



Analysis of Space in Architecture: A Perspective on Subject-Meaning Relationship

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Abstract

For the subject experiencing architectural space through their body, the encounter with meaning is the initial interaction with reality. This article analyzes the subject's journey in the intersection of space, which becomes a part of meaning construction by experiencing architectural space through the body, on a theoretical level. The tangible indicators of architectural objects encountered during the subject's architectural space experience have been interpreted through a method of analysis. The subject bases its strings on the body-space-experience axis, with the binding force that holds these strings together being the axis of meaning. The subject's axis of meaning is ontological and theologically based, experienced as an act of worship within the space. The subject's ontological stance in the world and its encounters during the process of being present in architectural space are analogous to a ceremonial partnership. The subject's worship experience is a meeting of architectural space that acts as an intermediary between the physical and metaphysical. The subject establishes its binding to the axis of meaning through an Islamic theology-based act of worship that enables a physical bodily experience within the space. The aim of this study is to analyze the bodily encounters during the act of worship that the subject constructs through meaning and to theoretically present the witnessed journey. The theoretical analysis of encounters in architectural space is evaluated under three fundamental conceptual headings: meaning-making, perception, and interpretation. Each fundamental conceptual analysis is created by clarifying the boundary and framework parallel to the subject's encounters with space.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the ancient period, the measure of a human who did not see themselves separate from the universe they lived in is the unified relationship with nature; in this relationship, there is no distancing between the human and the external world, and they do not perceive themselves as separate from the external world. In the Middle Ages, the criterion for human interaction with things outside of themselves is shaped through theology; everything is themed with religious aspects and centered around divine principles. In the Enlightenment, human beings, who are believed to possess the mechanism to determine certain knowledge, are at the center of the world with a perception that considers their own reason superior to everything else, and their measure is their ability to determine knowledge about everything. In this context, in the new world order, human distance themselves from themselves and transform the world order they differentiate as self and other into a dialectical relationship with subject and object distinction. The subject individualizes, separates from the whole, and questions the knowledge domains outside of themselves in an attempt to analyze them. The knowledge that humans possess about themselves, their existence, and the boundaries of the place they create for themselves encounters the realm of meaning in every situation. From the beginning of their physical presence in the world and their existence between things, humans engage with the world through the data they generate based on the encounters they experience with their inherent spiritual and physical information. They converge with each subject in a process of objectification. The complex structure of the subject, laden with meanings, transcends and surpasses the formulation of a well-defined process of objectification. Navigating the boundaries of the

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encounters experienced by the subject through meaning allows for embarking on a journey of various quests, and the contents of these encounters can be deciphered and examined.

The aim of this study is to examine the meaning-making, perception, interpretation of worship spaces within the boundaries of Islamic theology by the subject who restructures and assigns meaning to the individual, social, and cultural sign systems in its surrounding environment. It seeks to analyze the process of encountering and deciphering the potential grounds of encounter during this process, utilizing interconnected concepts. The objective is to conduct these analyses specifically within the context of worship rituals in Islamic theology. As the most comprehensive and singular source of religious knowledge, the sacred scriptures that have existed since the 9th century provide a broad and infinite potential for architectural formation, despite the absence of specific forms or formal data regarding worship spaces. Rather than a mere formal quest, the focus is on delving into the truth of the action, reexamining architectural knowledge of spatial realms through the subject, and interpreting and questioning it from the perspective of today's reality.

The scope of the study encompasses the spatial encounters experienced by the subject within the realm of architecture, considering the subject's existence in the world and examining these encounters through the processes within the sphere of their lived reality (Figure 1). It delves into historical references and analyzes the reflections of the mental frameworks within the context of Islamic theology's worship architecture, employing a questioning approach. The theoretical foundations and analytical methodology of the study have been developed to address these reflections.

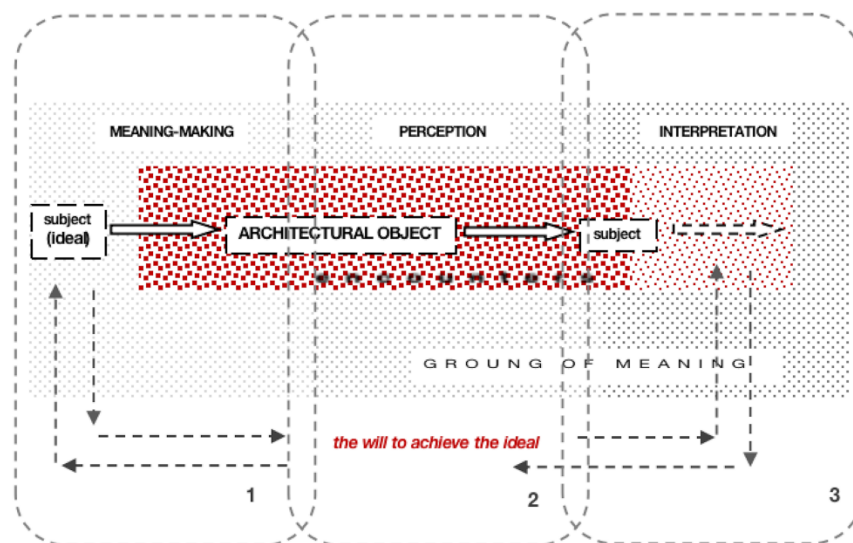


Figure 1. Basic Conceptual Framework (created by the author)

