THE CONSTRUCTION AND REPRESENTATION OF IMAGINARY SPACE: THE CASE OF MIYAZAKI'S FANTASY REALM

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in

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by

Dilşad Nur Altınışık

September 2025

To my cat Lokum Hanım,

who is now in the queendom of the stars

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September 2025

We certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

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Giorgio Gasco (Advisor)

_____

Ekin Pınar

_____

Elif Selena Ayhan Koçyiğit

Approved for the Graduate School of Engineering and Science:

_____

Orhan Arıkan

Director of the Graduate School

ABSTRACT

THE CONSTRUCTION AND REPRESENTATION OF IMAGINARY SPACE:

THE CASE OF MIYAZAKI'S FANTASY REALM

Dilşad Nur Altınışık

M.S. in Science of Architecture

Advisor: Giorgio Gasco

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Fictional architecture creates its own reality in its unique medium, and it refers to a visualization of space that exists in a medium that does not supposedly produce concrete architectural space. Representations of those imaginary spaces have mostly focused on environments related to virtual reality. In this manner, the study suggests that two dimensional flat surfaces are the basis medium of virtual environments because the representation of imaginary space has been discussed through architectural representations on drawings, which usually provides the information to build and read the space through its elements.

The study suggests a thematic visual content analysis focusing on imaginary spaces created in the medium genre of anime, with the case of respected author and director Hayao Miyazaki. Creating a framework for approaches to architectural representations, the study investigates the possibility of reading the imaginary spaces through concepts of metalepsis, defamiliarization, phantasmagoria, and transparency. Thus, it is aimed to explore possible interconnections and juxtaposes of metaphors selected from discussions of architectural representations in order to answer the question of how it is possible to explore those notions by looking at the drawn representations of architectural spaces in fantasy environments focusion on the medium genre of anime with the purpose of investigating the architectural space created in flat surfaces medium of two dimensional drawings.

Keywords: imaginary space, metalepsis, defamiliarization, phantasmagoria, transparency

ÖZET

MİYAZAKİ'NİN FANTASTİK ANİME EVRENİNDE HAYALİ MEKANLARIN OLUŞUMU VE TEMSİLİ

Dilşad Nur Altınışık

Mimarlık Yüksek Lisansı

Tez Danışmanı: Giorgio Gasco

Eylül 2025

Kurgusal mimari, kendine özgü ortamında kendi gerçekliğini yaratır ve somut bir mimari mekan üretmediği varsayılan bir ortamda var olan bir mekanın görselleştirilmesini ifade eder. Bu hayali mekanların temsilleri çoğunlukla sanal gerçeklikle ilişkili ortamlara odaklanmıştır. Bu bağlamda, çalışma, iki boyutlu düz yüzeyde yaratılan medyumun sanal ortamların temel mekanı olduğunu öne sürmektedir; çünkü hayali mekanın temsili, genellikle mekanı unsurları aracılığıyla inşa etmek veya okumak için bilgi sağlayan tasvirler üzerindeki mimari temsiller aracılığıyla ele alınmıştır.

Bu sebeple çalışma, saygın yazar ve yönetmen Hayao Miyazaki örneğinde incelediği üzere anime türünde yaratılan hayali tasvir mekanlara odaklanan tematik bir görsel içerik analizi önermektedir. Mimari temsiller aracılığıyla tartışılan sınır aşımı, yabancılaştırma, fantazmagori, saydamlık kavramları üzerine bir çerçeve oluşturmayı hedefleyen çalışma, iki boyutlu ortamlarda yaratılan hayali mekanların mimari temsil yaklaşımlarıyla okunma olasılığını araştırmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, mimari temsiller üzerine yapılan tartışmalardan seçilen metaforların olası bağlantıları ve ilişkileri araştırılarak, anime türü medyasına odaklanılarak, fantezi ortamlarındaki mimari mekanların çizilmiş temsillerine bakılarak bu kavramların nasıl keşfedilebileceği sorusuna cevap aranmıştır. Bu bağlamda, iki boyutlu çizimlerin düz yüzeylerde oluşturduğu mimari mekan incelenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: hayali mekan, sınır aşımı, yabancılaştırma, fantazmagori, saydamlık

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on a particular kind of space, which refers to the space created in drawings of fantasy worlds in comics, cartoons, manga, and anime. Fantasy, as a term, according to Conrads (1962), in relation to space has utopian values that relate to an imaginative memory. In this regard, the term fantasy can be approached as an inclusive term that refers to a realm that responds to imaginary acts.

In this manner, architectural spaces and spatial structures can be created in various mediums beyond the phenomenal real world, which is the medium of architecture itself. These mediums include two dimensional environments that can be discussed based on the layers of representation. These fictional spaces carry the

unique specialties of their own, according to their own physical rules and materials. Although these spaces cannot be experienced in the phenomenal world, spaces created in different mediums are the reality of a fictional mindset with their unbuilt imaginary notion.

On the other hand, the term imaginary is broadly defined as a response of the human mind or memory. In this regard, imaginary space, as the term that this study refers to, is the imaginative architectural space and landscape created in alternate mediums other than architecture itself. It is possible to state that imaginary space is the foundation of architectural space created in fantasy realms of two dimensional representation mediums.

These non-tangible spaces in two dimensional environments have monocular elements to suggest depth in order to represent three-dimensional space features such as insertion, overlapping, convergence, relative size, and density gradients (Lefevre, 2006). Authors of those spaces use these elements with the colors, shades, lights, and the motion of the moving objects around in order to represent the space as perceptible as possible. This notion gives the authors the opportunity to give the spectators different perceptions of created spaces.

The research focuses on the spaces created in the medium of a two dimensional flat surface medium. Those spatializations are referred to as imaginary space in order to classify what kind of entities are being analyzed. In order to narrow down the scope of discussion and focus on the visualizations represented in two dimensional surface media, this study focuses on the format of anime in the medium of cinema.

Considering that the architectural space is not only represented but also created in the imaginary realm, this study aims to generate a discussion on possible layers of space and landscapes regarding the architectural elements and space fragments in Miyazaki's anime. In this regard, the study will focus on how the space is created and represented, relying on the approaches of visually created imaginary spaces in fantasy realms.

1.1. Problem statement

Understanding how elements relate to each other is essential for creating a frame in two dimensional platforms such as cartoons and comics. However, while elements and characters interact with the represented architectural space, it is also possible to separate the representation of space to analyze its own essence. This essence can be analyzed through the layers of representation of imaginary spaces. Most architectural spaces portrayed in different mediums from the architecture realm are fed by techniques such as perspective, layers, and gradients.

Especially in the two dimensional medium, it is possible to explore the impact of different approaches that the authors apply to the representations in order to suggest different meanings. On the other hand, the spaces created in an environment different from the literal architectural representations, such as plans of a building that is meant to be built, do not contain spatial properties; instead, they tend to pretend as if it has voids and forms to create spatial structures using different representations. While reading those imaginary spaces, it is possible to explore how those representations are layered through literary and phenomenal structures of the two dimensional realm.

Recently, the contemporary discussions on representations of space in fantasy realms have particularly focused on virtual reality-related environments such as metaverses and cyberspaces, which need to be attributed to the discussions of architectural space representations on two dimensional flat surfaces in order to understand the virtual notion of the spaces. Those spaces often lack a comprehensive understanding of how these virtual spaces are informed by traditional architectural representations on two dimensional flat surfaces. This gap limits the ability to fully grasp the complexities of virtual spaces, as the foundational role of two dimensional representations in shaping our perceptions of three dimensional environments remains underexplored. Reading those spaces created in flat surfaces is essential to investigating how architectural drawings and their elements contribute to the conceptualization and reading of imaginary spaces within virtual environments. In this manner, the study suggests that two dimensional flat surfaces are the basis medium of virtual environments because the representation of imaginary space has been discussed through architectural representations on drawings, which usually provides the information to build and read the space through its elements.

In order to perceive and read the spaces created and represented in two dimensional flat environments, the creativity of the architectural space drawing process needs to be discussed within a framework within the themes of representations. This way, it will be allowed to perceive those spaces out of their frame of flat surfaces, and thus, an opportunity will be created to explore and read those spaces from a point of the medium of architectural representations.

What needs to be done in order to create such a framework that contributes to the layers defined above of such spaces, and this study aims to explore possible interconnections and juxtaposes of metaphors selected from discussions of architectural representations. How does the fiction represent the space in two dimensional medium? What are the patterns of construction and representation of those spaces? And how is it possible to explore those notions by looking at the drawn representations of architectural spaces in fantasy environments? How are the architectural vision and ideas represented in different media other than themselves? And how is it possible to explore those notions? In order to specify those imaginary spaces in flat surfaces, this study examines two dimensional medium of drawings, focusing on the medium genre of anime.

1.2. Aim and Scope

The research will uncover recurring types and methods of representing architectural spaces in two dimensional mediums, focusing on Miyazaki's fantasy realm in his anime. These patterns can reveal how different forms of medium contribute uniquely to creating these imaginary spaces and how they differ from the literal architectural representations. This definition includes comic strips and animated cartoons in terms of their creation methods. Since Hayao Miyazaki's creation method of representations of fantasy realms corresponds to the imaginary space defined in the problem statement, as created by drawing them frame by frame, the study focuses on anime films directed by Hayao Miyazaki.

The study focuses on selected fantasy realms of three anime films from Studio Ghibli directed by Hayao Miyazaki. The films chosen for the study contain

spatial setups reflecting Hayao Miyazaki's approach to the architecture and landscape, following as Castle in the Sky (1986), Howl's Moving Castle (2004), and The Boy and the Heron (2023). The reason these three films were selected for analysis out of the eleven directed by Miyazaki is because of their distinctive exploration of architectural space as a narrative and visual element. The three anime films reflect Miyazaki's approach to imaginary space. Thus, it is possible to explore the space construction and representations of his approach in terms of the fantasy realm. The themes of war and legacy are another common point of the three films selected out of all directed by Hayao Miyazaki. In this regard, it is possible to discuss imaginary spaces that are created with the light of similar motives. In addition, the imaginary spaces in the three films represent the variations of architecture portrayed in Miyazaki's fantasy realm.

The main focus of the study is understanding how imaginary spaces are constructed and represented, particularly through different approaches to architectural representation. This will help uncover recurring patterns, types, and themes that distinguish these spaces from literal architectural representations and how different mediums contribute uniquely to their creation, and how different mediums contribute similar approaches. In order to provide a framework for reading and analyzing imaginary spaces, this study focuses on how they are constructed and represented in the two dimensional medium of anime in order to narrow down the scope of corresponding examples. This approach will help to understand the impact of different approaches on the perception of those imaginary spaces.

1.3. Methodology

The study revolves around a qualitative thematic visual content analysis, by establishing a discussion around previous approaches regarding metaphors of architectural representation and imaginary spaces, and analyzing the selected cases in the two dimensional flat medium in order to provide a framework for reading and analyzing imaginary spaces. The analysis was supported by plane-based visual analysis of imaginary spaces in selected fantasy realms created by Miyazaki. Since imaginary spaces the study focuses on are created on the medium of flat surfaces as images, this method has been selected.

The method is extracted from the book Visual Methodologies by Gillian Rose (2016), which provides a guidebook on how to read and analyze image-forming content, combining the reading and analyzing techniques of images to create a qualitative thematic visual content analysis. The thematic visual content analysis was used to put a framework on the reading process of imaginary spaces. Thus, the thematic approaches and concepts were investigated to create a table for the framework of analysis. In addition, the plane-based version of visual analysis codes the foreground, middle ground, and background planes, and fits them into the content analysis framework. Focusing on the chosen imaginary spaces, the properties will be monitored and analyzed from the point of view of how they fit into the approaches of fantasy architecture, as mentioned in the classification of imaginary space metaphors that the author deciphered.

The analysis compares the visual elements that shape these imaginary spaces with the representational elements of the imaginary worlds constructed by the author.

Focusing on categorizing the properties of architecture, the study emphasizes the conceptual nature of those imaginary spaces from the perspective of representational approaches. Despite the fact that all three films take place in different settings, with different narratives and environments of imaginary spaces, the layers and elements have common points to refer to Miyazaki's visual style of portraying the imaginary space.

The study examines how imaginary spaces are represented in the selected three films. By focusing on particular imaginary spaces, the study discusses and correlates their representations within the framework of similar themes and concepts. The approaches of fantasy architecture discussions will be associated with the representative layers of selected imaginary spaces. The methodology for uncovering this problem is choosing similar imaginary spaces from Miyazaki anime to compare and classify according to representation approaches. Each section will include a background and review of the mentioned architectural space, and a discussion on those imaginary spaces will follow the analysis.

