CONCEPT OF SPACE: WHAT IS IT-HOW IS IT PERCEIVED?

Mekân Kavramı: Nedir - Nasıl Algılanır?

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Geliş Tarihi / Submitted:

06.05.2024

Kabul Tarihi / Accepted:

08.06.2024

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Kaynak Gösterim / Citation:

Ağarı, Murat (2024). "Concept of Space: What is it - How is it Perceive", *Karabük Türkoloji Dergisi*, 5/9, 001-030.

Abstract

There is no doubt that space is one of the important elements of language construction. So much so that it has such an effect that the basic element we call verb can be transitive or intransitive. In this respect, we believe that it is important to know the place the space element occupies both in the eyes of Western thought and in the axis of Islamic thought because the concept of space is not just about the place where the action takes place in the sentence. Apart from the position it occupies in existence, the place it occupies in space and its dialogue with the void must also be taken into consideration. The concept of space is one of the elements of the synthesis of multiple thinking in both Western thought and Islamic thought. When looking at the works of Muslim philosophers, it is possible to see the place they occupy. Aristotle was decisive about space. We come across Aristotle's dominant thoughts in Western thought and Peripatetic philosophy, both during his time and after him. In Islamic thought, time presents a functional integrity in both its concrete and abstract form. For this reason, Aristotle constituted our main area of investigation within the framework of Western thought in our study. Apart from Aristotle, Plato is another Greek thinker whose thoughts we have examined. When we came to the Islamic world, we started giving ideas about space as a natural reflex with al-Kindī. Then, we included the views of Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, al-Fārābī and Ibn Arabi in our study. While making this determination, we tried to take into account the importance that philosophers attach to space in their works.

Keywords: Space, Place, Aristotle, al-Kindī, Avicenna.

Öz

Hiç şüphe yok ki, dil inşasının önemli unsurlarından biri mekândır. Öyle ki fiil dediğimiz temel unsurun geçişli veya geçişsiz olabilmesine neden olacak bir etkiye sahiptir. Bu bakımdan mekân unsurunun hem Batı düşüncesinin gözünde hem de İslam düşüncesi ekseninde işgal ettiği yeri bilmenin önemli olduğunu düşünüyoruz. Çünkü mekân kavramı sadece cümle içinde eylemin gerçekleştiği yerle ilgili değildir. Varlık içinde işgal ettiği konumun dışında, mekânda işgal ettiği yer ve boşlukla diyaloğu da dikkate alınmalıdır. Mekân kavramı hem Batı düşüncesinde hem de İslam düşüncesinde çoklu düşüncenin sentezinin unsurlarından biridir. Müslüman filozofların eserlerine bakıldığında işgal ettikleri yeri görmek mümkündür. Aristoteles mekân konusunda belirleyici olmuştur. Aristoteles'in baskın düşüncelerine hem kendi döneminde hem de kendisinden sonra Batı düşüncesinde ve Peripatetik felsefede rastlarız. İslam düşüncesinde mekân hem somut hem soyut haliyle işlevsel bir bütünlük sunar. Bu nedenle çalışmamızda Batı düşüncesi çerçevesinde asıl inceleme alanımızı Aristoteles oluşturdu. Aristoteles dışında düşüncelerini incelediğimiz bir diğer Yunan düşünürü ise Platon'dur. İslam dünyasına geldiğimizde ise mekân hakkında Kindî ile birlikte doğal bir refleks olarak fikirler vermeye başladık. Daha sonra İbn Sina, İbn Rüşd, Fahreddin Râzî, Fârâbî ve İbn Arabî'nin görüşlerini çalışmamıza dâhil ettik. Bu tespiti yaparken filozofların eserlerinde mekâna verdikleri önemi göz önünde bulundurmaya çalıştık.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mekân, Yer, Aristoteles, Kindî, İbn Sina.