2. METHOD

The methodology of this study involves conducting a comprehensive review of key sources within the literature of the architectural discipline that are relevant to the content and context of the study. By systematically organizing the gathered information and data from primary sources, a conceptual framework is constructed. The obtained knowledge and data are then interpreted and evaluated through a multidisciplinary approach, taking into consideration their connections with disciplines beyond architecture, while adhering to a predetermined structural framework. As the production of architectural knowledge draws from various disciplines, this study is grounded in a theoretical foundation, particularly emphasizing phenomenology, ontology, and hermeneutics. These conceptual frameworks are employed through the analytical method, allowing for the reinterpretation and examination of the subject matter from an interdisciplinary perspective, with the subject being placed at the center of the theoretical framework.

3. FIRST SPATIAL ENCOUNTER: MEANING-SPACE

In the universe in which we are encompassed and exist, within the infinite chain of relationships formed by our thinking and behavioral patterns that give rise to us in our everyday lives, each link inevitably seeks to be based on a causality ground at the beginning and end, ultimately manifesting itself by focusing on the matter of meaning. In his comprehensive book "Phenomenology of Perception," Merleau-Ponty expresses that the essence of the world consists of meanings that emerge through experiential interactions, and perception is the instrument through which the subject, who acquires these experiences through the body, reaches objects [1]. The meaning chains established by the subject in their own mental world are unique. The subject, located in the field of existence, possesses the most comprehensive knowledge and, to some extent, the capacity for action and agency. Therefore, every encounter with an existence other than itself creates a domain of objectivity based on meaning. The initial connection between the subject and space is formed through meaning. In this context, the theoretical extension of the initial encounter with physical space is shaped by meaning.

3.1. Ontic Stance of The Subject-Falling into The World

Aristotle's "first philosophy," also known as metaphysics, is associated with theology and examines existence in terms of being. It forms the foundation of metaphysical knowledge, which is the philosophical basis for the highest reality. Existence, which is both the beginning and the ultimate destination of everything, is a transcendent divine power that falls into and is brought into another being by its inherent eternal existence[2]. The "world," which signifies the openness of existence, is not seen as the realm of being and the existing, but rather emerges through being-in-the-world. It is the illumination of the existential essence within the thrownness of human existence into the world [3]. Heidegger defines Dasein, which is the subject itself as an existential being, as the clarification of questions regarding the meaning of the subject that inherently exists. The most fundamental characteristic of Dasein, which can only be recognized in relation to existence, is its perception of its own existence as a problematic structure and the establishment of a philosophy by the subject that asks questions about it. The fact that Dasein is left to its own existence also implies that they always find themselves [4]. This situation is unfolded not as a quest, but as a turning away from thrownness by turning towards escape. In this context, the thrownness, which is not a "finished fact" but an "unfinished case," is constantly maintained as the inevitable transformation of the fallen subject into the thinking subject.

3.2. Understanding Meaning in Space

Nelson Goodman, in his article titled "How Buildings Mean" published in 1985, approaches the relationship between architecture and meaning as a philosopher, stating that there are many parameters related to architecture that need to be addressed from an interdisciplinary perspective [5]. Goodman asserts that architecture not only has a functional and physical role but actively contributes to the formation of meaning and reality [6]. He suggests that architecture will have an epistemological and metaphysical role beyond being merely a visual and physical integrity as long as it contributes to the formation of meaning and understanding. An architectural product where the function determines the first link in the chain of meaning and signification can initially be seen as an object of a function-based need for the subject. When encountering an architectural product related to its function, the subject communicates through signs, just like with everything in the world that comes into contact with them in a bodily and mental sense. The concept of experience, which maintains the sensory and intellectual comprehensions of the vital process between meaning and essence directly related to function, enables the establishment of a relationship with space by holding them together [7]. This concept alters the depth of communication and removes the boundaries between the determined literal meaning and connotations of signs. Architectural space, experienced and shaped through its content of functional arrangements, becomes spatialized. Since space defines an area of experience behind a physical appearance, its expression cannot be rationalized solely through mathematical formulas or concrete expression techniques. This concept of experience is what constitutes architecture, so beneath a concrete image, architecture reveals itself within a realm where it is perceived, experienced, and lived. When the subject is connected with the architectural object, it creates an experiential field where the accumulated sensations

stimulated by the subject's presence in the world interact with what has accumulated within it over time – the conversion of space into spatialization (Figure 2).