CHAPTER 2

ARCHITECTURAL SPACE REPRESENTATIONS

Architecture, when it is perceived as an art form, has the power to narrate an idea, whether it is portrayed on its own tangible medium or not. The need for a shelter for human beings resulted in the production of architecture, which conducted the engagement of humans in terms of bodily acts in space and perceived those ideas it encouraged. Architecture not only fulfills the basic requirement for space but also becomes the medium through which bodily acts are framed and enriched. It shapes the environment by organizing matter around the spaces that define human motion, which responds to and enhances the flow of daily life. Thus, architectural space transcends its material form to engage with the living, motion-based presence of the

human body. More than a physical enclosure, by organizing matter around human activity, architectural space becomes a living interface between the materiality of voids and the dynamic presence of the body, enriching the act of inhabiting.

The literary definition of fiction is that it is the type of book or story that is written about imaginary characters and events and does not describe real people or deal with facts, or it is a false report or a statement that people pretend is true (Cambridge, 2024). The imaginary entity can also represent a space where subjective ideas, emotions, and desires take shape, allowing people to envision alternatives to the existing world.

Fictional architecture, as the production of human imagination, creates its own reality in its unique realms, and it refers to the space created in the fantasy realm. It embodies the visualization of space that exists in a medium that does not supposedly produce concrete architectural space. Architectural space in imaginary environments has perceptual elements to suggest depth in order to represent architectural space features. Authors use these elements for the purpose of representing the space as perceivable as possible. This notion gives the authors the opportunity to give the spectator different perceptions of imaginatively produced spaces. However, these kinds of representational architectural spaces also contain layers of elements, which may also be discussed through the lenses of the characters in relation to the narrative held in the imaginary space.

However, imaginatively created fictional spaces are not always a pretended version of physical architecture with which humans engage. In this regard, the term fantasy is used to define the fictional and imaginative act of something that is not

real. Imaginary space is a form of expression without boundaries or rules of reality. These types of architecture of the fantasy have their own rules, defined by the author who created it in the imaginary space. De Domenico (2017) states that architecture in the fantasy realms evolves into forms of a semantic nature close to the language of communication, and the story unfolds the space. Thus, imaginary space acts as a communication tool of the narrative for the medium in which they have been created. It is possible to state that architecture in the fantasy realms can be read within the medium in which it was created, similar to the architecture in its own medium. This kind of architectural entity consists of visualizations in the corresponding medium.

An image is a form of visualization of a concept or an object in the mind. Images are formed by the human mind according to the concepts that exist in reality, although it is fictional. Fiction as a false reality, which produces an imaginary act, contains imaginary elements such as characters, places, and even facts of its own realm. Space, as a function, provides a structural framework that organizes these elements, enabling them to coexist in a coherent and relatable manner. It provides the necessary unique dimensions for a specific interaction, whether in reality or imagination.

Space, as a matter of dimension, shapes the sense of being in place. As a concept of being, space transcends its physicality and becomes a reflection of existence itself, influencing how individuals perceive their identity, emotions, and connection to their surroundings. It carries existential weight, embodying the boundaries between reality and fiction and offering a medium through which meaning is constructed and experienced. However, it is possible to state that space

can be constructed as a norm of representation when it comes to its existential specialties.

In this manner, architectural spaces and spatial structures created in different mediums other than the phenomenal world, which is the medium of architecture itself, such as two dimensional environments, discussing them based on literal layers and layers of representation, carry the specialties of fiction, sometimes according to its own physical rules, sometimes according to its own materials. These non-experienceable spaces created in different mediums are the reality of a fictional mindset with their imagined notion.

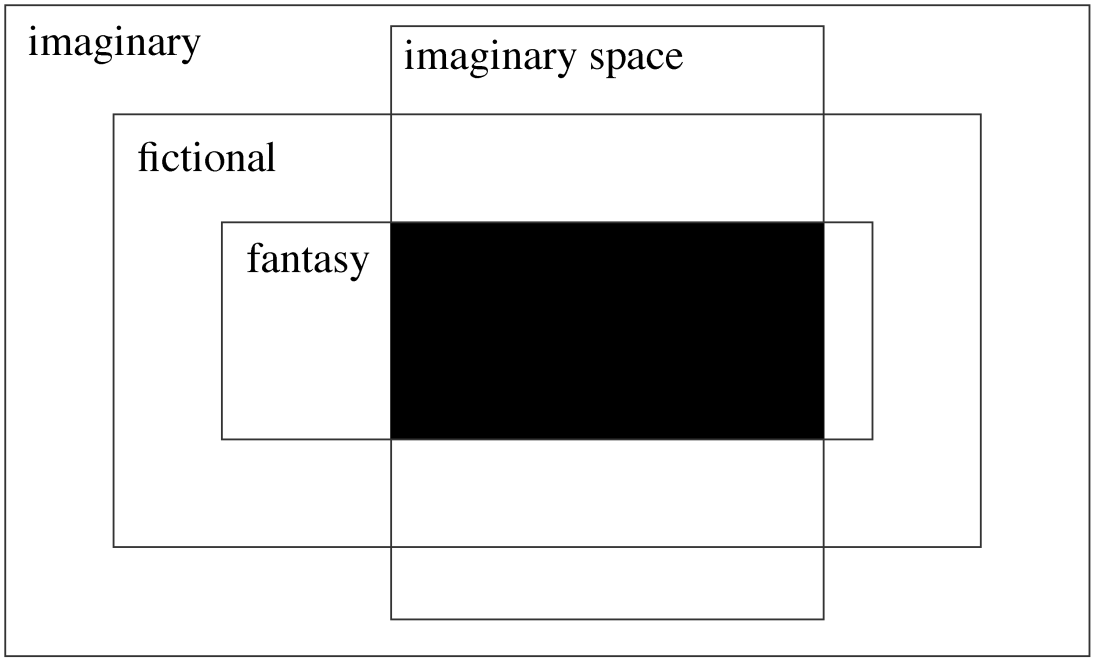
As Zevi mentioned in his book, the space is the protagonist of architecture, which has the contents of the container and the contained. Voids and masses create those dimensions of architecture. (Zevi, 1974: 24) In light of the discussions of how many dimensions architectural space has, it is possible to give meaning to architectural elements other than to define what fictional and imaginary space are and what dimensions they hold.

To clarify the dimension between the terms imaginary, fictional, and fantasy, it is possible to state that the imaginary act is prior to the others, involves both fictional and fantasy entities, while the fictional act is only prior to the fantasy entities. As it is stated in Figure 1, the term imaginary space has a broader definition than the particular spaces created within the imaginative act.

The particular section of this study that is of interest involves imaginary spaces created within the notion of fantasy acts, defined as the scope in Figure 1, and this study refers to them as imaginary spaces. It is possible to state that the spaces

Figure 1

Imaginary fantasy space



Note, Altınışık, 2025.

represented in the anime fantasy realm of the cinema medium are a part of the imaginary fantasy spaces. These particular kinds of imaginary spaces are created in fantasy realms by their authors and represented in a way to express their notions. The imaginary spaces can be defined with various approaches regarding the representation and reading methods.

2.1. Descriptions of Imaginary Space

The definition of imaginary space is the imagination in the description world of imaginatively created realms represented by the author. It might also cause changes in the spectators' perspective, much like architecture shapes physical space to accommodate bodily acts, fiction crafts narrative spaces to accommodate the

movements of the mind. Both mediums respond to a fundamental need to create frameworks for existence, allowing them to be explored, inhabited, and make meaning of worlds beyond human minds' immediate reality.

Every medium has its own limitations. Despite these limitations, authors find ways to construct spaces that spectators can perceive. Thus, it is possible to read the fictional spaces created in their fantasy realm. Authors put boundaries on their fictional spaces to allow spectators to imagine. Considering the architectural representations constructed in order to be built in the material world as the realm of architecture, it is possible to state that the representations of architecture created in the fantasy realm are an imaginary space. Both representations are portrayed in two dimensional mediums of flat surfaces, yet play different roles to represent distinct architectural spaces.

It is relevant that imaginatively created spaces are not literal architecture and do not reflect the properties of an architectural space. Although the medium of anime also does not reflect those properties, it consists of imaginary spaces in its own fantasy realm. Yet, considering how the utopian fantasy notion of imaginary architecture is created in two dimensional drawings as space representations, it is possible to approach the anime space as an imaginary representation of space.

The realm of fantasy has the potential to conduct representations of space with different elements than the architecture of the material world. The chapter will discuss the descriptions of those approaches and the relation to rhetoric and philosophers when it comes to architectural movements, ideologies, and archetypes, while defining the term research coming from those spaces, which is imaginary

architecture. Imaginary space does not exist in the phenomenal world; imaginary space is created by fiction. Imaginary space does not allow for the spatial practices that shape real-life, lived spaces. How does the fiction represent the space? What are the patterns of construction and representation of those spaces in different mediums?

2.1.1. Imaginatively Produced Spaces

Architectural space has a nature of imagination that is pursued by its thinking process and its relation to the fine arts. Architecture, being a part of the fine arts and providing science requirements simultaneously, has a unique power to shape the space. Architectural elements such as columns, ceilings, and walls are tools that shape the architectural space itself. At the beginning of the 18th Century, a few architects started to state that the main instrument of architecture was the space instead of ornaments on architectural elements such as columns, ceilings, and walls.

Vidler (1991) states that Jacques-François Blondel, the teacher of Étienne-Louis Boullée, emphasized that the feeling of space should be an a priori element of the intention of architecture. In this regard, according to Vidler (1991), Boullée was also affected by his teacher's ideology, which produced his utopian revolutionary architecture. Unfortunately, only a small number of his projects were brought to life, but his utopian revolutionary architecture and his theory about architectural space remained alive. Their revolutionary architecture was a way to describe literary architecture. In this manner, the vision of this imaginary architectural space represents a non-experienced architecture with the potential of different mediums and tools other than spatial elements of architecture, such as voids and masses.

According to Conrads (1962), the utopian value of the fantasy space is also related to an imaginative memory but lacking the human spirit, which in this study will be approached as the experience. Architecture, as Thomsen (1994) mentions, as it is accepted nowadays, is distinguished from its imaginary notion; thus, the architecture that is built cannot be a part of the visionary discussion. In addition, Thomsen (1994) states that visionary architecture and architectural vision are separated from each other in terms of how they approach the representation. The vision of architecture has no time definition; it can be created at any time. However, this does not mean the visionary notion of architecture should be a link between the past and the future. It is, in fact, beyond the future and possibilities.

The definition of boundaries when it comes to the layers of space can be determined with the conception of indefiniteness. How the objects are located, and characters move through the undefined spaces, makes the layers intertwine with each other, and thus, the layers can be read through. Burden (2000) refers to this visionary notion as unbuilt space that does not require the significance of the building process of architecture. As a concept, unbuilt can be discussed from the perspective of imaginatively created representations of those kinds of spaces, yet it is not possible to narrow down the imagined notion to the action of being supposed to be built or not.

On the other hand, Pallasmaa (2012), in his study The Existential Image: Lived Space and Architecture, discusses Walter Benjamin's approach to the relationship between cinema and architecture from a phenomenological point of view. In terms of the existential space of cinema, Pallasmaa (2012) points out

perception, emotion, and thought as the expressions of space cognition. He also claims that the cognition and perception of space are associated with memory. Thus, understanding the power of architecture to shape space is possible not only in the built environment but also in representations such as drawings of imaginary space. Cinema, and eventually entities within cinema, reflect the cultural and visual vision of the time.

In this regard, considering that cinema is a portrayal of situations, architectural space and landscape in cinema are part of the composition of a situation. Experience of the situation changes according to the spectators' location and the visual vision they perceive. The audience would experience the fantasy space in the film differently from the character of the narrative in relation to their own experience and memory. However, the expression, motion, and background of the character have the potential to affect how the experiences are implied.

Representation of the architecture has elements to express various layers of space that can be perceived by the notion of experience. Imaginary space, as a representation of architectural space or landscape in two dimensional environments, differs from how the space is represented to be built or how it is perceived. This can be discussed with the statement about the representational layers of the imaginary space, as Conrads (1962), in the book Architecture of Fantasy, provides frameworks in order to discuss the value and elements, including concepts such as tangibility, structural aesthetics, transparency, shape and shapelessness, intersection, and creative power of the architectural value. Layers of the utopian fantasy world and imaginary space can be read through representations, and this notion gives the human mind the

ability to understand space with its different layers in relation to different concepts. According to Conrads (1962), the utopian value of the fantasy realm is also related to an imaginative memory but lacking the human spirit, which this study approaches as the experience.

