation. An interdisciplinary approach was employed, drawing from literary analysis, film studies, and architectural theory to provide a well-rounded analysis of spaces within the chosen novel (Figure 1), namely *The Hobbit* (1937).

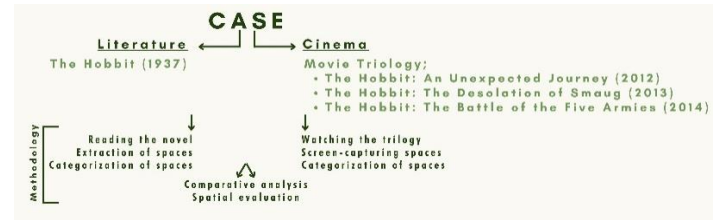


Figure 1. Research Process and Method (Created by Authors)

This qualitative study commences with an in-depth reading of a single novel that provides the foundation for understanding the spaces described in the original narrative. In addition, the film trilogy based on the novel was analyzed in terms of its visual representations of the spaces within the original story to compare the written and visual renditions. The various spaces featured in the novel and the cinematic adaptations were noted and listed whether described in the text or depicted on screen. Detailed descriptions of these spaces were recorded, screen shots were categorized, including their basic environmental or physical attributes, inhabitants, historical or cultural significance, and any changes or adaptations made in the cinematic version.

The Hobbit is a journey story. This journey extends both in the literal sense from the Shire to Erebor, as well as in the sense of Bilbo Baggins' internal journey, a process of self-discovery as described by Campbell (1949). Throughout this journey, numerous locations are visited. Some are merely passed through, used as places to rest, or encountered as sites of misfortune that keep the story engaging. Others, however, serve as pivotal points for the aforementioned journeys.

After examining all the locations and categorizing them based on a few fundamental characteristics (Table 1), it becomes clear that each one holds significance. However, to maintain brevity in this study, not all locations have been analyzed in detail. Instead, the focus is placed on the pivotal locations: Bag End in the Shire, which serves as the starting point and the protagonist's living space; the Woodland Realm, a key location where the narrative begins to unfold and branch out; and finally, Erebor, the Dwarven Kingdom located in the Misty Mountains, which is the ultimate destination and the site of the main quest.

This analysis involved examining how the characters interact with the spaces, the emotions and atmospheres conveyed, and the significance of these spaces in the plot's development. Following this analysis of essential space use, the recurring patterns and themes emerging across the novel and the films were identified.

Table 1. Narrated Spaces According to Their Environmental Settings and Users

Space/Type	Name of the Dwelling	Inhabitant	Natural Setting	Urban Setting
Natural	Goblin Town	Goblins	Tunnels & Caverns	Clustered
	Gollum's Cave & Lake	Gollum (Hobbit)	Cave	Lair
Constructed/Built	Bag End	Bilbo Baggings (Hobbit)	Countryside	Small Town
	Rivendell	Elves	Valley	Refuge, Sanctuary
	Beorn's House/Hall	Beorn(Skin-changer)	Wilderland	Farmslead, Self-sufficient
	Mirkwood & Woodland Realm	Elves	Forest	Kingdom
	Esgaroth (Lake Town)	Mankind	Lake	Waterfront Town
Erebor	Dwarves	Mountain	Fortress, Kingdom	

Tolkien and The Hobbit

J.R.R. Tolkien can be considered a prominent figure in fantasy literature (Butler, 2013). As a pivotal point of convergence, Tolkien's renowned novel, *The Hobbit* (1937), and director Peter Jackson's cinematic adaptation as *The Hobbit Trilogy* (Figure 2), comprising *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* (2012), *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* (2013), and *The Hobbit: The Battle of The Five Armies* (2014), were chosen for the analysis. This is because the novel and the movie trilogy form an interconnected narrative tapestry, enriching each other in various ways. Thus, both two mediums were examined in detail to unravel the complex interplay between architecture, literature, and cinema.



Figure 2. Movie Posters of *The Hobbit I* (2012), *Hobbit II* (2013), and *Hobbit III* (2014) (Source: Tolkien Gateway)

Writers harness letters and words to convey imagined scenarios, characters, and spatial settings within a story to their audiences. In Tolkien's case, however, his literary endeavors extended beyond the use of words alone. That is, he created an original language, a unique history for an entirely new universe, and distinctive spaces that evolved under his meticulous authorial guidance and sketches (Hammond & Scull, 2013). With the help of this additional background work, Tolkien's influence extends not only from the popularity of his literary works but also from his profound impact on the development of the fantasy genre as a whole (Carter, 2004). The sustained popularity of Tolkien and his literary oeuvre can be largely attributed to his deliberate priorities and, notably, his adept world-building skills. Butler (2013) further posits that one of Tolkien's significant contributions to the fantasy genre lies in his painstaking efforts to construct intricately detailed settings that encompass original architectural and natural landscapes, languages, and a comprehensive historical backdrop. These provide the foundation for the majority of his fantasy creations.