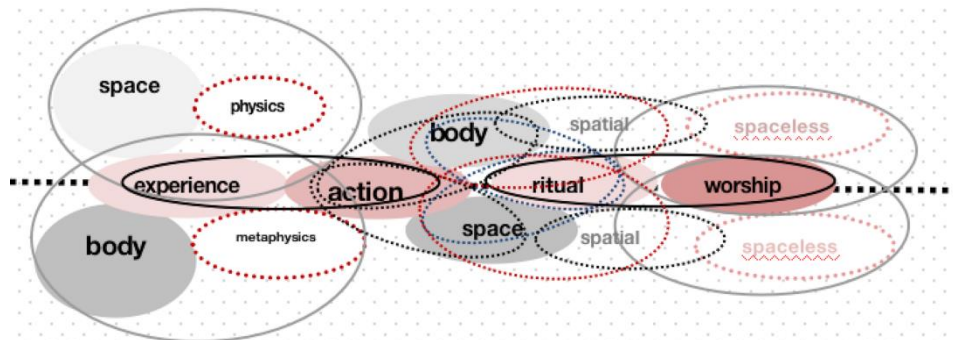


Figure 2. Continuity of Meaning in the Subject-Space Relationship (created by the author)

In the study, the "subject" mentioned is kept within defined boundaries and its ontological stance is represented by the coexistence of the architectural object within the intersecting space of the worship place, which serves as a common living area where it experiences encounters through a meaning-value-belief-based path, acting as a "homo semioticus" in the interpretation of its world [8]. Homo semioticus is the interpreting human being; the one who questions the formation of meanings in the world and creates entirely new meanings by interconnecting them; the one who goes beyond merely describing the individual, social, and cultural sign systems in their environment and reconstructs the process of their production. Homo semioticus reads the world: It reads with all its senses, emotions, and memories. The world is both a finite text and a collection of interrelated texts that can be endlessly unfolded for them. In other words, the world and humans are both constructed structures and infinite sources of production that can be expanded for homo semioticus. For a homo semioticus equipped with semiotic qualities or an ideal homo semioticus, analysis is a game of being able to see, comprehend, and carry the meaning(s) that the world carries for humans and the meaning(s) that humans carry for each other, and reconstructing the formation, establishment, interconnection, organization, and re-interpretation of the event and process of carrying and conveying meaning, thereby creating and developing a comprehensive theoretical model that is both abstract and universal, as well as simple, consistent, and all-encompassing.

4. SECOND SPATIAL ENCOUNTER: PERCEPTION-SPACE

The concept of perception is an inherent sensation within the subject, which can be defined as "the knower of everything, known by no one, the carrier of the world, and the condition for all phenomena and objects" [9]. Throughout the history of humanity, the transitions between epochs known as Ancient Period, Middle Ages, Renaissance, Enlightenment, Modern era, and beyond have not only shaped the ontological relationships among things but also influenced the perception of the universe on a macro scale and the transformation of the subject's modes of perception situated at the center of the universe on a micro scale. In his work "The World as Will and Representation," Schopenhauer affirms the concept of perception/phenomenon within the subject as a cognitive source experienced in its relationship with things external to itself. He emphasizes the significance of Descartes' notion of thinking, which plays a crucial role in the transition from a constrained and definitive ontological framework to an understanding of infinite space. According to Schopenhauer, thinking, parallel to the understanding of existence within the scope of being's determination, is actually a distinct representation and reiteration of the original world of perception, existing within another content [9].

The embodied self that emerges from the activity of perception is not merely a scientifically objective entity but rather the foundation of a personal field of perception derived from the internal experiential processes of the body. Beyond Husserl's transcendental approach, Merleau-Ponty assigns a subjective character to the experience of perception, imbuing the act of perception with an existentialist meaning and form [10]. The subject, engaged in an interaction with objects through perceptual mediation, is evaluated within the framework of the subject-object interaction, considering both the spatial positioning of the

object within the network of spatial patterns and its relationship with other objects. This network of relationality with the external world is a complex system of communication, and Merleau-Ponty expands upon this pattern by introducing the notion of the "horizon," which signifies the contextual framework of subject-object communication [11]. Objects, apprehended through their relationships with the surrounding environment, refer to the perceiving subject in various ways based on their positioning within the horizon. This reference occurs not only through the discernment of objects distinguished from one another but also through their mutual revelation. The configuration of objects within the horizon does not hinder the perception of objects or limit the perspective of the subject. Each object's appearance in the reflection of other objects simultaneously indicates the presence of characteristics that the perceiving subject can learn and those that remain hidden from their perspective.

4.1. Ontic Stance of The Subject-Thinking in The World

Experiencing the present moment goes beyond mere presence; it involves the awareness of one's past experiences, future aspirations, and expectations. The human being, thrown into the world, establishes a relationship with the world, wherein the external world beyond oneself is objectified and described through methods of representation, embodiment, exemplification, and problematization, ultimately signifying the concept through language. Nietzsche argues that the world, which becomes embodied through the thought of the thinking subject, cannot be seen as the origin of thought. Rather, the concrete world can only be interpreted by interrupting and punctuating the flow of thought and sensation [12].

Descartes, who establishes a direct connection between thinking and existence, asserts that as long as one is thinking, there can be no doubt about their existence. Ceasing to think is equivalent to ceasing to exist. Descartes emphasizes that when one exists as a thinking entity, they can be known as a real and truly existing entity, aware of their own soul, their inner self, and their intellect [13]. According to Hegel, thought creates itself and then creates another for itself through a unity that turns back into itself [14]. Heidegger, who seeks to analyze the roots of this creative action in human beings, poses four different questions about thought [16]:

"...What is the essence of what we call 'thinking'?
 ...How does traditional teaching understand and define what we call 'thinking'?
 ...What are the prerequisites for truly being able to think?
 ...What calls us to think, so to speak, what commands us to think?"