1. INTRODUCTION

In our previous two studies, we focused on the concept of time and the relationship between movement and time (Ağarı, Zaman Kavramı, 123-148; Ağarı, Zamanın Anlaşılabilirliği, 1-29). This study, in which we investigated what time is and what it is not, showed that the motif in question has a colorful diversity with different meaning constructs. Similarly, we want to address the *concept of space*, another element of language. As can be seen below, different elements of space appear in the concept of time. This term, which means *place* or *mansion* in the Arabic dictionary, is derived from the infinitive *kevn*, which means *to be*.[1] It means the vast magnitude that includes all limited magnitudes that exist within itself. We can also define it as a three-dimensional volume, that is, a volume with width, length and depth (Ekşinar, 7). Another plural of the word whose plural is *emkine* or *emâkin*. It is possible that the root of the word is related to the infinitive *mekâne*, meaning to have a respectable place because *temekkun*, which means taking up space in classical intellectual works and is derived from this infinitive, has a conceptual relationship with the term space, which does not come from the same root (Kutluer, 28/550).

The fact that the word space comes from the Arabic root *kevn* supports this ontological approach. *Kevn*, in Devellioğlu's dictionary, refers to being, existence, existence, as well as embodiment. Derived from the same root, *kevneyn* means the corporeal and spiritual realm, *kevni*, cosmic, cosmic, cosmos, the universe, the whole of existing things, creatures, creatures, existing, being (being, to on), and *tekevvün* means coming into existence, coming into being, becoming (Devellioğlu, 590). In terms of word origin, the derivation of the word space from the root *kevn* shows that the word contains an ontological discourse within its current structure (Sekman, 16). The word space in the Qoran[2] refers to the place where people or objects are located in everyday language (Kutluer, 28/550).

The terms space and place are used in different ways in dictionaries. For example, in the *Dictionary of the Turkish Language Association*, space is explained as follows: "*Place, location, home, dormitory, space, outer space*" (Turkish Dictionary, 2/1526). There are references to four different meanings within the three articles: Land, location, address and space. These meanings, which are emphasized by three articles about place in the dictionary, are also valid for the term place. The concept of place is explained in 13 articles in the dictionary and is used in similar meanings to the explanations of the term place and space:

- The space, place, space that is or can be occupied by something or someone,

[1] The author must have mistakenly used the word "take" in the text. This is because the infinitive kawn has no meaningful connection with taking.
[2] See: Yunus, 10/22; Maryam, 19/22; Hajj, 22/26, Saba, 34/51.

- Location, living area, environment,

- (Geographically speaking) Earth,

- Situation, location, position.

As can be seen, both concepts can be used interchangeably and different items can be explained in interconnected meanings (Bozdoğan-Benek, 179).

Space shows the dimensions of the understanding, which dates back to ancient times, but is not always used with this concept, but instead used as place, earth, soil, region, world, and even more recently, space, extension, and expansion (Kılıç, 1). For this reason, space can be defined as the place where existing things are located, and the area of relationship established with other beings (Dündar, 16). Space, which literally means place, environment, home, dormitory, is the place that allows or restricts the movement of humans and other living things. In terms of both allowing and restricting movement, it is a factor that shapes first the individual and then the society that develops and matures within the space. In modern times in which the city and society are mechanized, space is explained by volume, size, and light (Taşçı, 207).

There are three basic approaches to space: The first of these is the approach of those who interpret space as a container or reservoir. According to this approach, space exists as an empty container until something is placed inside it. It is an element that exists whether or not something is placed in the space. In this context, some intellectuals say that space, as a container or reservoir, is infinite, that is, there are no external boundaries. Some other scholars argue that there is an end to space. The second view is the so-called relational space view. According to this view, space says that there is an external connection between things, among which there is unity. Accordingly, space is something between things that can exist even when there is nothing between them. When things exist, space exists among them. However, when things do not exist, there is no space between them. The third approach is one that highlights space. By creating a synthesis of the container-shaped view of space and the related view of space, he advocates a versatile view of space that suggests that space and things complement each other. There is a conceptual relationship with the term *hayyiz*, which means the volume in which the object is thought to occupy space, and the halala, which is called absolute space. Discussions about space mostly occur within the framework of the terms emptiness (*halâ*) and fullness (*mela*) (Ekşinar, 7-8).