Numerous watercolor or hand-drawn black-and-white sketches, accompany nearly every spatial element within his work (Figure 3). During the era in which he wrote, fantasy literature was marginalized, primarily relegated to children's literature, and seen as a means of escapism from the rigors of real-life responsibilities (Baker, 2012). Yet Tolkien evidently approached the process of world-building with utmost seriousness, affording his spaces a detailed imaginary history and a robust foundation for his fantasy narrative, in contrast to superficial portrayals. This underscores the profound significance of meticulously framed spaces within his work.

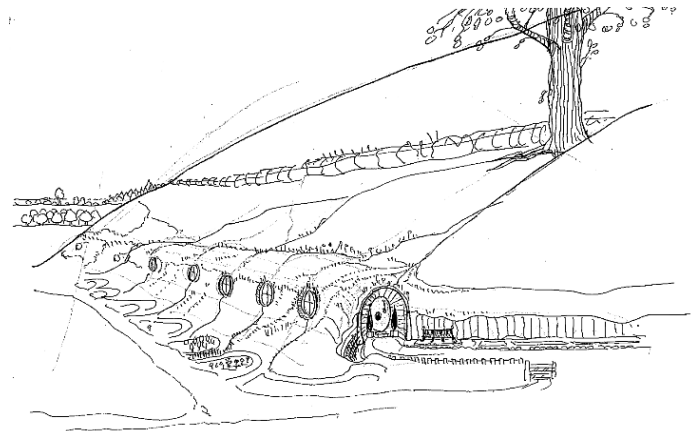


Figure 3. One of Tolkien's Sketches on Bag-End (Hammond & Scull, 2013, p. 22)

These invoked spaces exhibit a remarkable capacity for adaptive transformation, adapting their characteristics in tandem with a diverse cast of characters, with their homes and racial distinctions underpinning their occupancy. The various races in Tolkien's mythology each adhere to invariable specifications governing their existence within designated spatial domains. This intricate web of constraints has manifold implications and spatial outcomes that warrant closer examination within Tolkien's work.

This paper seeks to understand the intricate, multilayered role of architectural spaces within Tolkien's literary creations, identify the depth of symbolism embedded within this constructed environment, and reveal the many responsibilities of architecture in creating Middle-Earth's narrative complexity. While Tolkien's works often inhabit the same fictional universe of Middle-Earth, they may diverge in terms of focal points, chronology, or characters. That is, Tolkien devised a fictional narrative framework that interconnects all these stories, which

differentiates his work within the broader fantasy genre. Within this vast literary canvas, *The Hobbit: or There and Back Again* (1937) occupies a prominent position and serves as the case study for this paper.

Having been initially published as children's adventure literature, the novel swiftly exceeded its initial categorization to gain recognition across the broader expanse of the fantasy genre. Its ascent to prominence was underpinned by Tolkien's fastidious dedication to craftsmanship, characterized by intricate narrative construction, linguistic sophistication, and the vivid creation of an imaginative realm. The novel's narrative is profoundly inclined towards establishing a sense of place. Given his ambitious efforts to craft an entirely imagined world, Tolkien fashioned his own settings, cities, and dwellings. As a polymath drawing on various disciplines, he gave paramount importance to establishing harmonious relationships between the characters and their environments, employing this dynamic as yet another medium to bolster the narrative of his adventure tale (Woodward and Kourelis, 2006).

As an important work of art, *The Hobbit* has had many adaptations, from graphic novels to cartoons. However, its most popular adaptation is the movie trilogy directed by Peter Jackson. His cinematic adaptation of the novel drew extensively from the original literary work, particularly by using architecture as a potent storytelling device to leave an indelible impression (Lee, 2019).

Exploring the Relationship Between Architecture, Literature, and Film

Elementary dictionary definitions of the term "space" refer to it as an unoccupied area or a realm deemed suitable for use. This encompasses expanses that envelop everything around us, possessing multiple dimensions, directions, and orientations. Yet, beyond these rudimentary descriptions, the epistemological understanding of space is remarkably intricate. Space, in practice, assumes a measurable and objectively existing character, commonly encountered in daily life. It is our individual experiences, perceptions and imagination that imbue it with meaning, distinguishing it from its ostensibly straightforward definition (Pallasmaa, 2011).