Heidegger asserts that thinking is not independent and disconnected; instead, these four questions belong to a unity within one another. He examines the word "heißen," which means to call, demand, convey, and demands clarity in relation to this subject [15]. The subject of thought, assuming the role of bringing forth, according to Heidegger, brings what it possesses as its own self, confronts it, and strives to return to the connection it establishes by relating to itself. This corresponds to the idea in the modern age of bringing forth the self as something that precedes existence. It grants the subject of thought the knowledge of being aware of the world, holding the world before oneself in the relationship between the human being and the world, being informed about the world within the world's image, and being prepared and equipped for it [16]. The thinking subject, while aware of its finite bodily existence, realizes its infinite desire through the level of contemplation, which is the superior method of thinking. Although conscious of being finite, it forms its knowledge of the self by conceptualizing a future and eternity intertwined with theological origins within the realm of intellectual activity.

4.2. From Cartesian Space to Embodied Space

Adrian Forty discusses the historical process of the concept of space within the discipline of architecture in his text "Space." He notes that until the 1890s, the term "space" did not exist in the vocabulary of architectural discipline and it was first brought to attention by German writers in a noticeable way. The word "space," which is frequently used in the field of architecture today, was implicitly expressed within the words "volume" and "void" starting from the 18th century in architectural discourse. However, it began to be adopted explicitly in connection with the modernist movement and its developments towards

the end of the 19th century [17]. According to Forty, the concept of space began to appear in architectural theories with two different ideas within German philosophy during the 19th century. The first one is associated with Gottfried Semper, who formulated his philosophy related to Hegel and remained outside the discipline of architecture. The second one is a psychological approach that emerged in the 1890s and dealt with aesthetics, closely related to Kantian philosophy. Semper can be seen influenced by Hegel's aesthetic theory in his belief that the future of architecture lies in creating space. Semper's theory about the origins of architecture as a visible element of enclosed space can be observed in his concept of the wall as the "enclosing space" of a built element. According to Hegel, "enclosure" is a feature of architecture that is not related to aesthetics but rather functional, serving a different purpose. For him, space, which he refers to as enclosed space, specialized through dimensions such as height, width, and breadth in Gothic architecture, manifests itself as an independent religious idea beyond its function. The 1920 generation of modernists, influenced by Semper's model, supported this understanding and considered it the essence of architectural practice and production, as expressed in the texts written by Adolf Loos in 1898, H.P. Berlage in 1905, and Peter Behrens in 1910.

Towards the end of the 19th century, criticisms directed towards the classical understanding of space established two axes in the philosophical realm. The first axis is built by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who in his book "The Birth of Tragedy" (1872) categorizes mental instincts as Apollonian and bodily instincts as Dionysian. The second axis is constructed by the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl, who argues that the source of spatial thought lies in being a bodily self and the idea that the necessity of a living body - not an objective body - is required to perceive the world and exist in the world [18]. Philosophical discourses on space and spatiality within the discipline of architecture and the architectural environments built upon these discourses began to emerge in Germany only in the 1900s. Forty outlines this transformation in the subtitle "from space to spaciality" in his text "Space" [17]. The second major historical study concerning spatiality in the discipline of architecture is Paul Frankl's work "Principles of Architectural History" (1914). Following Riegl and Schmarsow's understanding of space, Frankl develops a framework through his analysis of space in Renaissance and Post-Renaissance architecture. Frankl's significant contribution to Riegl and Schmarsow's understanding of space lies in his distinction between "additive space" in Renaissance architecture and "spatial division" in Post-Renaissance architecture. Forty categorizes the period between 1920 and 1930 in terms of spatial definitions under three main headings: "space as enclosure," "space as continuum," and "space as an extension of the body" [17].

4.3. Space as a Medium for Worship Rituals

In Islamic theology, due to the nature of its theoretical and practical knowledge, worship rituals are physically embodied within the limitations determined by religious beliefs and principles. As a result, the body of the subject extends into space. Initially, through the intermediary of architectural objects, the worship ritual becomes a "spatial" entity by blurring the boundaries of absolute spaces. Subsequently, the physical space that the subject engages with through the architectural object becomes a "non-spatial" (spaceless) entity by obscuring the metaphysical. Eliade, who states that for the religious individual, space is not homogeneous but rather fragmented, suggests that non-religious space generates neutrality, uncertainty, relativity, and chaos, while human beings determine their orientation by experiencing the spatial and transcendental aspects of the world [19]. For a homo-religious subject who performs the act of worship in space, the place of worship becomes an architectural object representing the separation between the non-religious world and the religious individual. The physical boundaries of the space that the subject spatializes through worship offer possibilities for transcending into a transcendent realm. By excluding the non-religious world, the architectural object provides the subject with a spatial experiential domain that is homogeneous and uniform, enabling a connection with God. In the spatial experience acquired through worship, the subject acquires the belief that God can descend to the earthly realm, and symbolically, the subject can ascend to the heavens through a door opening upwards, facilitated by the existence of architectural space. In the enacted space where actions take place, within a defined architectural space perceived in a holistic manner, the most influential limiting factor for the complex and infinite perceptual and sensory act of the subject is the material and concrete determinations created by the functions and features that elevate architectural space to a transcendent level through bodily activities.

For the subject who experiences space through the given functional knowledge, the role that space assumes in the perceptual relationship with the subject, in terms of content and form, is determined by framings, definitions, and the context of the subject's interaction with space.