Imagined space does not exist; imaginary space is created by fiction, and it does not allow for the spatial practices that shape real-life, lived spaces, the medium of architecture. On the other hand, imaginary space is a form of expression without boundaries or rules of reality. Types of architecture have their own unknown rules in the fantasy realm. De Domenico (2017) states that architecture in the fantasy realm evolves into forms of a semantic nature close to the language of communication, and the story unfolds the space. Thus, the fantasy realm acts as a communication tool of the narrative for the medium in which they have been created.

2.1.2. Approaches to Imaginary Space

The vision of architecture has something to say about social topics, ideas, and feelings, and architects choose to express their ideologies with visionary architecture in order to get beyond the boundaries of the medium of architecture. Since architectural space has the power to narrate an idea, and the author of it, the architect, seeks an alternate expression, it is perceived as an art form. This represents a key aspect of various imaginary architectural spaces. According to Thomsen (1994), visionary architecture pushes limits beyond imagination and creativity, but when it is built, the ideologies behind this creation process might be damaged. In this manner, this kind of architectural space, which is a production of an imaginary activity, actually belongs to its own medium, other than the medium of architecture. In this

regard, whenever a space represented in the purpose to be built differs from the representational opportunities, the space remains in the fantasy realm.

Visionary architecture is a form of space creation in which imagination and innovation converge, transcending the conventional boundaries of architecture and its construction. It represents the imaginary spaces that do not provide the notions of built architecture. It consists of imaginative, visually represented architectural spaces. This visionary move was followed by a respectable number of architects who focused on expressing the meaning of their created architectural pieces without the motive of building them, instead creating and transplanting the idea in different mediums, including two dimensional drawings and three dimensional models.

The representation of imaginary space has been discussed through architectural representations on drawings, which usually provide the information to build and read through. This leads to the question of how it is possible to read how the representational layers of architectural space and landscapes are perceived. In this regard, visionary architecture is another basis of the architectural spaces created as virtual environments.

The notion of how representations of imaginary acts can be defined in some approaches, such as phantasmagoria. The concept of phantasmagoria, as explored by Walter Benjamin, serves as a metaphor in architecture for the relationship between material reality and its ideological interpretation in a commodified world (Vidler, 1991). This idea highlights how the built environment reflects both physical structures and their often illusory ideological representations. Benjamin's interest in phantasmagoria illuminates the complex intersection between the architecture of the

material world and the realm of fantasy. Phantasmagoria connects to architectural representations by showing how the built environment embodies material reality and ideological interpretations. These representations encapsulate the illusory aspects of urban spaces, acting as platforms for projecting cultural meanings onto physical structures. This perspective supports Benjamin's aim of revealing the multifaceted meanings inherent in architecture.

Through the perspective of phantasmagoria, the layers within architectural representations reveal the intersection between physical forms and their ideological interpretations. These layers contribute to the perceptible presence of structures, shaping subjective experiences of urban spaces and reflecting the dynamics of materiality and ideology. In this context, architectural representations capture the essence related to the phantasmagoria of urban spaces, where the built environment acts as a canvas for projecting ideological and cultural meanings onto physical structures. Concerning illumination and perceptible presence, the layers within architectural representations, examined through the lens of phantasmagoria, reveal the interplay between physical structures and their ideological, often illusory, interpretations. These layers of meaning enhance the perceptible presence of architectural representations, shaping the subjective experience of urban spaces and illustrating the dynamic relationship between tangible structures and the imaginative processes that lend them a spectral reality.

In this regard, within the broad scope of this topic of imaginary spaces, phantasmagoria suggests a vital framework to understand how distinct narratives of the fantasy realm are shaped by its own virtual reality. Transcending its material

construct that is unique to the environment it has been created, spaces can be examined by the layers of embodied interplay between the narrative, character, and the space. In this context, imaginary spaces are not merely figments of the authors' imagination; they are enriched by the narrative, and the elements support the narrative.

Another term, defamiliarization, or ostranenie, comes from a theoretical concept of the indifferent recognition suggested by Russian literary critic Shklovskij. As Crawford (1984) suggests, Shklovskij's ideal is to point out the operation of defamiliarization and its consequent perception in the literature is like the notion of winding a watch, both of which originate the difference, change, value, act of motion, and presence. In this regard, from an architectural point of view, the representation of imaginary spaces across different media reveals distinct patterns of spatial construction that challenge conventional architectural concepts. Through visionary approaches like defamiliarization, authors transform familiar architectural elements into new, imaginative forms, enabling spectators to perceive and interpret space in ways that fundamentally differ from their familiar expectations in the realm of lived environments. These spaces contribute uniquely to the discourse on architecture by expanding the boundaries of what constitutes spatial experience and offering alternative frameworks for understanding space. Defamiliarization compels viewers to question their assumptions about space, function, and meaning by stripping away the habitual associations tied to architectural forms.

These unbuilt spaces, existing only in the realm of imagination, contribute uniquely to the discourse on architecture by expanding the boundaries of what

constitutes spatial experience. They offer alternative frameworks for understanding space, pushing beyond the constraints of physical reality and into the realm of the speculative and the imaginary. The concept of phantasmagoria is related to defamiliarization through its capacity to challenge familiar perceptions and unveil the hidden ideological transpositions within cultural and historical representations in the architectural realm.

Additionally, phantasmagoria relates to defamiliarization by challenging familiar perceptions and exposing ideological interpretations within the forms. It reveals the ideological obscurity of common representations, encouraging a re-examination of the familiar and emerging individuals to view their surroundings in new, critical ways. This process reveals the ideological foundations that shape individuals' understanding of the world.

Since the relationship between phantasmagoria and defamiliarization can be explored through the lens of imaginary spaces as depicted in various mediums, in the realm of moving images, such as films and animations, phantasmagoria serves as a visual and narrative device that gets responses from human minds' familiar perceptions of architectural representations. By imposing techniques like lighting, perspective, and visual effects, these mediums create imaginary architectural spaces that challenge spectators' conventional understanding of built environments. This defamiliarization allows the experiencer to engage with architectural forms in ways that uncover the hidden ideological and representational dimensions within the architectural space.

Similarly, while discussing the imaginary space in two dimensional environments, phantasmagoria can be used to recontextualize architectural settings by distorting, exaggerating, or transforming familiar structures into surreal forms that do not act according to the physical rules of the physical world. These imaginary portrayals of architecture interrupt spectators' conventional understandings of built environments and physical frameworks, inviting audiences to critically examine the ideological and representational implications of the imaginary realm.

To analyze the construction of space within imagined environments, it is essential to examine how the environment interacts with both the narrative and its characters. When a specific element of the environment stands in contrast to the narrative, it serves as evidence of an unfamiliar recontextualization. This phenomenon may provide insights into the complexities of narrative development and the representation of space in creative contexts.

This kind of unexpected interaction between core entities is usually associated with another approach called metalepsis in film studies. Feyersinger (2010) defines metalepsis as a fictional and paradoxical transgression of the boundary between exclusive, distinct narratives based on its definition in literature. As Gérard Genette narrated this paradoxical situation through a rhetorical term called metalepsis in order to explain how the narrator interacts with the diegetic realm. (Feyersinger, 2010:281) However, the term metalepsis was later mainly discussed in the field of film and animation.

In film studies, this narrative technique is often seen where characters engage with their authors or the audience, crossing the fourth wall and transforming a

narrative that is fictional into the phenomenal world. Elements from one narrative world crossing into another can also be addressed as a form of metalepsis that takes place within the distinct realm itself. In this regard, it is possible to explore this interaction between exclusive entities of distinct realms from another perspective, as to how the real entity is portrayed in fantasy realms. For the study, it is relevant to suggest that it is possible to explore the contributions of metalepsis through spaces of the phenomenal world to spaces of a fantasy realm, and there are existing metaleptic effects while the imaginary spaces are created. In this regard, it is possible to explore through the layers of space to answer the question regarding metalepsis within the distinct imaginary space.

In addition to the approaches discussed, Rowe and Slutzky (1968), in their study, discuss the literal and phenomenal meaning of transparency, pointing out the literal and phenomenal layers of architecture. With respect to imaginary space studies, phenomenal layers of architecture can be associated with the concepts of narrative, while literal layers act as a tool for representation. In this regard, as Rowe and Slutzky (1968) suggested, literal layers such as background, middle ground, and foreground can be perceived in the context of visual layers such as lights, shades, voids, and forms, in order to create the representational layers of the imaginary space. Conrads (1962), on the other hand, in Architecture of Fantasy, frames the representational layers of architecture in order to discuss the value and elements of utopian and fantasy, including concepts such as tangibility, structural aesthetics, transparency, shape and shapelessness, intersection, and creative power of the architectural value.

The study focuses on four approaches selected from various discussions of architectural representations and literary definitions, following as transparency, defamiliarization, phantasmagoria, and metalepsis to suggest a framework for imaginary space representations.

2.2. Representation of Imaginary Space

The representation of architecture has elements that express various layers of space that can be perceived by the notion of experience. Imaginary space, as an imaginative representation of architectural space and landscape in fantasy environments, differs from how the space in an actual architectural representation is perceived. The representational layers of the utopian fantasy world and imaginary space can be read through representations, and this notion gives the experiencer the ability to understand space with its different layers in relation to various concepts.

In this regard, if the spaces can be built called architecture of reality, and the spaces visually imagined in any other medium are called fictional architecture, architectural space can be discussed according to how it is perceived. As shown in Table 1, the elements that create architectural space can be classified according to how it is perceived.

Architectural space can be conceptualized through both physical and virtual dimensions. The physical dimensions are the tangible entities that can be perceived through the act of interaction with the masses, including the structures of buildings and urban landscapes. These elements are visible and concrete, forming the material fabric of architectural surroundings. Contrarily, the conceptual aspect of architectural space is perceived through visual representations like paintings, architectural

Table 1

Properties of space

Space	Physical/Tangible	Conceptual/Non-Tangible
Perceived by Observation	Masses: Physical structures (architectural elements of buildings, urban landscapes)	Visual Representations: Paintings, architectural drawings, digital models, or films
Perceived by Experience	Voids: Empty spaces, where the experience of motion happens (courtyards, urban voids, inside of a building)	Imagination/Memory: Experiences of space through personal recollection or creative envisioning

Note, Altınışık, 2025.

drawings, digital models, or spaces projected on two dimensional mediums like cartoons, which capture the essence of space in a non-physical form.

On the other hand, when experienced, architectural space is felt through voids like empty spaces, urban voids, or the interior volumes of buildings. These voids are not just physical absences but also evoke a sense of place and bodily engagement. On the conceptual side, space is perceived through imagination and memory, where personal recollections or creative envisioning bring spaces to life in the mind.

Together, these dimensions highlight the duality of architectural space as both a physical reality and a conceptual experience. In this regard, this research focuses on conceptual architectural space and spaces perceived by experience, leaving the space that is perceived by physical interaction out of the scope.

With the aim of classifying conceptual spaces and spaces that are perceived by experience, considering approaches discussed in the chapter Approaches to Imaginary Space as the metaphors of space, they can be discussed within the framework of the properties of space (Table 2). Thus, the properties of imaginary space can be defined by intersecting with the perception type and metaphors.

Table 2

Properties of imaginary space

Space	Perception	Metaphor	Description
Physical/ Tangible	Observation	Transparency	*Representational layers of space*
	Experience	Defamiliarization	*Unfamiliar representation of familiar concepts*
Conceptual/ Non-tangible	Observation	Phantasmagoria	*Illusionary elements of representation*
	Experience	Metalepsis	*Indefiniteness between reality and representation*

Note, Altınışık, 2025.

Transparency is a physically recognizable property of space that can be observed as the representative layers of imaginary space. Defamiliarization, on the other hand, stands for a property that can be experienced as familiar or unfamiliar. While phantasmagoria is a concept that can be observed through the illusionary elements of representation in imaginary spaces, metalepsis is experienced through the indefiniteness between distinct realities. The elements that help to understand imaginary spaces might be discussed in two subcategories: literary elements that point out narrative and the presence of characters within the frame, and visual elements that are intricate architectural compositions and the unique construction of space.

2.2.1. Literary Elements of Imaginary Space

Architectural elements, whether found in physical structures or their representations, influence the form, function, and boundaries of spaces. In the realm of imaginary environments, landscapes and architectural settings depicted in two dimensional mediums, which are often referred to as imaginary or diegetic spaces, are prevalent in formats such as movies, comics, manga, anime, and cartoons. Although rendered on flat surfaces, these spaces employ various monocular cues to convey depth and simulate a three-dimensional experience.