Space sustains its presence through diverse media. When interwoven with various mediums and disciplines, this union gives rise to a plethora of discoveries and interdisciplinary research domains. Architecture stands out as a primary realm wherein the concept of space is directly engaged. Although architectural space was historically construed solely in terms of physical dimensions, the twentieth century ushered in the realization that it encompasses additional dimensions, both perceptual and theoretical. This transformative understanding, as elucidated by Yüçetürk (2016), has facilitated the emergence of a cross-disciplinary nexus between architecture and other spatial constructs. As an interdisciplinary field, architecture, and by extension, the concept of space, can assume diverse manifestations, maintaining its relevance across varied domains.

At its core, architecture employs an arsenal of lines, forms, planes, and volumes to delineate and enrich spatial configurations. Havik (2006) aptly observes that architecture, as a discipline, is perceptible through all our senses, thus possessing a sensory essence. Nevertheless, it would be an oversimplification to reduce architecture to a mere amalgamation of lines and planes. As a discipline, it tends to be perceived as mathematical,

rational, and reliant on visual imagery; however, it also possesses a linguistic dimension (Perez-Gomez, 2018). To clarify, architecture is rendered more nuanced and enriched through the assistance of language, one of its own creations. Language not only enhances its expressive capabilities but also serves as a conduit for unraveling the historical and cultural intricacies within which architecture resides. This linguistic dimension enables observers to grasp aspects of architecture that extend beyond the confines of their immediate sensory experiences (Havik, 2006).

In contrast to architecture, literature employs letters, words, and sentences as its fundamental building blocks, with the objective of constructing a narrative. While architecture adds bricks and stones to physically erect structures, literature constructs mental edifices in the minds of its readers. Although literary characters and places remain invisible and conversations remain inaudible, readers inherently have the capability to formulate individualized interpretations of the narrative. Thus, Havik (2006) argues, literature constitutes a linguistic creation that evokes emotions and imagery, and occasionally rekindles memories. Regarding the use of space in literature, Bolak (2000) identifies two distinct sub-categories of narrative space: objectively narrated spaces and subjectively narrated spaces. Objectively narrated spaces are those spaces described by the author devoid of subjective emotional or sentimental connotations, which provide background spaces to enrich the narrative. Conversely, subjectively narrated spaces are imbued with emotions, personal reflections, perceptions, and nostalgia to provide a foreground space of equal significance to the characters and actions within the narrative (Bolak, 2000).

Much like literature, cinema can leverage space and architecture in various ways. However, as Kaçmaz-Erk (2009) asserts, it is essential to acknowledge that cinematic space should be perceived as an interpretation of architectural space rather than a direct replication. That is, it must serve as a novel spatial construct.

Cinema and architecture share numerous commonalities, such as employing fundamental elements of volume, spatial divisions, light, colors, furniture, etc. (Vidler, 1993). Nevertheless, when introducing cinematic space into this discourse, what becomes significant is the artificiality inherent in fictional space as distinct from the tangible settings used in filming.

From a professional standpoint, these two disciplines exhibit further parallels. In architecture, practitioners are referred to as architects, while in cinema, they are known as directors. Both may need to coordinate diverse teams of individuals from various related professions. Directors oversee the art department, actors, screenwriters, production design, costumes, etc., much like architects who collaborate with site workers, engineers, and carpenters. Consequently, both fields entail complex structures demanding distinctive efforts.

In cinema, audiences perceive spaces much as they perceive the actors or their actions. This necessitates deliberate spatial design. Unlike literary creations in which spaces are described, cinema requires audiences to visually encounter these spaces because it is fundamentally an image-based art form. Hence, film spaces possess their own boundaries, distinct from the physical constraints of architectural or natural spaces (Derle, 1992). Films are framed within different ratios or specifications, with one of the most influential being the film director's vision.

Architecture, in turn, impacts cinema by virtue of its indispensability. While filmmakers can use existing architectural spaces, advances in techniques and computer-generated imagery (CGI) have enabled the creation of futuristic or historical settings, utopian realms, or fantastical cities. In other words, cinema has liberated a segment of architectural practice, permitted the exploration of unconventional spaces, and fostered the ability to work within alternative realities. Jacobs (2007) also alludes to cinema's influence on the non-sensory aspects of architecture, delving into the sentimental and subtextual layers of architectural pieces, echoing the relationship between literature and architecture. Furthermore, in terms of spatial exploration, architects may find a realm of creative freedom within the cinematic dimension, unhindered by contractual obligations, site constraints, structural calculations, or legal regulations (Neumann, 1999).