When perceiving space within the context of Islamic theology through the relationship between action and form, the subject who simultaneously experiences space through the act of worship necessitates the architectural space, which serves as the physical setting for worship, to possess three essential conceptual characteristics: directive space, restrictive space, and focusing space (Figure 3). Directive space refers to the architectural configuration and arrangement within the space that guides the subject's movement towards the intended location of worship. This entails a central orientation and utilizes spatial design elements such as plane variations and strategic positioning of light to establish a sense of direction. Restrictive space involves the creation of a distinct boundary between the inside and outside, defining the space where the subject engages in worship. It establishes a context for self-immersion within the worship experience. Focusing space enables the subject to establish a focal point that facilitates a connection with the Divine and serves the purpose of the worship act. It encompasses a physical spatial configuration that allows for the transcendence of the formal discourse of the perceived space and enables access to its content-based discourse. The act of worship performed within the architectural space, represented by a formal language, serves as a conduit for the transcendental dimensions of the perceived space, extending beyond its formal discourse and facilitating a connection with its content-based discourse.

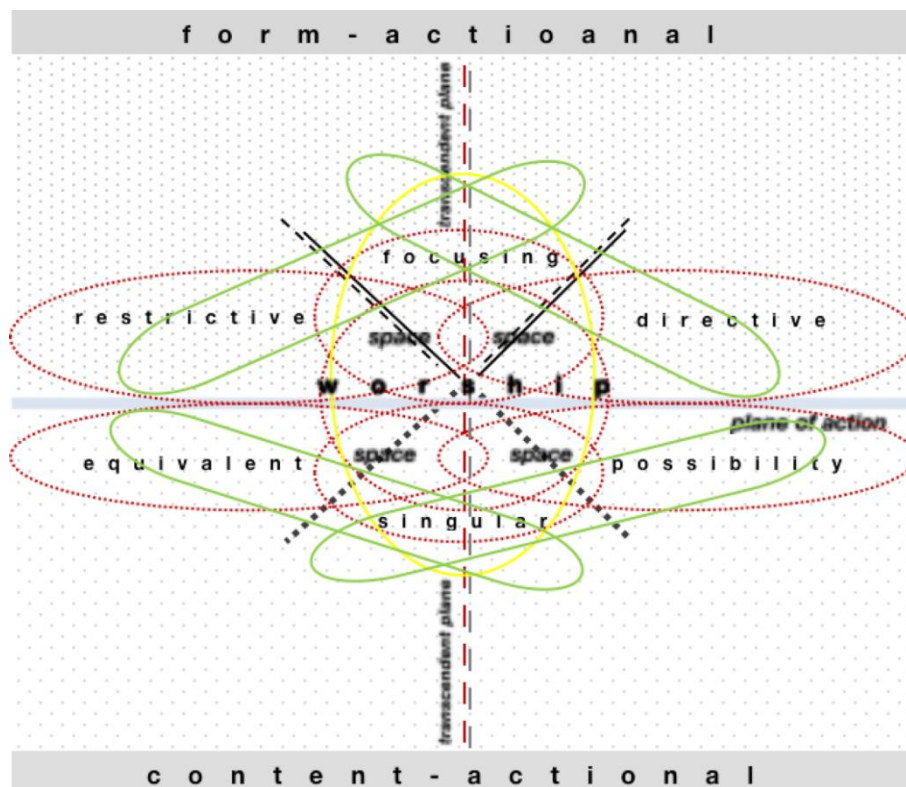


Figure 3. Diagrammatic Analysis of Perceptual Space as a Field of Action (created by the author)

In Islamic theology, through the relationship between content and action, the concept of the ultimate transcendent space, called "Transcendent Space", emerges as the manifestation of three types of space within the perceived space: possibility space, equivalent space, and singular space. Possibility space refers to the spatial characteristics that are in accordance with possibility and suitable for existence, free from any contradictions, and influenced by the senses that surround the subject engaging in worship. It is based on a content-based existence that is rational and aligned with the world of possibilities. Equivalent space derived from the word "denk" which also forms the roots of the words "balance" and "equilibrium," focuses on the concept of balance as the representation of the ideal and middle state in everything. The concept of balance, which is a fundamental principle in Islamic theology, encompasses the understanding of determining the measure and proportion for any theoretical or practical activity, advocating for

moderation and following the middle path. In Islamic literature, the term "balance" (denge) derived from the Arabic root "adl" is explained by Islamic philosophers as the state of human behavior being in a moderate state between two extremes called "excess" (ifrat) and "deficiency" (tefrit). Deviations from this balance, either in excess or deficiency, are seen as a consequence of the human's subjugation to their animalistic powers. Furthermore, another characteristic of the spatial components that constitute the worship space is equivalent space, which corresponds to the architectural design and formation that assist the worshipping subject in establishing a foundation of balance. Lastly, singular space grounded in the concept of "Unity of Existence" (Vahdet-i Vücûd) based on the understanding of unity, wholeness, and oneness in relation to the thought of Ibn Arabi, arises. In the term "Vahdet-i Vücûd," "vahdet" means unity, while "vücûd" means existence and is related to the words "ecstasy" (vecd) and "being present" (tevâcüd) that have the same root. Singular space, encompasses the characteristics of the worship space that imply that the fragmented unity in existence is evidence and manifestation of the unity of God.