Landscapes and architectural settings in two dimensional illustrations are frequently termed imaginary spaces or diegetic spaces, created or represented in comics, manga, anime, or cartoons. According to Lefevre (2006), such imaginary spaces that are created on flat surfaces have monocular cues to suggest depth in order to represent three-dimensional space features such as insertion, overlapping,

convergence, relative size, and density gradients. In this regard, imaginary spaces in drawings can be analyzed in terms of their visual style, cultural elements, sequence notion of the panels and scenes, the characters and narrative, light, perspective, and layers of the presentation. These are the catalysts for classifying and understanding how the human mind perceives different types of spaces, regardless of whether the body exists in them.

In the context of spatial design for different mediums, it is possible to state that it does not portray the creative process of traditional architectural and engineering conventions. Instead, it emerges that a more innovative and unusual approach will facilitate the development of its unique environments that enhance the space experience. The imaginary spaces are not experiential throughout bodily engagement, yet cognitively perceptive. But how are those spaces from mediums different than architecture, and can they be discussed with the tools of spatial design?

Weatherford (2012) discusses how architecture in manga and anime has the potential to discuss new perspectives on the representation of architecture. Although anime and architecture are distinct forms of creation, Weatherford's study supports the idea of reading the imaginary spaces in anime with the tools of architecture. In this regard, it is possible to explore the notions of anime space with the metaphors from discussions of architectural representations in order to discuss them from a new point of view. And according to Güzer (2023), cinema should not stick to conventional rules of architecture and engineering while designing the space. This leads the author to envisage the architecture and its elements as it crosses limits beyond. A similar approach can be discussed in the context of different mediums

where the conventional rules of architecture and engineering are not in charge. This is one of the common behaviors of the virtual realms that differ from the architecture of the material world.

The integration of visual elements and intricate architectural compositions produces a dynamic rhythm, which is significantly enhanced by the interplay of light and shadow. The contrasting voids and forms invite exploration and inquiry. Through the use of visual elements, the design offers captivating perspectives that introduce a diverse perception of panels and scenes, layered to uncover the complex narrative inherent in spatial structures. These elements are effectively employed to enhance the spectators' comprehension of depth. Additionally, diegetic elements contribute to the immersive narrative experience, animated by motion and the presence of bodies and characters; this dynamic interaction shapes spectators’ perception and invites active engagement with the unfolding narrative.

2.2.2. Visual Elements of Imaginary Space

The term imaginary encompasses a broader concept than simply the imaginative spaces perceived within architecture. It refers to something more abstract than architecturally perceived imaginary spaces. To enhance the perceivers' understanding of imaginary space, it is essential to categorize it based on its various elements. These elements serve as distinct inputs, influencing how the human mind interprets and experiences those spaces. For example, one may analyze color, texture, light, and sound as integral components that significantly influence the overall atmosphere and emotional resonance of visual environments. A comprehensive examination of these elements allows for a more unique understanding and

perception of the complexity of imaginary spaces. Certainly, the visualization of any element is not unique to imaginary notions, yet it plays a highly noticeable role in the perception and recognition of the frame.

Architectural elements, whether in the material world or the fantasy realm, influence the form, function, and boundaries of space along with the interpretations of how it's perceived. According to Lefevre (2006), such imaginary spaces created on flat surfaces utilize monocular cues to suggest depth, representing three-dimensional characteristics such as insertion, overlapping, convergence, relative size, and density gradients. In this context, imaginary spaces in drawings can be analyzed based on their visual style, cultural elements, sequencing of panels and scenes, the characters and narrative, light, perspective, and layers of presentation.

The definition of boundaries when it comes to the layers of space can be determined with the conception of transparency, besides indefiniteness. How the objects are located, and characters move through the undefined spaces, makes the layers intertwine with each other, and thus, the layers can be read through. When these kinds of undefined spaces are portrayed, the architectural style and geometries often lose meaning, and the definition of space can be read through the experiencers' motions and the narrative.

The undefined spaces in the realm of imagination reflect similarity, being undefinable as a visual style despite the feeling and perception of the narrative. Since the imaginary environment and system has its own rules, the engagement and perception should study the means of the layers of imaginary space, trying to understand the narrative and how the author aimed to demonstrate and interpret the

imaginary space is the main question of the analysis rather than how the spectator perceive it, instead of the audience experience, since as the spectator, the audience has the limited ability to understand imaginary environments rules. The form of the architectural space can be read through its layers in the built environment as well as in imaginary environments. This realm has its own dimensions to represent an architectural space and its own layers of representations according to its medium.

CHAPTER 3

THE MEDIUM AND APPROACH TO MIYAZAKI'S FANTASY REALM

> What is the primal activity of animating? Essentially, it is a form of image-making, but when it is a voluminous activity that is centralized at a particular place and culture, it cannot help but arouse attention and inquiry. (Hu, 2010: 157)

Fantasy realms of a two dimensional medium are not restricted to only comics or animated cartoons, as mentioned in previous chapters, including architectural utopian drawings, yet this study focuses on the particular kind of spaces created in the flat surfaces of those fantasy realms that interact with narrative and

characters. The reason the study focuses on the medium of anime is that it narrows down the scope to a kind of representation that is drawn scene by scene instead of being created via modelling animation. The particular difference between anime and cartoons is that, since anime still consists of the unique techniques of drawing, it differs from other drawing and animation forms of media. The traditional technique of drawing the scenes frame by frame is still used by anime artists.

3.1. The Two Dimensional Medium of Anime

In the book Frames of Anime: Culture and Image-Building, Hu (2010) identifies the growth process of the popular Japanese animation method called anime as a medium genre. In this regard, it is possible to state that anime stands out as a particular kind of point as a genre besides the medium of motion creation, such as cartoons and animations. It is possible to state that both the medium of representation and the creation process is anime are produced in flat surfaces, yet cartoons are animated in virtual environments within more dimensions. Japanese animation possesses a profound quality when the protagonist is created by strong auteurs like Hayao Miyazaki (Hu, 2010: 24). Since the medium itself stands out from the animation methods by enclosing the technique of drawing on flat surfaces.

Furthermore, Ruh (2014) focuses on the concept of Japanese animation as anime in contrast to flat surface medium products such as cartoons and comics. The contrasting discussion on the topic of anime studies focuses on how viewers interact with those two dimensional images (Ruh, 2014: 166). In addition, Marden (2012) discusses the new methods and conceptions of architectural visualization in anime from the perspective of imaginary spaces and their relationship with Japanese

culture. Imaginary spaces are not only produced by architecture but also by architectural components, objects, and landscapes. Imaginary spaces also have an impact on the production of imaginary characters in relation to the narrative (Marden, 2012: 3634). Thus, it is a form of medium that contains visualizations of space settings and narrative, supported by cinematic inquiries like movement and perspective.

> …the medium show influences from such Japanese traditional arts as *Kabuki* and the woodblock print (originally popular culture phenomena themselves), but it also makes use of worldwide artistic traditions of twentieth-century cinema and photography. (Napier, 2005: 4)

Hayao Miyazaki is one of the few authors who continues to create his fantasy worlds using traditional techniques in the anime genre by drawing the scenes on flat surfaces. As Napier (2005) mentions, Hayao Miyazaki, as the author, is a global treasure for his creations. Apocalyptic anime, such as the films of Miyazaki, contain visions of hope and rebirth; most of anime's apocalyptic fare is much darker, centering on the destruction of society and the planet itself. (Napier, 2005: 29) This kind of approach and worldviews made Miyazaki's creations distinct from others, in terms of visualization and narrative building.

It is relevant that anime is a distinct genre of synthesis of different art forms, mediums, and approaches. Architectural spaces and landscapes in anime are a kind of synthesis of imaginary space, which is imagined and created in two dimensional environments and architecture represented in film studies, with the experience of motion. In this regard, spaces constructed in the realm of anime act as an imaginary space created in a medium of a flat surface environment that provides qualities of a

fantasy world created by the author. Fantasy spaces in anime have the elements of representation and phenomenological layers in relation to the narrative and characters. Thus, architecture and space can be constructed and perceived.

As the research focuses on imaginary spaces, the space representations in Miyazaki's fantasy realm are character-oriented, allowing the space and its properties, which can be observed and perceived, as mentioned before, to adapt to the narrative. Visual properties that represent masses and voids, and literal properties that represent the adaptation of the space to the narrative, construct the imaginary spaces. In other words, imaginary architectural space created in fantasy realms, such as the genre medium of anime, is not only a background for characters, but it is also an effective prop as a part of the mise-en-scène that the narrative revolves around.

3.2. Space Representation of Miyazaki

Hayao Miyazaki, with his partnership with Studio Ghibli, has a visually recognizable image identity in his works, such as My Neighbor Totoro (1988), Howl's Moving Castle (2004), and The Boy and the Heron (2023), in the context of the visual elements and the aesthetics of the components related to the stories written by him. These visual and aesthetic elements are also possible to read through the architecture and landscape, which are highly integrated with nature in his realms.

This contrast of the concepts gives the fantasy spaces the opportunity to be read through different layers, especially in the context of existential architectural notions of perception. Despite the Western inspirations of fantasy as a global architectural style, spaces constructed in Miyazaki anime are often highly related to Japanese culture. Blagrove (2015) states that Miyazaki has distinctive aesthetics and

background preparations for the settings of his animated films, and Miyazaki successfully created his own worlds, even though the story was an adaptation. Considering that architecture is also a part of everyday life in response to human need for shelter for living, Miyazaki implements visual and aesthetic aspects to the imaginary space with ordinary objects in the details in order to make this primitive need find value.

This study focuses on Castle in the Sky (1986), Howl's Moving Castle (2004), and The Boy and the Heron (2023) in order to narrow down the scope of discussion with enough variations of the imaginary spaces of Miyazaki's fantasy realm. The reason these three films were selected for analysis out of the films directed by Hayao Miyazaki is because of their distinctive exploration of architectural space as a narrative and visual element. Thus, it is possible to explore the construction and representations of his approach in terms of the fantasy realm created by the author.

The story of Castle in the Sky (1986) revolves around a young girl named Sheeta, the last heir to the legendary kingdom of Laputa, and Pazu, a boy who dreams of discovering Laputa, a legendary sky castle that his father once photographed. Laputa floats in the sky like an island, where its own habitats of robots living in its high-tech architectural spaces blend with elements of nature.

Howl's Moving Castle (2004), on the other hand, is an adaptation of a British novel of the same name by Diana Wynne Jones, which tells the story of a young woman named Sophie, cursed by a bad witch called Witch of the Waste to turn into an elderly woman going into adventure and ending up at the Moving Castle of

misunderstood magician Howl Pendragon. Fantasy spaces in Howl's Moving Castle are balanced between ordinary spaces of the city and spaces of the magicians. Nature and landscapes are mostly in contact with fantastic spaces rather than urban fabric.

Lastly, The Boy and the Heron (2023) is a film claimed to be he last film directed by Hayao Miyazaki during its production. However, Miyazaki decided to come back to the studio after the film. The story takes place in a new house of Mahito, a young man who lost his mother in a hospital fire, and a heron that later guides him to a hidden tower in the woods near that house, where Mahito discovers a fantastic world of shifting realities.

The methodology is of visual analysis of imaginary spaces in Miyazaki's selected fantasy worlds in order to suggest a discussion on how architectural spaces and landscapes are perceived from the perspective of characters. Thus, the analysis contains comparisons of the visual elements that create fantasy spaces and representational elements of the imaginary spaces constructed by the author. The analysis relies on the categorization of properties of architecture, mostly focusing on the conceptual spaces perceived by experience. All three films have a story that takes place in an individual environment with its own rules, evolving around a lesson-giving narrative with a powerful lead who also discovers themselves. The integration of nature and environmental problems, and how they are portrayed in the narrative, such as war and violence, gives hints of Miyazaki's ideology and worldview, despite being an original scenario or an adaptation.

The cases are aimed to be chosen as diverse as possible, following: one from the beginning of Miyazaki's early production with Studio Ghibli, Castle in the Sky

(1986), one from a later period of production, Howl's Moving Castle (2004), and the latest production by Hayao Miyazaki, The Boy and the Heron (2023). As in the period this study started to be structured, Miyazaki stated that The Boy and the Heron would be his last anime film and masterpiece of production, yet, after finishing the production process, it is reported that the author decided to continue his anime production career. In addition to diversity, in common, all three films contain fantasy elements regarding the narrative and setting of their fantasy world, as the study also focuses on a distinct section of imaginatively produced spaces. The visualization of that fantasy architecture is arranged on the same plane of observation in terms of aesthetics.