According to Lamster (2000), architecture and cinema are both underpinned by imagination, intellect, and practical application. This observation also applies to literature. In cinema and architecture, however, space is predominantly experienced visually. Nevertheless, this does not alter the fact that a film originates from a script, which is a verbal construct that adds a layer of value, much like the relationship between architecture and literature. In essence, as noted by Pallasmaa (2008), the visual nature of cinema does not preclude the incorporation of literary elements. Literature, including language, remains a fundamental cornerstone of these intricate structures, akin to the indispensable use of space.

An Interdisciplinary Examination of Spatial Dynamics in The Hobbit

Since the novel and the movie trilogy belong to distinct forms and disciplines, this section involves a comparative analysis of spatial narratives within each respective discipline by scrutinizing the methods and underlying intentions behind each spatial description while also exploring their interaction.

Within Tolkien's literary oeuvre, encompassing both the original novel and its cinematic adaptation in the trilogy, the created spaces serve a variety of functions that significantly affect the progression of events and their consequences. These carefully fashioned environments are characterized by their intricate layering and nuanced sub-textual dimensions, which ultimately give the architecture multiple responsibilities.

Whether encountered in the original literary narrative or its cinematic counterparts, each space has a distinct stylistic and descriptive attribute. The discerning reader should recognize that these intricately detailed portrayals are far from arbitrary; rather, they are a deliberate narrative device that Tolkien uses as a foundational backdrop for his storytelling. These spaces exhibit a fluidity of scale, whether vast, unspoiled, verdant landscapes, imposing citadels perched atop soaring promontories, urban centers nestled ingeniously within chiseled valleys, enchanted forests, lofty chambers, or humble subterranean abodes that are central to the lives of the principal characters. Their depiction may range from expansive geographies, meticulously delineated through cartography, to intricate urban mosaics, to the intimate, character-specific interiors of homes.

Examination of the novel and the film trilogy reveals a substantial thematic richness capable of accommodating a diverse array of illustrative instances. For the following analysis, four paragraphs were chosen to encapsulate the core concept while conveying a sense of plurality. Commencing with the

novel's iconic first sentence, which has gained popularity when scrutinized through the dual literary and cinematic perspectives, these paragraphs then portray the intricacies of each physical setting. Then, the focus is directed towards the interior representation of the hobbit-hole, which intricately stimulates the reader's imaginative faculties. The analysis also considers Erebor's (a dwarf kingdom) rear entrance, which appears to be a natural formation when it was actually constructed by the Dwarves. The analysis then explores the portrayal of the Mirkwood elves' homes, which are seamlessly integrated into and intrinsic to the Woodland Realm, where their existence harmoniously unfolds within the embrace of nature.

Tolkien begins the novel as follows: "In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat; it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort" (Tolkien, 2015, p. 1). Thus, even before the theme, time, or the main character's name, the first thing encountered is the place. The whole fictional realm and fantasy world of Middle-Earth will be widened through this hobbit-hole, and the hobbit's only qualification initially is being a resident of this place.

The introductory paragraph provides a succinct yet evocative portrayal of space within the narrative, accentuating the pivotal role of the hobbit's dwelling, called Bag End in the novel, and its intimate association with the concept of comfort. Although it eschews the extensive spatial elaborations encountered in following paragraphs, it is an indispensable prelude, ushering the reader into Bilbo Baggins's realm.

The first sentence stands as the primary pronouncement of the spatial construct within the narrative, namely the hobbit's place of habitation. This ostensibly straightforward assertion efficaciously erects the scaffolding for the reader's imaginative faculties and induces a sense of inquisitiveness concerning the attributes of this spatial domain.

The paragraph is distinguished by its deployment of negations as a rhetorical device to elucidate what the hobbit-hole is not. These negational juxtapositions regarding less desirable alternatives contribute to the formulation of a distinct and sought-after image of a space that is both distinctive and covetable. In effect, these negations accentuate the space's comfort and desirability.

While the paragraph avoids a detailed portrayal of the hobbit-hole's physical attributes, it implies qualities conducive to comfort. These latent attributes may include the snug interior, well-appointed living spaces, and, conceivably, an intrinsic connection to the natural environment. Each of these features serves to buttress the overarching notion of comfort.