5. THIRD SPATIAL ENCOUNTER: INTERPRETATION-SPACE

In his book "Ways of Worldmaking," Nelson Goodman emphasizes the plurality of worlds and explores how worlds are constructed and what they are made of, based on the understanding that a definitive and ultimate conclusion cannot be reached. Influenced by Ernst Cassirer's philosophical approach, Goodman examines the relationship between worldmaking and knowing, seeking ways to describe these multiplicities through versions [20]. This approach also applies to the discipline of architecture, demonstrating that interpretation involves creating new concepts through language, which can be seen as a different yet original repetition. According to Goodman's philosophy, architecture not only produces physical structures that respond to functional and practical needs in the realm of architectural products, but also actively contributes to the creation of meaning and reality through design as a medium. Thus, architecture assumes an epistemological role as it contributes to the production of meaning and understanding, while also acquiring a metaphysical role by contributing to the creation of reality and going beyond the mere assembly of material.

The production of architectural knowledge regarding the architectural object, both in the practical field of implementation and in the conceptualization process, as well as in the realm of written discourse, is the result of a subjectified interpretive activity that establishes the legitimacy of the subject-object relationship. The act of revealing the concealed, hidden, or implicit aspects and making them comprehensible through architectural representational tools involves a dual interaction between the primary subjects of architectural practitioners and the "users" who are indirectly involved with the architectural object. This encompasses the entirety of interpretive activities. Each architectural object represents a "new" interpretation, and within this interpretation, it reflects the subjective engagement of architects as the primary actors who are always, to some extent, interconnected with the historical, sociological, philosophical, and cultural accumulation and context inherited by the subject within the reality sphere of the present time. It is a reflection of the architectural understanding and comprehension level of architects' engagement with the world.

5.1. Ontic Stance of The Subject-Dreaming in The World

In each stage of its existential determination, the dreamer/renewed subject, as a continuation of the flow of existence, awakens from a previous dream and pursues other dreams within dreams. The dreamer/renewed subject, through the act of dreaming, extends the realm of its psychic and spiritual existence beyond the material realm and defines for itself a trans-temporal space. This possibility is both an affirmation that is part of the belief in the eternal within the subject's inherent existence and a product of the anguish and anxiety of its material existence. The dreamer/renewed subject, detached from the reality it faces, bestows upon itself an ownership of a self-otherness that is not itself; it participates in the function of the unreal and opens itself to a poetic reality world in which it can trust the world it finds itself in [21]. Through dreaming, the subject acquires knowledge of the growth possibilities of its other existence that it has constructed for itself, gaining a metaphysical experiential realm. Regarding death and the afterlife, empirical methods that seek to establish a definite field of knowledge within the limits of positivist causality fail to provide a concrete reality that can answer the ultimate acceptance or rejection

of what comes after human termination. Therefore, philosophical approaches have discussed the subject of "immortality of the soul" in various ways to create a debatable field. In the conceptual line where the truth of death lies in the world and the truth of the world lies in death, the expectation of eternity for the dreaming/renewed subject, rooted in the Islamic theological tradition, corresponds to a mode of existence that is not a final termination but a transformation under the name of "resurrection," which is answered by the teachings and doctrines of religion.

5.2. The Epistemological Scope of Interpretation in Architecture

The relationship that can be established between the words and principles of language and the architectural elements and principles does not allow for a direct connection, primarily due to the physical nature of architecture and the mental nature of language. However, there is a resemblance between them in terms of their systematic structures. Just like the words in language, each architectural element is determined by its position at the intersection of both sequential and compositional relationship axes, within a complex and tightly woven network structure like a sentence or a text. Fisher states that in order to understand the language system, one must recognize that it is a cross-section of the system and is part of the ongoing developments that preceded it. He further explains that every language is situated at the intersection of these two axes: the horizontal axis (synchrony) and the vertical axis (diachrony), and suggests that a similar approach can be adapted to the language of architecture, in terms of architectural language system [22]. The systematic characterization of linguistic structuring in architecture through approaches such as style, path, and manner in the hermeneutic realm allows the language to which the architectural object belongs, and thus the contextual elements of that language, to be recognized and transmitted. This comprehensive establishment of context and the possibility of multiple meanings and linguistic interpretations also form the methodological approach of hermeneutics (Figure 4). Linguistic and hermeneutic expansions are important parts of the epistemological scope in the interpretation of architecture.

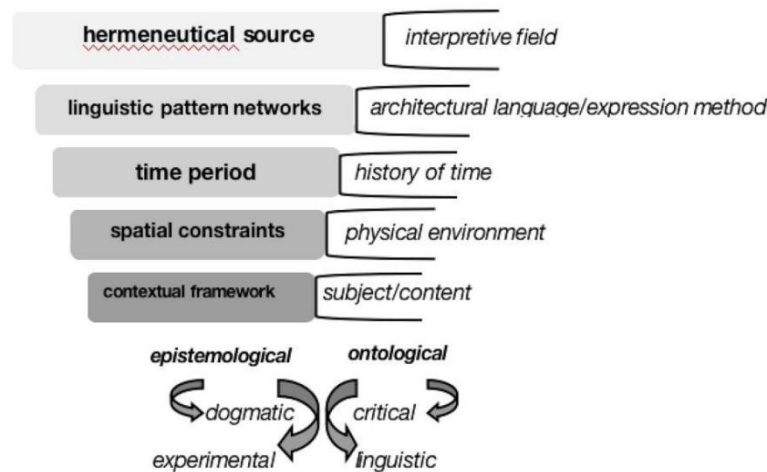


Figure 4. *The Relationship Between Hermeneutics and Language in the Production of Architectural Knowledge (created by the author)*