The visual and aesthetic elements in Miyazaki's films can be read through the architecture and landscape, which are highly integrated with nature and, despite being inspired by global styles imported from Western culture, are often highly related to Japanese culture. Monumentality of the imaginary fragments is usually delivered from Japanese culture in the Miyazaki fantasy realm. The significant influence of imaginary elements is deeply intertwined with Japanese culture in terms of literary and visual fragments of the fantasy realms. Gossin (2015) points out how Miyazaki manages to express the aesthetics of everyday life through the visualization of the scenes with small, ordinary elements of composition, such as raindrops and the motion of wind.

Since architectural space is also a part of everyday life, this primitive need finds value in visual and aesthetic implements of authors' fantasy realm, with ordinary objects in the details of space. The imaginary spaces of Miyazaki are highly

connected with nature, embodied with an organic and ordinary notion of life as a visual style. How the author implies space elements and fragments in the representation of scene effects, and how spectators engage with their emotional response to imaginary space.

Despite the fact that all three films take place in different settings, with different narratives and environments of imaginary spaces, the layers and elements have common points to refer to Miyazaki's visual style of portraying the imaginary space. In addition, the imaginary spaces in the three films represent the variations of architecture portrayed in Miyazaki's fantasy realm.

3.2.1. Castle in the Sky

Castle in the Sky contains three main imaginary spaces, including the village, the military base, and Laputa, the castle. The film takes place mostly in spaces that float in the sky, despite the village where Pazu lives.

The main spaces can be discussed in relation to their surroundings in terms of how they are portrayed in the fantasy realm. The first architectural space the audience faces is the village (Figure 2), an urban setting that has a foundation on the ground and is represented identically to its average example in the realm of architecture. However, another depiction of the village reveals that (Figure 3), in fact, the process of envisioning the urban fabric includes imaginary elements that allow the architectural forms to hang onto the steep slopes surrounding them.

The second architectural space is the military base (Figure 4), which has a massive settlement of a stone building complex. The scale of the masses is recognizably larger than it should be, yet not impossible to replicate in the real world.

Figure 2

The Village that Pazu lives

Castle in The Sky, 00:06:26

Figure 3

The Village that Pazu lives

Castle in The Sky, 00:12:17

Figure 4

Military base

Castle in The Sky, 00:45:51

And lastly, the audience faces Laputa (Figure 5), a castle that floats in the sky with the help of a magical core that the narrative takes the protagonist towards. The castle consists of two sections, a magical core and a castle that emerged with nature. Despite all those spaces being products of creative envisioning, the level at which they are perceived changes according to their properties of imagination.

As far as concerned in the statement before, which helps understand imaginary architecture in three subcategories, literary elements, visual elements, and representative elements, these three imaginary spaces can be discussed in terms of how they fit into the narrative, which kinds of architectural compositions they occur in, and how they are constructed to be represented in the medium of anime. Starting with the village, it is certain that its urban construction is unique yet not unfamiliar.

Figure 5

Laputa

Castle in The Sky, 01:27:05

As can be observed in the film, the visualization of the village represents a settlement constructed by a community of mining facilities on the slopes surrounding it. The background is mainly constructed by the natural elements, such as soil and rock. The middleground mostly presents the urban settlement. And the foreground is mostly where motion happens. From an architectural point of view, the foreground in the scenes takes place in the village, including construction materials such as stones and architectural elements such as doors and stairs.

On the other hand, the military base is constructed with massive stone materials, and the background includes the building's own facilities along with the horizon. It is possible to state that the scale of the settlement can be perceived as the scene starts with Pazu held in the dungeons (Figure 6), and then shows the whole set of buildings. The foremost parts of the settlement translucents into the background,

allowing the middleground and background to merge together, and leaving the foreground to be read within the notion.

Figure 6

Dungeons of the military base

Castle in The Sky, 00:38:20

The Castle, Laputa, on the other hand, was constructed with unique architectural elements such as one-way vision stones. (Figures 7, 8) This notion of construction elements allows the imaginary space created within the castle to break down the visual boundaries and allows the spectator to perceive the middleground as background, vice versa, background as the middleground. Yet this kind of interpretation is only possible when this imaginary space is perceived from inside of it, as a consequence of the construction materials' properties.

The main imaginary spaces portrayed in the film are the urban setting of the village, a massive military base which is monumentally enclosive, and the Castle that

Figure 7

Laputa vision from inside

Castle in The Sky, 01:31:10

Figure 8

Laputa vision from outside

Castle in The Sky, 01:31:16

sustains its power from a kind of fantastic composition. It is possible to approach the urban setting of the village through its representative layers in order to analyze the construction on the flat surface using transparency. On the other hand, the flying castle Laputa allows exploring concepts as defamiliarization, phantasmagoria, and metalepsis through its fantasy elements within the themes of change and illusion.

3.2.2. Howl's Moving Castle

The fantasy realm of Howl's Moving Castle contains several settings of urban spaces. Still, most of the narrative revolves around the house of a sorcerer named Howl Jenkins Pendragon, which he refers to as the Moving Castle. The Moving Castle has a unique entrance located below its ground elevation, which is defined by a magical door that allows the castle to reach four different locations in the same fantasy realm. In this manner, the Moving Castle acts as a catalyst for the act of metalepsis in the same world. The definition of boundaries when it comes to the layers of space can be determined with the conception of transparency, besides indefiniteness. How the objects are located, and characters move through the undefined spaces, makes the layers intertwine with each other. Howl's Moving Castle does not revolve around a particular number of main imaginary spaces other than the Moving Castle, but the film contains secondary imaginary spaces associated with it.

In this film, the first imaginary space the audience faces is the Moving Castle, yet the representation of it is foggy in order to encourage the emotion of curiosity (Figure 9). This emphasis that the author is motivated to represent space fragments not only as a background or a location where the narrative takes place, but also as a character of the story and the scene (Figure 10). Its magical essence of being a

Figure 9

First sight of Moving Castle

Howl's Moving Castle, 00:00:39

Figure 10

Sofie's first sight of Moving Castle

Howl's Moving Castle, 00:18:44

soccerer's house gives the Moving Castle a unique dimension of changing its own space organization, fragments, and the location it can be reached through, despite the castle being in motion in the foothills of the mountains nearby.

The key fantasy element to this action is the main entrance door handle of the Moving Castle (Figures 11, 12). This action lets the main entrance open to the pre-set location in the realm of film. As far as it is concerned, this kind of interaction between distinct spaces can be approached through the notion of metalepsis. The metalepsis mentioned in the change of location through the fantasy key element is an example of a form of metalepsis that takes place within the fantasy realm itself. The imaginary spaces that the Moving Castle reaches through are followed as two urban settings of cities, one central and the other coastal, the foothills of the mountains where the Castle is in the act of moving, the Hatter, and the rural area of Howl's uncle's house. The door handle also indicates an unknown space associated with the color black, but it leads to the warfield instead of making the castle reach through a certain location.

Another imaginary space has a significant relationship with the Moving Castle, and also the narrative, is the atelier of Sofie, which is located in the Hatter that belonged to his father in the past (Figure 13). When the organization of space changed by Howl in Moving Castle, the space enlarges to create a room identical to the atelier of the protagonist, Sofie. (Figure 14). Even the surroundings and the view throıugh the windows are reminiscent of the original atelier. This change in the space causes the Moving Castle to have another distinct location to reach, the hometown of Sofie or vice versa, because the main entrance has a new location to reach, the space

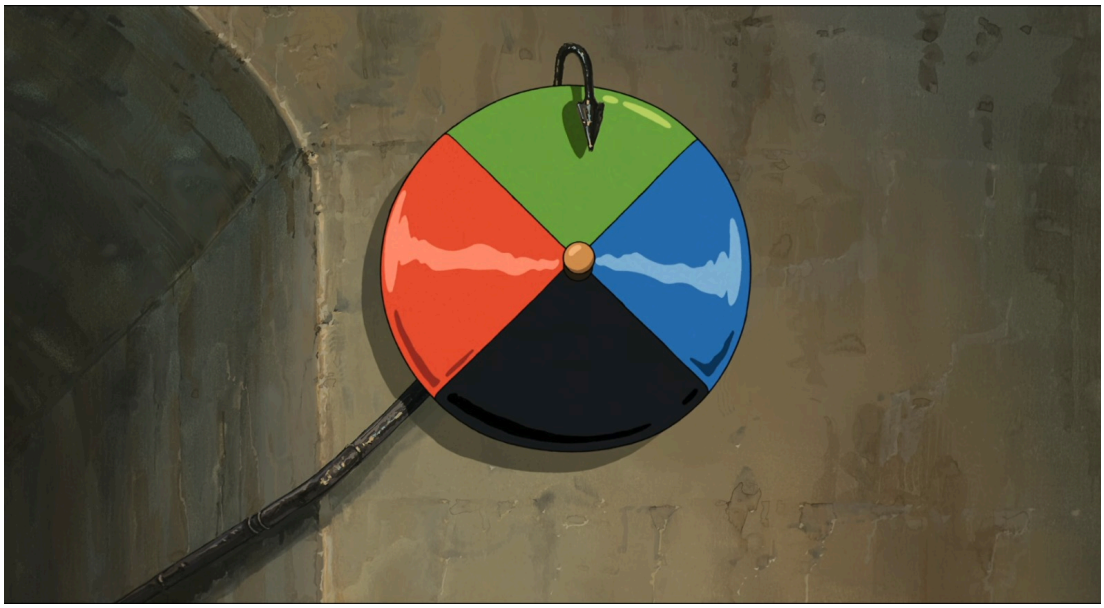
Figure 11

Door handle of main entrance

Howl's Moving Castle, 00:27:01

Figure 12

The wheel connected to the door handle



Howl's Moving Castle, 00:27:04

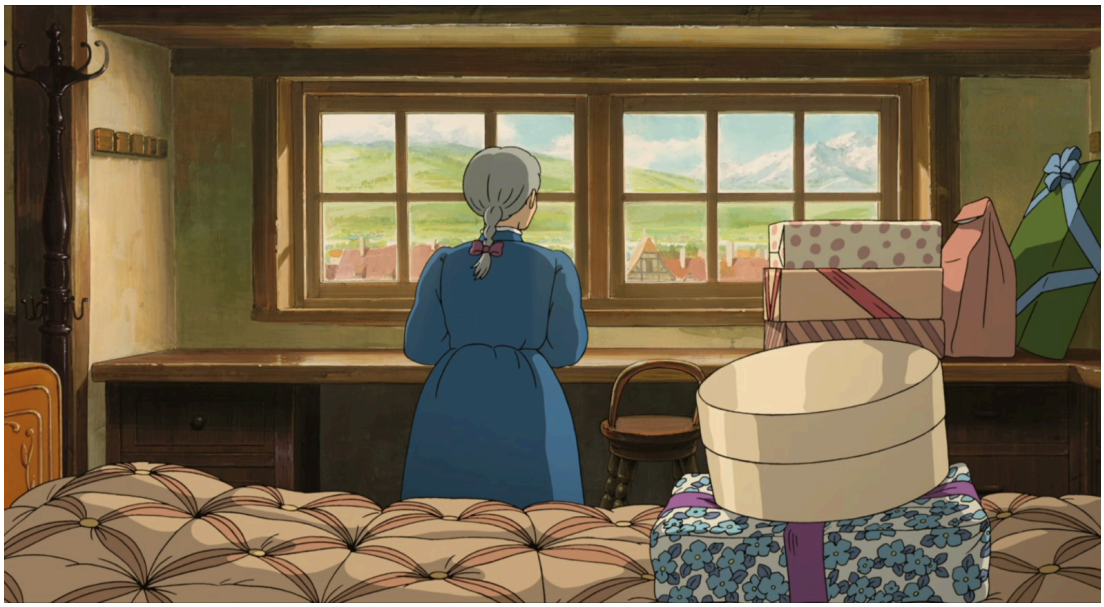
Figure 13

Sofie's atelier at the Hatter

Howl's Moving Castle, 00:01:41

Figure 14

Sofie's atelier at Moving Castle



Howl's Moving Castle, 01:20:06

of the Moving Castle reorganizes itself according to. This interdependent act of imaginary space is an inner metalepsis that characters of the film experience and spectators observe. In this regard, it is possible to discuss how imaginary spaces interact with each other through various metalepses.

3.2.3. The Boy and the Heron

The narrative focuses on an abandoned tower in the woods near the family's house, later explored by Mahito. The film contains a glimpse of the urban settings, but the narrative focuses on the family's house and the tower. The family mentioned is the mother's side of Mahito, where one of the great uncles built a tower around a mysterious meteor that crashed onto the land (Figure 15). The tower contains an alternate fantasy realm of its own instead of having distinct imaginary spaces.