The term hobbit-hole gives the space an emblematic identity imbued with character and individuality (Anginbaş, 2020). That is, it is not merely a generic domicile but rather one calibrated to harmonize with the hobbit way of life, thereby intimating how architectural design is influenced by cultural proclivities and values.

This first paragraph harnesses spatial delineation and the concept of comfort as tools for immediately engaging the reader's imagination and curiosity. While it may have fewer explicit architectural descriptions than subsequent paragraphs, it fundamentally introduces the narrative's architectural elements by accentuating the paramount role of space in hobbit life and culture. This introductory description is acutely purposeful,

evoking sentiments of snugness and distinctiveness in the reader's mind. As such, it emerges as a pivotal motif in the broader narrative tapestry of *The Hobbit*, which concerns a longing for home in later chapters (Olsen, 2012).



Figure 4. The Cinematic Reinterpretation of the Hobbit-hole (Screenshot from *The Hobbit I* by the authors, 00:16:44)

Jackson's cinematic interpretation (Figure 4) is distinguished by its close attention to detail in presenting Bag End's exterior. The adaptation adeptly showcases a spectrum of architectural elements that collectively define the perfect outer visage. Key features, such as the round doorway, the verdant thatched roof, and the stone-clad walls, are integral to establishing and communicating its unique architectural character. These compositional elements are intentionally curated to impart an indelible and aesthetically memorable facade. Notably, the faithful replication of the iconic round door from the novel visually represents the whimsical and hospitable ambiance of Tolkien's literary narrative. The round door's ornate woodwork further reinforces the themes of comfort and homeliness. Additionally, the exterior harmoniously melds with the luxuriant, sylvan backdrop of the Shire, thereby accentuating the mutual relationship between architectural craftsmanship and the natural milieu. The spatial layout of the Shire, a region of several hobbit villages (Figure 5), and the positioning of Bag End among other hobbit-holes convey a sense of community and interconnectedness. The winding path leading to the round door accentuates its architectural integration with the natural surroundings and creates a pastoral atmosphere.



Figure 5. The Cinematic Reinterpretation of part of the Shire (Screenshot from *The Hobbit I* by the authors, 00:17:39)

Jackson's reinterpretation and its impact on the exterior and entrance of Bag End in *The Hobbit* movies underscore the significance of architectural and spatial elements. The faithful visual representation, attention to architectural details, and integration with the natural surroundings contribute to a deeper understanding of the hobbit-hole and its role within the narrative. Jackson's adaptation successfully brings to life the architectural charm and spatial harmony that are central to the Shire and the hobbits' way of life.

In the novel, Tolkien's next paragraph describes the hobbit-

hole in more detail, inspired by his own sketches:

"It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. The door opened on to a tube-shaped hall like a tunnel; a very comfortable tunnel without smoke, with panelled walls, and floors tiled and carpeted, provided with polished chairs, and lots and lots of pegs for hats and coats, the hobbit was fond of visitors. The tunnel wound on and on, going fairly but not quite straight into the side of the hill, The Hill, as all the people for many miles round called it, and many little round doors opened out of it, first on one side and then on another. No going upstairs for the hobbit; bedrooms, bathrooms, cellars, pantries, lots of these, wardrobes, he had whole rooms devoted to clothes, kitchens, dining rooms, all were on the same floor, and indeed on the same passage. The best rooms were all on the lefthand side going in, for these were the only ones to have windows, deep-set round windows looking over his garden and meadows beyond, sloping down to the river." (Tolkien, 2015, pp. 1-2).

Although this appears to be a comprehensive sequence of spatial descriptions, it can ultimately be discerned that it provides a substantial amount of information regarding Bilbo Baggin's character in terms of habitat, race, and personal preferences, such as the prioritization of comfort and social habits involving the hosting of guests.

As noted previously, this passage presents a narrative replete with spatial intricacies and architectural insights that render it a captivating subject for scholarly inquiry within the domain of architectural literary analysis. The author's scrupulous attention to the spatial attributes characterizing the hobbit-hole offers insights into the architectural composition of this setting, the rationalization of the internal chambers, and the congruence of the residence with its milieu.

The descriptive narrative commences by painting a vivid picture of the entryway, characterized by a green, porthole-like door, distinguished by a centrally located shiny yellow brass knob. This architectural idiosyncrasy not only contributes a unique aesthetic signature to the spatial realm but also establishes a thematic precedent that shapes the reader's initial perception of the domicile as quaint and whimsical. It can be posited that the selected design and portrayal of the door persistently maintain their intriguing character, serving as a distinctive hallmark for both the literary work and its cinematic adaptations. Drawing from a Bachelardian perspective (1994), one may surmise that the door's rounded and perfect geometrical form potentially engenders a heightened capacity to evoke additional sentiments of affinity or attachment.