The subject that determines the epistemological scope and limitations constructs the organization of this knowledge of reality only through the outcome of an activity of understanding. The most important factor that defines the boundaries and framework of epistemology in the hermeneutic context is the analysis of the activity of understanding in the humanities, which constitutes the foundation of scientific knowledge. In this context, classical hermeneutic theorists such as Schleiermacher and Dilthey developed a method by determining the epistemological conditions of understanding and interpreting those conditions, with the aim of evaluating the problematic aspects of interpretation in the humanities [23]. In architecture, which is considered both a mental and physical field of scientific production in theory and practice, its epistemology is related to the activity of understanding within the context of Schleiermacher and Dilthey's hermeneutics, and it falls under the category of humanities with its social and artistic aspects.

How knowledge in architecture is defined, the scope and limitations of it, and the methodological analysis of it depend on how the subject establishes its relationship with understanding. In the broadest sense, the subject can approach this relationship in three different ways: unity in a religious and divine theological context, duality in the dialectic of subject and object, multiplicity in various supporting scientific disciplines. In this context, Boudon emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between the term "architecture" and the term "architectural knowledge" in investigating the nature of architectural knowledge, comparing it to what would happen if we were to mix language with linguistics, life with biology, and society with sociology [24]. He states that architectural practice questions the epistemological conditions that form the basis of instructional discourse, while architectural knowledge questions the epistemological conditions of theoretical discourse [24].

5.3. On the Hermeneutic Dialogue of Sacred Space

The concept of dialogism (dialogism) used by literary theorist Bakhtin to define linguistics and beyond linguistics is not about expressing the dialogue between language with loaded meanings and a limited number of subjects, but rather a concept that signifies the multilingual and decentralized nature of language, which has the potential for unlimited dissemination, as it structurally carries the speech of others within every utterance [25]. Building upon Bakhtin's dialogism theory, Kristeva establishes the concept of intertextuality. Intertextuality is based on the possibilities of perceiving the characteristics of different literary works and discourses, both in terms of discourse and text, as intersecting points [26]. In this context, this theoretical framework, which is constructed by relating to the text that exhibits polyphony, blurs the boundaries between disciplines by being adaptable to all disciplines. Bakhtin's dialogism and Kristeva's use of intertextuality are so profound that they cannot be confined to literary and linguistic philosophy, as they resonate with other disciplines. In this regard, the concept of the sacred, which refers to the religious domain, is in a hermeneutic dialogical relationship with the worship space that interprets it, as it embodies the polyphony of meaning transmission within the social, cultural, and historical realm. Drawing a parallel between Kristeva's notion that a text always responds to another text and the idea that spaces also respond to other spaces, architectural practices generate themselves with a similar relationality. The place of worship offers the subject, who experiences it as homo-religious, the possibility of creating a representation of a transcendent model. The physical architectural shaping of the Kaaba, which is attributed with sanctity in Islamic religion, comes long after the attribution of sanctity to it. As a sacred space representing the fundamental sanctity of religion, the Kaaba establishes a hermeneutic dialogical relationship within the spatial context, being common to devout individuals, characterized by polyphony, openness, and lack of centrality.

The diverse cultural backgrounds necessitated by geographical positioning have led to the diversification of Islamic theology-based arts, which also differentiate architectural shaping in worship spaces, demonstrating that there is not a single formal aspect of interpreting the space. Even if it is a worship space serving the same religion, it can be observed that it diversifies within a multiple dialogical relationship, separating from the worship space shaped functionally with the emergence of the religion and accumulating different social, cultural, and historical experiences. Grabar, when evaluating the stylistic differences related to the worship space as a whole, not just as forms and their arrangements, using the terminology of its ancient culture, sees them as the result of conscious efforts that emerge in the process of meeting the spatial production requirements necessitated by the development of the religion and the demands of the new culture [27]. Especially in the early Islamic period, the worship space was created not as an ideal typological arrangement, but rather to fulfill specific social requirements, adhering to the condition of providing a "single space for the entire community" and not presenting a complete, tangible production of the structure [27]. The act of worship is an activity of dialogue between the acting subject and the divine being addressed and made present, representing the human's orientation towards God as an addresser-addressee relationship [28]. While architecture serves as a mediator in this relationship, the space itself becomes a scene of hermeneutic dialogue, which is another form of dialogical relationship between subject and object. In this context, certain fundamental architectural elements of Islamic worship architecture are associated and interpreted with basic geometric shapes that constitute the repertoire of the religion.