Figure 15

The meteor

The Boy and the Heron, 01:17:32

Apparently, the tower gains its magical nature and time-bending powers from the meteor in the core and is represented with iridescent lights (Figure 16). This allows the element of light to come to the forefront among all the representative layers of imaginary space, highlighting it as the most significant element.

Figure 16

The great uncle discovering the meteor

The Boy and the Heron, 01:18:04

The tower acts as a threshold that opens a gate to an alternative fantasy realm that contains landscapes (Figure 17), mostly occupied by wild creatures, symbolizing the circle of life and the balance of nature. Along with these landscapes, the buildings also create urban spaces where those wild creatures mimic the urban life fragments and human acts. The tower appears within the alternative fantasy realm, suggesting that the layering of this realm is more complicated than it shows (Figure 18). Although Mahito enters this realm through the tower, it suggests another depiction of

the same tower, with surroundings distinct from reality. Mahito even mentions that the tower in that alternate reality looks like a tower he knows (Miyazaki, 2023, 01:25:52), referring to the magical tower that he accessed this fantasy realm through. This indicates a vertical relationship within the same fantasy realm.

Figure 17

Cemetery in the middle of an island occupied by pelicans

The Boy and the Heron, 00:52:20

Other imaginary spaces that are not associated with fantasy action in film also indicate the role of liminal spaces, symbolizing Mahito's journey through the fantasy realm ahead. Like the narrow corridors located in the main house of the settlement, the surroundings give hints through narrow and rhythmic openings (Figure 19). Even though the proportions of space are more orthogonal than the tower, the rhythm foreshadows the openings in the meteor that create the core of the tower.

Figure 18

The tower within de alternate realm

The Boy and the Heron, 01:25:48

Figure 19

One of the narrow corridors at the family house settlement

The Boy and the Heron, 00:08:13

The imaginary spaces should have been discussed from two sides. First, the imaginary spaces that represent the fantasy realm of Miyazaki, and second, the imaginary spaces that represent the fantasy within the realm of the tower. In this regard, it is possible to discuss which fragments are familiar and which are not in light of the metaphor of defamiliarization and phantasmagoria.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF IMAGINARY SPACES IN MIYAZAKI ANIME

Considering how imaginary spaces are represented in the selected three films, this chapter focuses on one imaginary space from each film to discuss how each one of them is represented within similar scenes and settings. Then, the approaches of fantasy architecture discussions mentioned in the classification of imaginary space metaphors mentioned before will be associated with the representative layers of the imaginary spaces.

4.1. Decoding the Imaginary Spaces in Miyazaki Anime

In order to discuss how various imaginary spaces show similar representative approaches, this chapter classifies imaginary spaces in three films into their themes and explores them according to the perception of space mentioned before.

Transparency suggests the metaphor of representational layers of space, how the author constructed the observable layers of the scene for the spectators. The layers of presentation are not classified according to their standpoint or order in the scene. The foreground layer contains the highlighted features of imaginary spaces, while the middle ground contains elements of space that are under the influence of the features highlighted in the foreground. The background supports and finishes the scene with filling elements.

On the other hand, phantasmagoria suggests the metaphor of those illusory elements of representation, within those layers explored through transparency. Defamiliarization suggests the metaphor of how unfamiliar representation of familiar concepts is portrayed in the imaginary spaces that characters experience through narrative. And metalepsis suggests the metaphor of indefiniteness between reality and the representation of imaginary spaces that characters experience through narrative.

The discussion in this chapter explores the imaginary spaces in three cases in the Miyazaki anime realm by classifying them into two subcategories: the urban settings and constantly changing spaces. Thus, similar representative fragments can be discussed within similar settings of the scheme.

4.1.1. City Settings and Transparency

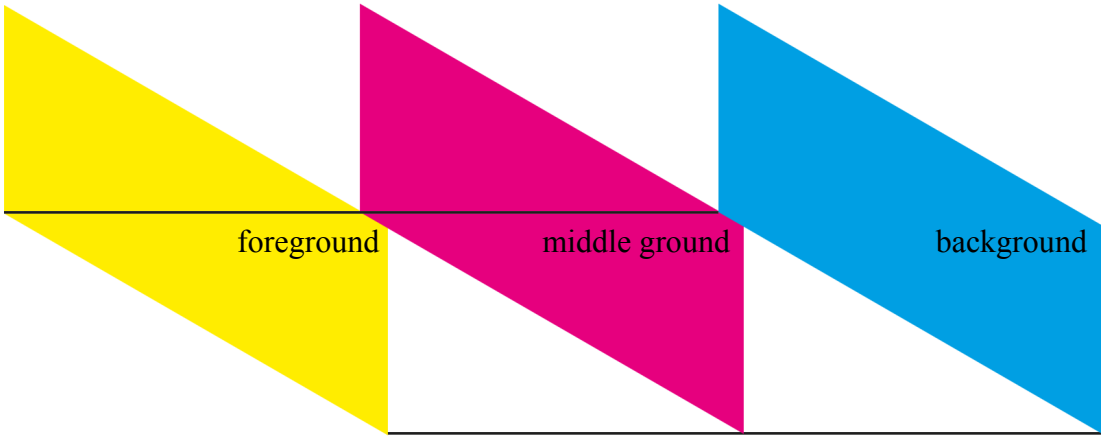
The urban settings are significant as the landscapes in the Miyazaki anime realm. The author indicates environmental and socio-cultural reflections, such as war, in the urban imaginary spaces he represents in his fantasy realm. Castle in the Sky reflects a long-lasting secret war between the human population on Earth and the citizens of the legendary nation of the flying castle Laputa. On the other side, the narrative of Howl's Moving Castle revolves around a war happening between two kingdoms. However, there is only a mention that the story takes place around the time of a war, most likely the Second World War, in The Boy and the Heron.

In order to explore how city settings are represented in the fantasy realm of Miyazaki anime, a scheme of representative layers inspired by transparency can be created. As Figure 20 shows, from left to right, the foreground is represented with the color yellow, the middle ground is represented with the color magenta, and the background is represented with the color cyan. The color scheme is delivered from the standard CMYK color space in order to simplify the representation. The analysis of the imaginary space will be based on the framework suggested by Rowe and Slutzky (1964) in their study, Transparency, regarding the literal and phenomenal layers of a visual presentation, and the framework of fantasy space pointed out in Architecture of Fantasy (Conrads, 1962) regarding the representational layers of space.

The village in Castle in the Sky represents the function of the locals' occupation, which is the mining facilities. (Figure 21) In order to highlight the mining facilities, the author with the help of a foreground of fog. Since the second

Figure 20

Representative layers of transparency



Note, as in order left to the right; foreground, middle ground, background.

Altınışık, 2025

facility that can be read is the vertical elements of the built environment, the middle ground of the representations can be read through the chimney stacks. And lastly, the background layer of the representation of urban space is filled with identical buildings. Thus, it is possible to state that the author intentionally highlights the facility of the fog in order to express the characteristics of the imaginary space. The representative layers can be identified and fit into a flat surface to create a representation of imaginary space, allowing the author to display the atmosphere of the urban space composition of the village. As illustrated in Figure 22, the representative layers of the village are exploded into three representative layers of foreground, middle ground, and background.

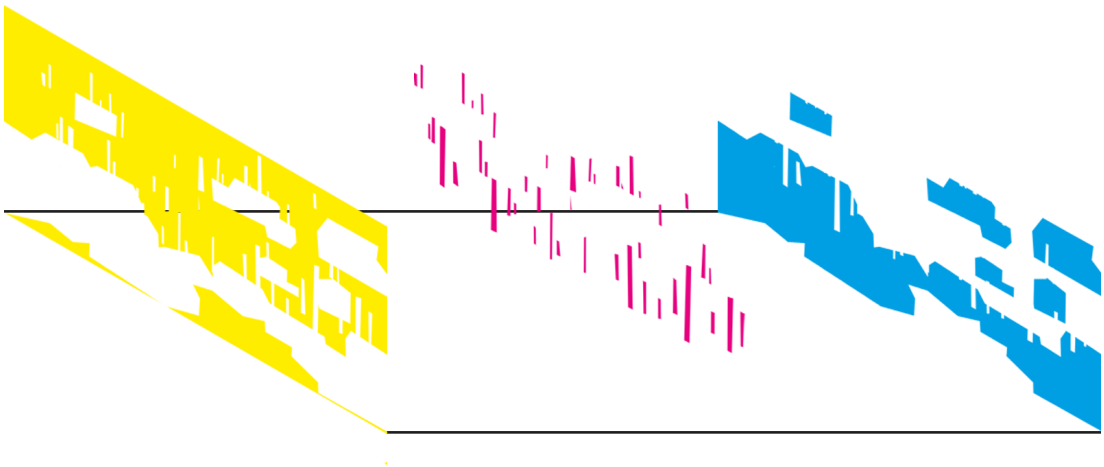
Figure 21

Urban setting of the village that Pazu lives

Castle in the Sky, 00:11:01

Figure 22

Decoding the representative layers of village



Altınışık, 2025

On the other hand, Sofie's homeland, Waste, in Howl's Moving Castle, is represented with natural light and shade. Although the scene is a widespread view of the urban space, as in the village in Castle in the Sky, the elements highlighted differ from it (Figure 23). The foreground of the representative layers is the urban setting of Waste. The element of shadow in the foremost lands can be observed in the frame, helping the urban setting to be read first in the composition. The middle ground, on the other hand, is the surroundings of the urban setting that are highlighted with the light element. And lastly, the background layer is the shaded ground in front and the mountains located far away. When the layers are put in the scheme template as shown in Figure 24, the representative layers prove that in this composition, the foreground layer comprises the imaginary space of the urban setting in the scene.

Figure 23

Sophie's homeland, Waste

Howl's Moving Castle, 00:12:36

Figure 24

Decoding the representative layers of Waste

Altınışık, 2025

In comparison to the previous two widespread views of the urban space, in The Boy and The Heron, the urban settings are not pictured this way in a scene; rather, they show close-ups with camera movements. One of the significant scenes of an urban setting is where Mahito finds that the tower within the alternate realm is similar to the real one (Figure 25). Yet the representative layer of foreground is similar to the village in Castle in the Sky, a garden followed by the grove, the highlighted element of urban space hiding the tower behind itself for a sense of curiosity. In the middle ground layer, the tower can be observed as its remarkable element roof. And this time, the background is the sky, to fill the scene for a complete composition.

Figure 25

Tower within the alternate realm

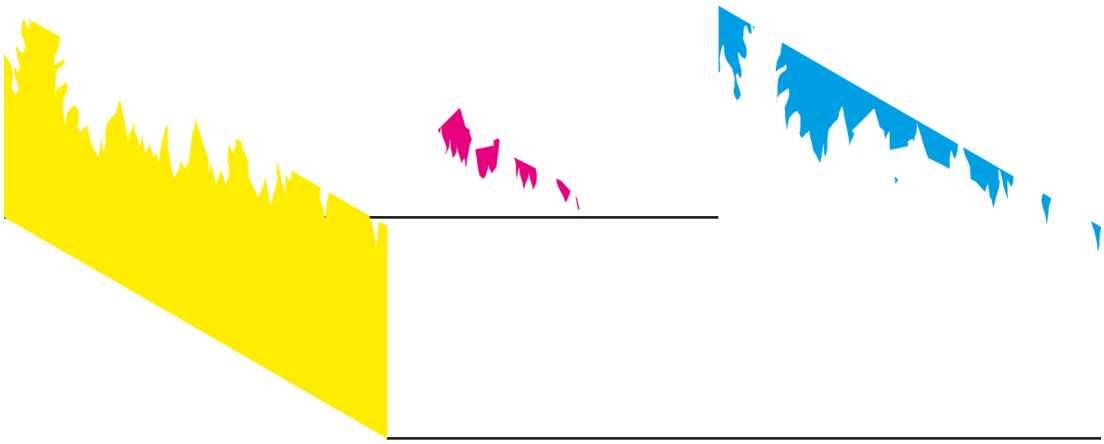
The Boy and The Heron, 01:25:38

As shown in the representative layers in Figure 26, it can be observed that it is similar to the village in terms of what layers consist of. Foreground contains an element to support the emotions towards the literal urban space element in the scene, and the layer of middle ground consists of the architectural element of the mentioned imaginary space. Yet, this time, the element in the representative layer of background is not dominant as it has been in the previous two. However, it is possible to state that even distinct ways of sensing the urban spaces have similar properties of representative layers.

It is possible to state that the representative layer of foreground in urban settings also indicates the illusory elements of what the author aims to highlight most. The layer of middle ground supports the foreground, and the representative layer of background completes the scene.