Upon crossing the threshold, the description likens the passageway to a tube-shaped hall akin to a tunnel. This articulation of space evokes a sense of seamless continuity and spatial progression, accentuating the tunnel-like configuration of the hobbit-hole. It serves to convey a sentiment of comfort and homeliness, thereby underscoring the intimacy and sheltered character intrinsic to the tunnel's enclosure.

The interior environment of the hobbit-hole is described as possessing paneled walls, flooring of tiles and carpets, and an array of polished chairs and numerous pegs designated for hats and coats (Figure 6). This comprehensive detail is emblematic of the meticulous attention directed towards the coziness and aesthetic aspects of the spatial setting. It reflects not only a

thoughtful architectural composition but also an environment meticulously organized and inviting.



Figure 6. A Shot from the Interior of Bag-End (Screenshot from The Hobbit I by the authors, 00:16:50)

The passage offers invaluable insights into the structural and spatial organization within the hobbit-hole. Notably, it highlights the absence of different levels within the structure; instead, all amenities and living spaces are harmoniously arrayed on the same floor. This architectural disposition bespeaks a design philosophy characterized by simplicity and accessibility, ultimately facilitating effortless mobility throughout the dwelling.

The spatial configuration is enhanced by the positioning of chambers with the most favorable views, principally sited on the left-hand side of the structure. These particular chambers are further distinguished by “deep-set round windows” affording panoramic vistas of the surroundings. The reference to these apertures underscores the architectural concern for optimizing natural lighting and picturesque views within the design.

The passage extends its description beyond the structural confines of the hobbit-hole to the garden and meadows sloping towards the adjoining river. This evokes the impression that the hobbit-hole’s architectural design is consonant with its natural milieu, transcending the definition of a mere constructed edifice to become an integral element of the environment (Korver, 2019). This seamless assimilation dissolves the distinction between the built environment and the natural world, epitomizing the concept of harmonious integration.

Through Tolkien’s aptitude, the passage highlights the author’s adroitness in delivering an intricate and imaginative description of the hobbit-hole’s spatial character. It presents architectural attributes that are instrumental in amplifying our understanding of the hobbit’s abode and its symbiotic relationship with the natural surroundings. The selection of materials, spatial arrangement, and architectural attributes underscores the ambience of snugness and distinctive charm permeating this spatial sphere within the overarching narrative canvas.



Figure 7. Hidden Door of the Erebor (Screenshot from The Hobbit II by the authors, 02:05:11)

Jackson’s (2012) cinematic reimagining closely adheres to the source material. In scenes where the textual depiction falls short,

the director draws on Tolkien’s visual sketches to inform his interpretation (Oziewicz, 2016).

“[...] and that is the secret entrance. You see that rune on the West side, and the hand pointing to it from the other runes?” “It may have been secret once,” said Thorin, “...Old Smaug had lived there long enough now to find out anything there is to know about those caves.” (Tolkien, 2015, p. 20) (Figure 7).

Much like Tolkien, Jackson opts for a scene characterized by simplicity. While the ambience is predominantly dim, runic inscriptions and a tunnel-like passageway are visible beyond the concealed door’s entrance.

“[...] Because it is too small. ‘Five feet high the door and three may walk abreast’ say the runes, but Smaug could not creep into a hole that size, not even when he was a young dragon, certainly not after devouring so many of the dwarves and men of Dale.

It seems a great big hole to me, “squeaked Bilbo, who had no experience of dragons and only of hobbit-holes...” (Tolkien, 2015, pp. 19-20).

The passage emphasizes the spatial characteristics of the secret entrance, noting its specific dimensions, “five feet high” and the capacity for “three to walk abreast”. These spatial details are instrumental for understanding the function and secrecy of the entrance, which remains hidden, notably from the dragon Smaug. This concept resonates with Louis Sullivan’s architectural principle that “form follows function” (1896). The entrance’s discreet design and practical features emphasize its purpose of offering secure access while maintaining a low profile.

The interaction between Smaug and the architectural aspect of the secret entrance is crucial while Smaug’s presence is significant, suggesting that he has had ample time to discover this entrance. Nevertheless, the text hints that Smaug’s large size, particularly after consuming numerous dwarves and men, prevents him from using the entrance. This illustrates the interplay between the physical features of a character and the architectural design of the entrance.