6. CONCLUSION

The encounter of the subject with itself, the body being the first physical formation that renders the subject familiar, defined, and visible, also establishes the initial boundary between the self and the other, while simultaneously creating limitlessness (Figure 5). The body, which is a spatial entity through which the subject proclaims the legitimacy of its existence, is the place where everything begins and ends at the border of being and non-being. The subject, capable of reaching the consciousness of the world through its body, delineates the boundary between the self and the other with its body. The subject acquires its knowledge about the external world through its body, enveloping its inherent layers of truth with its body as the veil of reality. Existing as both a subject and an object, connected yet separate, encompassing both darkness and illumination, encompassing both the inner and the outer, the subject, through its bodily existence, occupies a central position amidst all forms of tension.

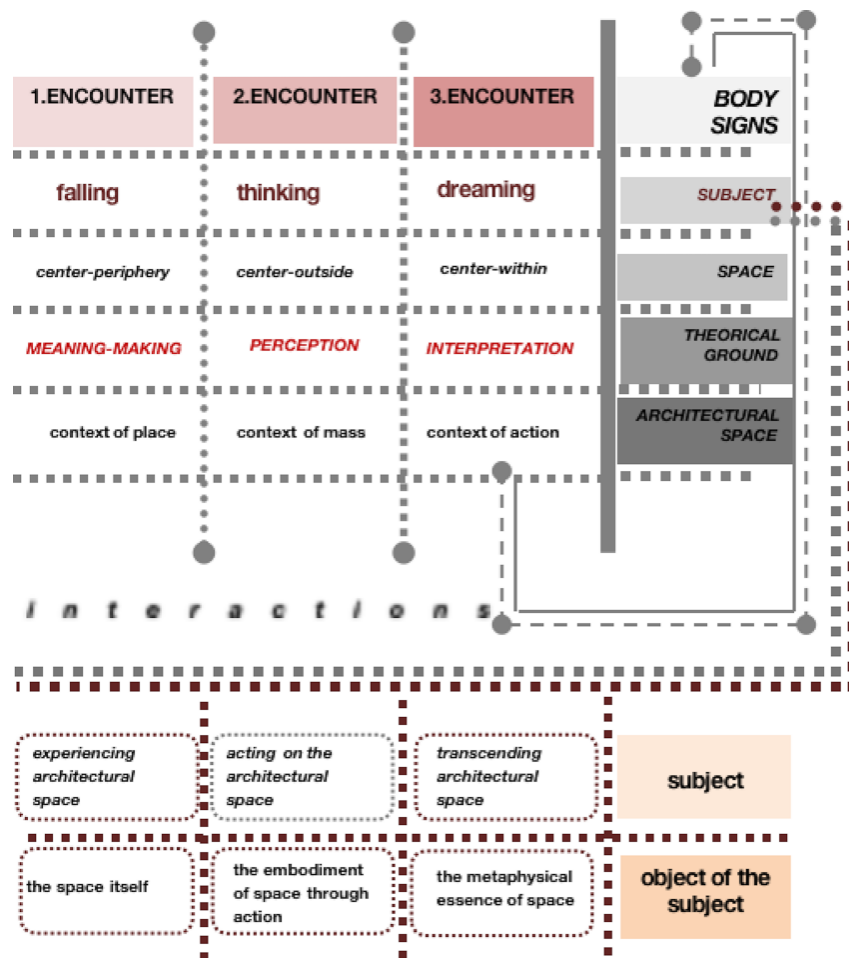


Figure 5. Diagrammatic Analysis of the Subject-Space-Encounter Trilogy (created by the author)

The context that forms the boundaries and framework of the subject is its establishment of meaning through a religious pattern of worship, which attributes legitimacy to its existence. The theological field in which it constructs these religious patterns is Islamic theology. The subject, who frequently experiences the act of worship as part of collective agency in everyday life, establishes a relationship with the worldly and spiritual dimensions in the intersection of worship and the mediating space. The bodily space, which defines a space where the subject can appear before the object as a target of action, when realized in action, turns into the spatiality of the body, providing information on how the moving body occupies time and space. It allows the action to take on the time and spatial aspects and offers an opportunity for the escape from the ordinariness of the existence that is subject to the present, as it transforms into an action. The relationship between space and the subject, focused on the interpretation of a worship-oriented space-body relationship, exhibits a cyclical characteristic where space is embodied

and the body is spatialized, turning the physical action into metaphysics; and metaphysics, in turn, always encompasses the physicality of the action within itself.

The act of worship, whether defined within a space or defining a space, establishes the scope of knowledge and information regarding the manner and purpose of space's engagement. Therefore, the fundamental guideline for evaluating architectural productions encountered as objects in practice is to analyze the mental background that will constitute the textual legibility of space, based on the form and content of the subject's spatial action. In this analysis, the most determinant factor that will constitute the mental background of worship space is the religious doctrine and determinations that shape this worship philosophy. Within the scope of this study, the religious context that constitutes these doctrines and principles is established through Islamic theology, and the mental background that shapes the ontological posture of the subject is constructed in this context. In the Islamic acceptance, the ahistorical nature of God and the transcendent nature of the religious principles bring forth the knowledge that can inform the forms of architectural production, allowing practices to be built upon this fundamental acceptance, carrying a renewed power of expression within their own linguistic existence and discourse realms. In this context, the production of multiple-relational theoretical models, allowing the potential convergence of the subject who realizes architectural practice and the subject who experiences it into a unified and shared entity, offers the possibility to transform historical uncertainties and disconnections into uninterrupted continuity.

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