Space is one of the most important elements of the universe. It is impossible to think of the universe independently of space. Matter exists in space and continues its existence in space. Space, which can be defined as the place where human existence is located, has become a subject of interest for disciplines such as ontological, cos-

mological and epistemological. Although these disciplines express different views, they seem to agree that space is one of these three basic dimensions of existence (Sekman, 15). The basic premise in treating the concept of space as a container as well as a basis is linked to the motto that in order to recognize and perceive an object, it is necessary to know its space (Koç, 13). We cannot understand the essence of an object, i.e. its origin and interiority, by considering only the object itself. Each object has come into being subject to the conditions and possibilities of the space to which it belongs. Therefore, the question of what is the essence of any object is closely linked to the question of what is the scope of its space (Kılıç, 1).

The concept of space dates back to ancient Greek philosophy. In ancient philosophical texts, the terms *khora*, *topos* and *pou* were used in place of space (Kutluer, 28/550-1), and it seems that in time, the subject was approached from the perspective of different schools of thought in the fields of cosmology, ontology and epistemology with conceptions. While the concept of space appears in fictional form in narrative genres, it has been shaped and constantly re-introduced as a result of the way of looking, perceptions and sensory developments of the people living in it. Within the ontological framework, space has become the place of human existence's in the universe, the world of occurrences, the product of human achievement and a convenient application area that affects it (Korkmaz, 78-9).

When we evaluate the subject within the framework of Islamic thought, we can see that it was the subject of the two most important currents of theoretical thought before al-Rāzī. These were the theologians on the one hand and the Peripatetic philosophers on the other. The definition of space that Peripatetic philosophers inherited from Aristotle is the inner surface of the encompassing body that touches the outer surface (*satih*) of the encompassed body. Therefore, in their view, space is a three-dimensional entity because it encompasses the body, but it is a two-dimensional entity because it is also defined as a surface. When we look at the terminology of Kalām, we see that space is defined as a mavḥūm (*mutavahham*) void (*farāg*) that is occupied by the body and into which its dimensions (*abād*) penetrate. In this respect, space is considered to be three-dimensional in that the volume of the object permeates it. The terms buʿd (*dimension, dimension, interval*) and farāg (*void*), which the theologians use in the definition of space, also need explanation. While buʿd is generally defined as the shortest distance between two things, volume is formed from the combination of three buʿds: length (*ṭūl*), width (*arz*), and depth (*umk*) (Günaydın, 7-8).

It is possible to gather all the ideas within the framework of the concept of space under two main headings:

- Existence of space,

- The nature of the place.

Even if the existence and nature of something is unknown (*machul*), some of its symptoms and effects are known (*malum*). In this case, both, that is, body and essence, become demandable (*matlub*). The concept of space is also such a concept because, according to the majority, its meaning is as follows: "(Space) is something that is possible for the object to remain calm within itself by moving and moving from itself and towards itself" (Günaydın, 80).

However, whatever the nature of the place, its four basic features determined the framework of this intellectual evolution:

- Space is what the object is in itself.

- Space does not accept any other object along with this object. The condition that only one object can be found (or can be) in any space means denying that objects can be intertwined (*tedahul*-i *ecsâm*).

- Space is what the object is separated from by movement.

- Space is what the object moves to through movement (Günaydın, 88).

When the term space is examined from a terminological perspective, it is noted that it overlaps (or is overlapped) with various concepts. According to Rasmussen, this concept should be the equivalent of the German word Raum given that the word does not have the same content as the word room, which is one of its English equivalents, and it means the comprehension of a space with defined boundaries with the term Raum-Gefühl (Usta, 26-7). While it is noteworthy that there is no such conceptual distinction in Turkish in the context of the concepts of space and place, it does not go unnoticed that there is a clear distinction between space and place in English. On the other hand, when research on the concepts of space and place is reviewed, it is seen that sometimes the concept of space and sometimes the concept of place comes to the fore or is excluded. In today's thought, when it comes to space, it is understood as an absolute space with perceptible boundaries and a geometric structure (Usta, 27). In this respect, the branch of science that particularly focuses on space is geography. Geography does not focus on space alone; it essentially evaluates the space by establishing its relationship with people. Thus, based on space, the earth branches into various components including the earth, continent geography, country, region, locality and locality. The point that needs to be considered here is that, when examining the concept of space, philosophical thought goes beyond physical space and is more interested in the theoretical dimension of the concept. However, it is still a fact that philosophers and geographers have exchanged information when it comes to space from past to present (Kılıç, 1).