Figure 8. Main Façade of the Erebor (Screenshot from The Hobbit I by the authors, 00:02:39)

Jackson’s Erebor has distinct characteristics that are even apparent from its façade (Figure 8). It is grandeur, ornamented, and precisely built. The Runic script mentioned in the previous quotation might have inspired the creation of Erebor’s sharp, labyrinthine, and semi-Gothic, semi-Viking craftsmanship atmosphere (Afzal, 2023) (Figure 9). The colors of this space also align with this theory, being rendered in cold tones and metallic surfaces which reflects the nature of dwarves.



Figure 9. Residential Area of the Erebor (Screenshot from The Hobbit I by the authors, 00:03:01)

Another important realm in the narrative is Rivendell, where the Elves live, which is hidden within a valley for security reasons (Loeck de Lapuerta, 2023). Similarly, the Woodland Elves, who share a similar past, have integrated their living spaces into nature, but unlike others, they have chosen the forest as their home. In terms of style, both realms favor natural and organic lines, incorporating wood and natural tones, showing similarities. However, while Rivendell serves as a temporary refuge, Woodland Realm is a permanent sanctuary. Therefore, despite having the same inhabitants and being significant to the story, only Woodland has been included in the analysis of these Elven realms. The following passage from The Hobbit has spatial and architectural elements that play pivotal roles in the narrative:

“In a great cave some miles within the edge of Mirkwood on its eastern side there lived at this time their greatest king. Before his huge doors of stone, a river ran out of the heights of the forest and flowed on and out into the marshes at the feet of the high wooded lands. This great cave, from which countless smaller ones opened out on every side, wound far underground and had many passages and wide halls; but it was lighter and more wholesome than any goblin-dwelling, and neither so deep nor so dangerous. In fact, the subjects of the king mostly lived and hunted in the open woods and had houses or huts on the ground and in the branches. The beeches were their favourite trees. The king’s cave was his palace, and the strong place of his treasure, and the fortress of his people against their enemies. It was also the dungeon of his prisoners.” (Tolkien, 2015, p. 166).

The primary architectural feature, the great cave, is the dwelling of the region’s most prominent king, functioning as a palace, treasure vault, fortress, and prison. This multifaceted role of architecture underscores its significance within this fantastical world. The king’s decision to inhabit a cave within Mirkwood exemplifies the seamless integration of architecture with the natural environment, situated at the forest’s edge as in the other realms and settlements in the novel. The cave’s placement within Mirkwood and its adjacency to a flowing river also supports this interpretation. The river is both a natural feature and a protective component, enhancing the defensibility of the king’s abode while contributing to the spatial dynamics of the location.

The passage also elucidates the cave’s architectural complexity, with descriptions of winding tunnels, numerous passages, and expansive halls. This spatial intricacy enriches the setting, emphasizing the grandeur of the king’s dwelling.

The passage also underlines the disparity between the king’s cave and goblin-dwellings, emphasizing the superiority of this architectural space by characterizing it as lighter, healthier, and

safer than goblin caves. This comparison underscores the role of architecture in shaping the inhabitants’ quality and style of life and power dynamics within this fantasy realm through spatial descriptions. This allows the reader to learn more about the characters and their racial backgrounds as elves or goblins.

Ultimately, this passage also illustrates the seamless integration of architectural and spatial elements into Tolkien’s narrative. The king’s cave transcends being a mere physical space to symbolize power, security, and territorial dominion. The storytelling is enriched by the interplay between architecture and the natural environment, and the juxtaposition with goblin-dwellings.

Jackson’s cinematic adaptation of the Woodland Realm in The Hobbit movie (2013) introduces several key changes and elaborations compared to Tolkien’s novel. These changes significantly impact the portrayal of the Woodland Realm’s exterior, its relationship with the environment, and its entrance (Figure 10).



Figure 10. Entrance of the Woodland Realm (Screenshot from The Hobbit II by the authors, 00:48:01)

In particular, Jackson’s adaptation (2013) introduces a visually striking waterfall entrance (Figure 11) that was not described in the novel. This cinematic choice adds a dynamic element to the storytelling and enhances the viewer’s experience.