Figure 26

Decoding the representative layers of the tower



Altınışık, 2025

4.1.2. Constantly Changing Spaces, Phantasmagoria, Defamiliarization and Metalepsis

The imaginary spaces in the Miyazaki anime realm often show signals of change, and this motion allows the imaginary space to act as one of the characters instead of being a place where the narrative takes place. These imaginary spaces transcend their role as a background and become assertive characters of the narrative. As far as it is concerned, a representative background layer is not always what is present in the back of the scene; instead, it is a part of the composition. Yet, the imaginary spaces with the action of changing are not only a part of the composition, but also the inputs to bend how those representative layers are composed.

The action of changing in terms of representation is highly connected with the concept of metalepsis within the same realm. On the other hand, the distortion of the functions of architectural elements in those actions is reminiscent of the metaphor of defamiliarization. The shift in the existence of those imaginary spaces becomes the scene and narrative itself.

Laputa from The Castle in the Sky is comprised of a core intertwined with nature elements, formed by the branches of an enormous tree, and a base that consists of a hybrid of high-tech and magical elements, gaining its power from the Crystal that Sheeta owns as one of the royals from the family. There is also evidence of spells that actually cast magic in the narrative. In this regard, it is possible to state that the base of Laputa, which seems like high-tech construction, is actually a form of high magic. As seen in Figure 27, the cubic modular elements of the base shift

Figure 27

The base of Laputa

Castle in the Sky, 01:41:53

Figure 28

The destruction of the base of Laputa

Castle in the Sky, 01:56:37

around to manipulate the space in order to open various gates to different spaces. The notion of change in the space in Laputa is a form of metalepsis in terms of how this action requires the magic from the crystal and how the cubic construction elements are not able to form any space without the power from the core (Figure 28).

On the other hand, the Moving Castle is a metaleptic walking machine in terms of its ability to open gates to multiple places. Moving Castle owes this interdependent overlapping structure to the magic of the fire demon called Calcifer and its presence in the fireplace in the composition (Figure 29).

Calcifer, as a fire demon who set an agreement with the soccerer Howl Pendragon, is not allowed to leave the fireplace. Yet when he forced the fireplace to leave by Sofie, when the Moving Castle's location was exposed to the soccerer of the

Figure 29

Calcifer in the fireplace

Howl's Moving Castle, 00:41:29

Figure 30

Calcifer leaving the fireplace

Howl's Moving Castle, 01:37:31

kingdom Sulliman, the Moving Castle loses all its metaleptic interconnections along with the construction of the masses (Figure 30). As a response to losing its core fragment, similarly to Laputa, Moving Castle collapses.

Similar to the Moving Castle, the tower in The Boy and the Heron is another gate opening for a metaleptic experience. The illusion of the ground being a liquid luminal element for a gate to the realm within the alternate realm allows the space elements to act out of their nature as an example of bending the familiar act of standing on the ground to the unfamiliar behavior of sinking into it (Figure 31). This reaction of the ground material is clarified as being one of the illusions that the Heron creates in order to play with the cognition of Mahito. Yet, the illusions turn to an interactive process of the term gate or the action of trespassing, allowing those who commit to be a part of it to end up on the other side of the passage.

Figure 31

The liquefaction of ground in the tower

The Boy and The Heron, 00:49:51

On the other hand, the towers get their illusory powers from the meteor, and Mahito later explores that the construction of the realm within the tower relies on the building blocks (Figure 32). Similarly to Laputa and Moving Castle, when the building blocks collapsed, the imaginary space within the fantasy realm of the tower collapsed (Figure 33).

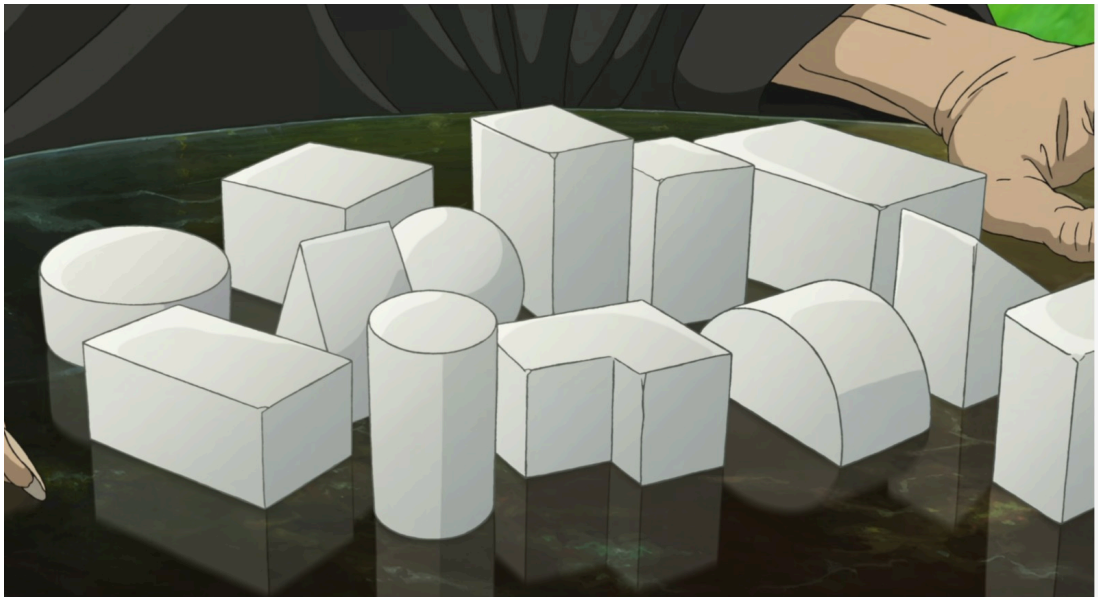
In this regard, it is possible to state that the action of passing through the luminal elements in the fantasy realm of the three cases consists of metaleptic action along with the defamiliarization of the elements. Thus, the construction of the imaginary spaces allows for interconnected representations at once. The core elements of magic source in the three films, crystal, Calcifer, and the meteor, contradict each other in terms of the way of their use, although their purpose and impact show similar effects on the imaginary spaces. On the other hand, the core elements of illusions in those imaginary spaces are also a response to those magic sources, which affected those changes in space, supporting the idea of how the construction and representation of imaginary spaces are connected to the illusory and metaleptic experiences.

4.2. Representations of the Imaginary Spaces in Miyazaki Anime

The imaginary spaces of the fantasy realm of Miyazaki anime consist of various metaphors to support representative layers to create imaginary spaces in the two dimensional medium of flat surfaces. Focusing on the chosen imaginary spaces are Laputa from The Castle in the Sky, Moving Castle from Howl's Moving Castle, and the Tower from The Boy and the Heron. Since the properties of imaginary spaces were monitored and analyzed from the point of view introduced in the discussion

Figure 32

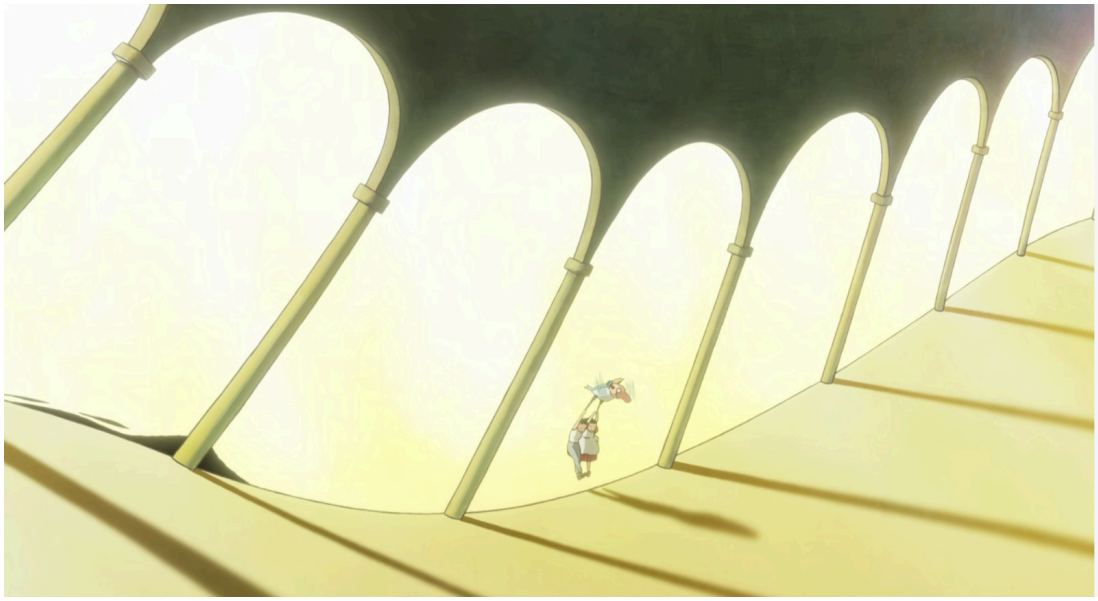
Building blocks



The Boy and The Heron, 01:52:07

Figure 33

The imaginary space within the fantasy realm of the tower collapses



The Boy and The Heron, 01:54:39

earlier in the previous chapters regarding how they fit into the approaches of fantasy architecture metaphors, mentioned in the classification of imaginary space metaphors that the author deciphered.

As far as it is concerned, Laputa consists of two contradictory main parts, while Moving Castle revolves around a machine-like construction powered and held together by the chimney, and the tower is constructed around a meteor that consists of powers from out of the realm.

The core elements of those imaginatively produced spaces are the illusory core elements, which follow as the crystal from Laputa, Calcifer from Moving Castle, and the meteor from the tower, affecting how the representative layers are constructed. Table 3 clarifies how those core elements affect the imaginary spaces despite being non-architectural elements of those.

Table 3

Agents of imaginary space

Imaginary Space	Non-architectural Core Element	Metaphorical Impact on Space
Castle in the Sky: Laputa	Crystal	*Reaction / Activation based illusory interactions*
Moving Castle	Calcifer	*Metaleptic interconnections*

The Tower	Meteor	*Illusory represented metaleptic experience*

Note, Altınışık, 2025.

Table 3 examines the agents of imaginary spaces to compare how they are transcended by their metaphorical impact through their core elements. The crystal is the core feature of Laputa, enabling reaction based illusory interactions within the imaginary space. It is capable of distorting the perception and structure of Laputa and activating reactions of mechanisms along with magical interactions within imaginary space. Similarly, in Moving Castle, the core element, Calcifer, interwines with the building's structure, creating illusory spatial perceptions within the imaginary spaces and allowing metaleptic interconnections with various locations throughout the door.

On the other hand, meteor allows the Tower to create an alternate reality where a similar metaleptic experience takes another dimension, including the fragment of time with the corridor and the doors opening a gate to different time spectrums (Figure 34). These interactions share a principle of how the nature of architectural space representations is structured in Miyazaki's fantasy realms.

In comparison, the only life form in three of the cores is the fire demon Calcifer, and it is possible to classify all three cores as matter or forces from the outside of the world. Despite their inherent differences, all of these core elements impact the imaginary space similarly in terms of changes and how the effects of these changes are reflected. In conclusion, all of those agents' impacts on spaces created in

Figure 34

The doors in the Tower

The Boy and The Heron, 01:56:19

Miyazaki's fantasy realms as a character of narrative where illusions and metaleptic interactions converge to redefine the essence of imaginary architectural space representations in fantasy realms.

Since the cores that take the role in the changes of imaginary spaces can be identified as agents, it is possible to examine their reactions to the discussed approaches in two categories in order to explore their role further. The agents can either actively or passively catalyze the reaction, which can be examined through different approaches. The agent, as an active catalyst, takes a role in the action or state directly affecting the situation. In contrast, the agent, as a passive catalyst, takes a role in the action or state with its force or influence on the situation.

As the core element and agent of the imaginary space in Laputa, the Crystal influences architectural elements. As stated before, the change in the space in Laputa,

being a form of metalepsis in terms of how this action requires the magic from the Crystal, can be identified as a passive reaction regarding how the force of the Crystal indirectly affects the changes (Figure 35). The modular cubes, architectural elements, and gates are influenced by the power, yet the crystal acts only as a catalyst in action.