Figure 11. Woodland Realm’s Entrance and Waterfall (Screenshot from The Hobbit II by the authors, 00:47:56)

In the novel, the depiction of the Woodland Realm’s exterior centers on the mystical attributes intrinsic to Mirkwood, mirroring the disposition of its inhabitants, the Silvan Elves. The forest is depicted as a place of enchantment and secrecy, with quite minimal architectural details. In Jackson’s film (2013), the Woodland Realm’s exterior is brought to life with stylistic visual imagery. The Elven architecture is characterized by intricate designs to create a visually captivating realm. The film provides a tangible representation of the Elves’ craftsmanship, emphasizing architectural beauty and elegance by working on Tolkien’s sketches and subsequent novel series, such as The Lord of the Rings (1954). Jackson’s films maintain this relationship, depicting the Woodland Realm as seamlessly integrated into its

natural surroundings. In line with Tolkien's vision, the film emphasizes the forest's enchanting and magical elements.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, the intricate and multifaceted role of architectural elements in J.R.R. Tolkien's novel "The Hobbit" and its cinematic adaptations has been explored. Through a detailed examination of both literary and cinematic representations, it has been demonstrated how architecture transcends its functional role to become a crucial narrative device in the storytelling process. The analysis has underscored the seamless integration of architectural elements into both mediums, highlighting the importance of spatial constructs in enhancing narrative depth and engaging the audience.

Tolkien's strategic use of architectural elements has been shown to significantly contribute to the narrative by establishing a sense of place, aiding in world-building, and enriching character development (Butler, 2013; Carter, 2004). The distinctiveness of spaces such as the hobbit-hole, Erebor's secret entrance, and the Woodland Realm has been highlighted, illustrating how these spaces not only serve as backdrops but also as active components that influence the story's progression (Hammond & Scull, 2013).

The cinematic adaptations by Peter Jackson have been acknowledged for their faithful and creative reinterpretation of Tolkien's architectural vision (Jackson, 2012; Jackson, 2013; Jackson, 2014). Through detailed visual representations, Jackson's films have successfully conveyed the thematic essence of the original narrative while enhancing the viewer's experience with visually captivating elements. The inclusion of additional architectural features, such as the intricate Elven designs and the waterfall entrance, has been recognized as effective in aligning with the overall tone and themes of Tolkien's work (Oziewicz, 2016).

The interdisciplinary approach adopted in this study has facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between architecture, literature, and film (Havik, 2006; Kaçmaz-Erk, 2009). By drawing on perspectives from literary analysis, film studies, and architectural theory, the complex spatial dynamics in "The Hobbit" have been elucidated, offering new insights into the role of architecture in narrative construction.

It has been concluded that architectural elements play a pivotal role in shaping compelling and well-organized narratives. Their inclusion not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the story but also contributes to its thematic richness and emotional resonance. The absence of these elements, conversely, may lead to a lack of depth and engagement in the narrative.

Future research is recommended to further investigate the role of architectural elements in other literary and cinematic works, particularly within the fantasy genre. Such studies could expand the understanding of how spatial constructs can influence and enhance storytelling across different media. For example, examining the architectural landscapes in George R.R. Martin's "A Song of Ice and Fire" series and its television adaptation, "Game of Thrones", could reveal how monumental structures like the Wall and King's Landing contribute to the narrative's thematic depth and character dynamics. Similarly, exploring the intricate world-building in J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" series and its film adaptations might provide insights into how spaces like Hogwarts and Diagon Alley enhance the magical realism and emotional engagement of the story. These examples are particularly valuable due to their widespread popularity and cultural impact, which can attract significant academic and public interest,

thereby enhancing the focus and attention on the importance of architectural elements in storytelling. As Pallasmaa (2008) notes, "The spaces and settings of our lives are not mere neutral containers but are themselves imbued with symbolic and existential meanings that resonate with our emotions and memories".

Additionally, exploring the impact of contemporary architectural innovations on narrative techniques could provide valuable insights into the evolving relationship between architecture and narrative art. The use of digital architecture and virtual reality in recent films, such as the hyper-realistic environments in "Blade Runner 2049", exemplifies how cutting-edge technology can transform narrative spaces and enhance storytelling. Furthermore, video games offer another rich avenue for investigation, where interactive environments and player-driven narratives present unique spatial dynamics. These platforms are highly popular and can draw attention to the innovative ways architectural elements are used in storytelling. Emerging technologies are also creating new meta-places, such as augmented reality and the metaverse, which are redefining how architectural spaces can be experienced and integrated into storytelling. Investigating these modern applications can illuminate how advancements in architectural design and technology are reshaping the way stories are told and experienced, offering new possibilities for immersive and interactive narratives.

Overall, the findings of this study reinforce the significance of architecture as an integral component of storytelling. The contributions of Tolkien's and Jackson's works to this interdisciplinary field are substantial, offering a rich tapestry of spatial and narrative interplay that continues to inspire and captivate audiences.

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