Figure 35

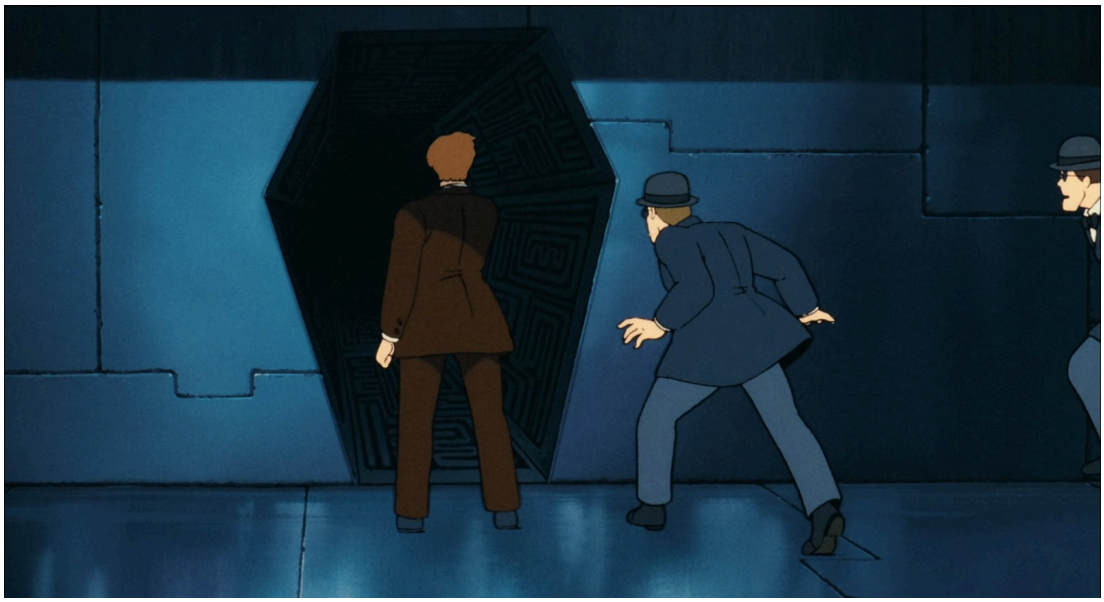
Construction modules inside Laputa influenced by the force of Crystal

Castle in the Sky, 01:44:38

Similarly, the representative layers of imaginary spaces portrayed in film are also indirectly influenced by this power, allowing Laputa to be represented as soaring through the sky, corresponding to the mysterious power of the Crystal. On the other hand, the Crystal actively possesses similar construction concepts as walls, gates, and even gardens, which translate into unfamiliar representations like see-through massive blocks and invisible doors (Figures 17, 18, 36).

Figure 36

Invisible door inside Laputa influenced by the force of Crystal



Castle in the Sky, 01:39:10

As the only life form core element among the three cases and the agent of the imaginary space in Moving Castle, Calcifer takes a more active role in metaphors than the Crystal takes in Laputa. The undefinitenessless, illusions, and in-realm metalepses are actively affected by Calcifer itself. In order to possess changes and illusions in space and around the Moving Castle, Calcifer's presence is mandatory (Figure 37).

This can be proved by the deconstruction of Moving Castle, along with its illusory concepts and in-realm metaleptic connections when Calcifer is removed (Figure 30). In addition, it is explicit that the actions affected by Calcifer's present state regarding how much the force of it manipulates or possesses the space. As seen in Figure 38, while Calcifer, as a fire demon, is nearly losing all its flame, it can only possess a small portion of the castle, creating a transitory space that actually acts

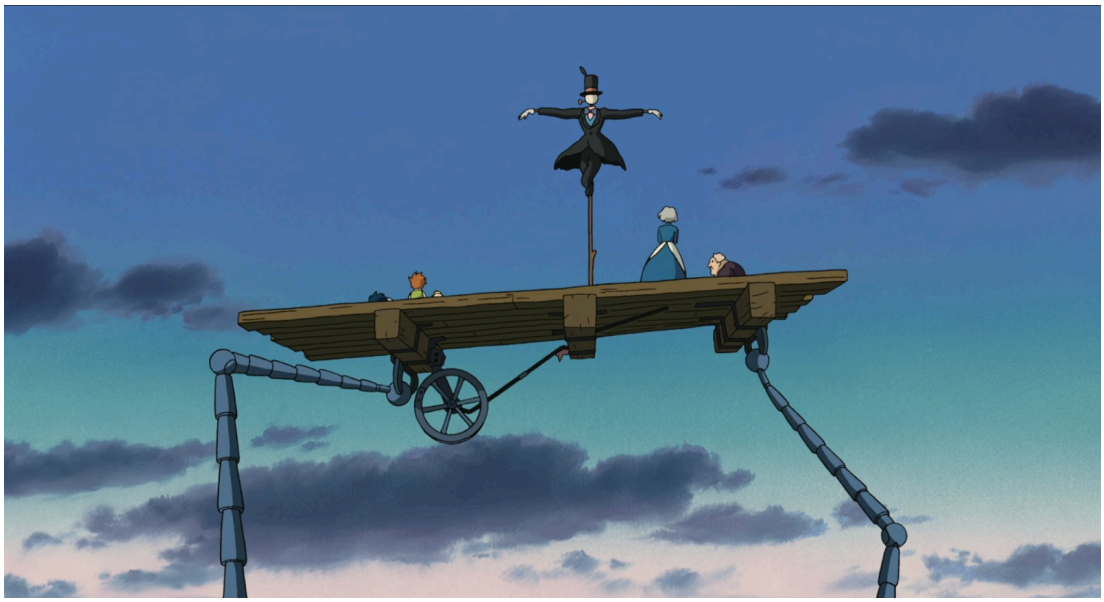
Figure 37

The space inside of Moving Castle influenced by the force of Calcifer

Howl's Moving Castle, 01:18:31

Figure 38

The small scale Moving Castle influenced by the force of Calcifer



Howl's Moving Castle, 01:50:23

similarly to the Moving Castle's original form on a rather smaller scale.

On the other hand, as the core element and agent of the imaginary space in Tower appeared in The Boy and the Heron, the Meteor mostly plays a catalytic active role in metaphors among the three cases because of the fact that the tower is constructed around it, using it as a core element. The Meteor as an agent creates an alternative space and time reality between actual time and spaces (Figure 39), creating a massive transitory imaginary space that includes landscapes and a replica of the Tower. This imaginary space has no boundaries, is nearly undefinable, yet still connected to the force of its core, the Meteor.

In this regard, Table 4 examines how agents' reactions to metaphors can be

Figure 39

The space inside the Tower influenced by the force of the Meteor

The Boy and the Heron, 01:54:42

categorized based on the previous discussions, classifying which cores have actively

catalyzed which metaphors. While the Crystal from Castle in the Sky only directly influences the defamiliarization of constructive elements, Calcifer from Howl's Moving Castle directly influences defamiliarization of architectural elements, illusory entities around the phantasmagoria of space, and in-realm metalepsis. On the other hand, along with being the core element and agent of imaginary space in The Boy and the Heron, the Meteor also takes the role of being the core construction element of the Tower and thus influences all four metaphors discussed in this study: transparency, defamiliarization, phantasmsagoria, and metalepsis.

Table 4

Agents' reactions to metaphors

	Transparency	Defamiliarization	Phantasmagoria	Metalepsis
Agents				
Crystal	*passive*	*active*	*passive*	*passive*
Calcifer	*passive*	*active*	*active*	*active*
Meteor	*active*	*active*	*active*	*active*

Note, Altınışık, 2025.

As a result, it is possible to state that the study suggests that, even though the architectural representations are created in different media other than themselves, they can be read through the architectural approaches and can be interpreted in terms of the concepts. The study explores the imaginatively produced spaces that are

created in two dimensional flat surfaces of the anime medium with the metaphors delivered from the architectural representation approaches and space discussions.

This kind of medium has its own dimensions to represent an architectural space and its own layers of representations according to its medium, yet it is possible to approach them as a part of architectural representations. It is possible to state that spaces created in two dimensional spaces can be understood through their layered representations. The dimensions of imaginary spaces can effectively operate on how space is perceived throughout those layers of representation. It can be stated that besides the approaches that affect the imaginary space, core elements that react to this effect on space are also important.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The form of the architecture and architectural space can be read through its layers in the built environment as well as in fantasy spaces created in two dimensional environments. The representation of imaginary spaces in two dimensional medium reveals distinct patterns of spatial construction that challenge literal architectural concepts and methods of representation. The representation of unbuilt imaginary spaces in the flat surfaced mediums reveals distinct patterns of spatial construction that challenge conventional architectural concepts. These unbuilt spaces contribute uniquely to the discourse on architecture by expanding the

boundaries of what constitutes spatial experience and offering alternative frameworks for understanding space.

5.1 Discussion of the Findings

The study supports the idea that architectural representations in different medium can be read and analyzed with the concepts and metaphors of architecture, despite being an unbuilt, imagery notion differentiated from the literal architecture of the phenomenal world, since architectural representations can also be approached with the ideologies and conceptions. As a form of architectural space representation, imaginary space responds to the ideologies and metaphors behind the design theory. In order to prove that the study focuses on four design theory metaphors, as follows: transparency, defamiliarization, phantasmagoria, and metalepsis, delivered from the literature review into the thematic visual content analysis. The two metaphors, transparency and defamiliarization, are directly associated with architecture discussions, but on the other hand, phantasmagoria and metalepsis are the metaphors studied in media and design distinctly. It is possible to state that conceptions can also be crossed into different mediums while creating thematic analysis tables in relation to multidisciplinary approaches in design theory.

As a result, within the respect of transparency, it is possible to state that the study concludes how frames represent the imaginary spaces constructed according to what the author highlighted in the urban settings of three cases. Plane-based visual analysis and thematic visual contexts analysis prove that transparency has an agency on the imaginary space in light of the interpretation of the author and narrative. Phantasmagoria, on the other hand, helps the analysis emphasize the fantasy act in

imaginary spaces, both in visual and thematic analyses. Since illusion and change have a distinct role in the imaginary spaces created in the fantasy realm of Miyazaki, phantasmagoria agents the transgressions in frames and spaces, such as the interference of core elements in their respective spaces, as shown in Table 3. The thematic analysis proves that the concept of defamiliarization also has a similar agency on imaginary spaces as phantasmagoria. As a result of the thematic visual content analysis study, it suggests the existence of the concept of metalepsis in two cases, Howl's Moving Castle and The Boy and the Heron, regarding the metaleptic space experience in Moving Castle and The Tower. Since media studies focus on metalepsis as a dimensional transgression, the study refers to metaleptic action in the cases as in-realm metalepsis, proving that imaginary spaces can be discussed and analyzed from different perspectives other than the representation of architecture.

Although the study does not prove that all the remaining approaches in literature can be used to discuss architectural representation in two dimensional medium, it is possible to state that the construction patterns within imaginary spaces can be analyzed through various metaphors that help decipher design theory. It can be pointed out that, since the spaces created in fantasy realms have different constructive and representative layers, they can be read through various metaphors different than literal architectural representations. The study proves that imaginary spaces should be analyzed further in order to read their architectural representation and spatial construction.

5.2. Limitations

Since this study lacks the support of the pragmatic dynamism of direct interaction-based experience on imaginary spaces, further studies focusing on how spectators respond to the changes in the imaginary spaces along with the characters who experience the space would develop the medium of cinema and experience relation in Miyazaki anime, in relation to the creation of imaginary spaces. Thus, this study could be developed with a broader scope of films and data analysis of audience responses in the future, articulating around the same questions of how the experience based on memory changes the way we perceive fantasy spaces.

In this regard, this study creates a basis for the framework on how perception is affected by representational layers of imaginary space in Miyazaki anime, and it can be evaluated with more studies in the field of fantasy architecture, especially imaginary spaces created representatively by drawing on two dimensional mediums.

It is possible to enlarge the study with visual composition analysis of scenes, in order to discuss the properties of spaces in fantasy realms. This would support the thematic and content analysis of the visualization of those imaginative creations. In addition, it is required to conduct a comparative analysis between different authors' fantasy realms and imaginary spaces in order to create more competitive frameworks for visual content analysis. Thus, the study might be restructured with a comparative analysis.

5.3. Further Studies

It is possible to focus on how audiences respond to the changes in the imaginary spaces along with the characters who experience the space, which would

develop the medium and experience relations related to the creation of imaginary space. Thus, this study may be developed with a broader scope of films and data analysis of audience responses in the future, articulating around the same questions.

Further discussion might be held through the recreation of some imaginary spaces in virtual realms. The imaginary spaces of Miyazaki anime change through the story depending on how the characters perceive and experience them, or vice versa; the characters' experiences change depending on the drastic changes in the imaginary space they have been in.

It is possible to build fantasy realms interactable in order to effectively monitor and analyze the experience of being in the imaginary space. This kind of experience is highly related to the characters' familiarity with spaces and their objections based on memory in the narrative. Thus, the criteria on layers of imaginary space with the conception of built on the perception in relation to the narrative from the perspective of characters and their memories, which are related to how they are familiar with the space. It might be considered that the experience of familiarity with the imaginary space might be in contrast to how the audience perceives it.

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