2. PERCEPTION OF SPACE IN WESTERN THOUGHT

The first discussions about space, one of the basic concepts of cosmology, began in Ancient Greece and three different understandings emerged:

- The idea of infinite emptiness, which the ancient atomists claimed to be absolute absence,

- The perception of space, which is considered in the form of a three-dimensional and finite container, which is compared to magenta and completely covered by objects,

- The view advocated by Peripatetics, who do not accept the existence of a space independent of objects, and space consists of the inner surface (two-dimensional) of the surrounding body (Günaydın, 166).

The attempt to examine the universe in the context of classical thought has brought the concepts of space and place into its agenda since, throughout history, the importance of space and place has been constantly emphasized in understanding the relationships between nature, humans and nature, and society and nature (Bozdoğan-Benek, 179). As stated by Hesiod, space is what must come first. However, Hesiod's understanding of space is not clear and unambiguous. Pythagoreans considered numbers, which they saw as the basis of existence, as spatial entities; But they are mainly based on numbers and the space separating the numbers in question. Arkütas, one of the Pythagoreans, examined space in detail and brought important criticism to the understanding of the finite universe. In the following period, space emerged as a concept to refer to emptiness. While the members of the Eleatic school saw existence as a whole and denied the void, the Atomists basically defended the atoms and the void in which these atoms move. Aristotle criticized the coincidence of atoms coming together to form objects, and instead proposed a universe system based on the principle of purposefulness. Again, when we consider that before the Aristotelian understanding, Plato thought of space as a container, sometimes in the form of a bed to support everything, and sometimes as a scented ointment and being able to take any shape, Aristotle was influenced by his teacher's views on space, but he had a very different understanding of space. On the one hand, he states that his teacher Plato equated space and matter, on the other hand, he explains that space is different from matter (Kılıç, 27).

The first explanations about space in ancient Greek thought appear in the ontology of the great metaphysician Parmenides. While his master Xenophanes put forward a pantheistic doctrine defending the unity of God and the universe, Parmenides, who developed this understanding, put forward a monistic doctrine by reducing all beings

to a single being. According to this doctrine, there is only one being and the multiplicity we see in the universe with our senses is merely an appearance. If we expand this doctrine a bit, it could be seen that non-existence stands in opposition to existence; in other words, there is only existence. Non-existence does not exist and is unthinkable in any way. Existence has no beginning, nor does it have an end. Likewise, existence does not arise from another existence, nor does it arise from non-existence. Existence is an indivisible and motionless entity is idiosyncratic. Thought and existence are not different from each other; rather, they are the same thing (Haklı, 42-3).

Plato's views on space appear in the *Timaios* dialogue. In this dialogue, Plato tried to explain how the universe was formed, its basic principles, and also questioned what space is (Kılıç, 19). Plato tried to make space understandable through various metaphors and stated that it is actually eternal, just like existence, and is separate from being because space embodies creation. However, space is not something that can be grasped as easily as other things. In accordance with Plato's explanations, on the one hand, space is understood as a container and encompasses all, while on the other, it is actually thought to be independent of all its features, emphasizing its non-agentive role. Thus, space appears in an abstract way, and it is understood that it is separate from all kinds of objects.[3]

We find the earliest examples of the exponential use of space in terms of location, territory, or surface in the records of Heredotus throughout history. Herodotus in his *History* not only describes wars, relations between states, characteristics of societies, customs and Decencies, but also tries to give the names, characteristics and even quantitative measurements of the places he visited.[4] In Herodotus, space is closely related to distance. Another interesting point is the connection of dominating space with measuring space. A person who knows the art of measuring space is also a person who knows how to master it. Thus, it indicates that the place is also important from the point of view of politics. Subsequently, the prevailing view was that the term space would be more convenient provided that it is more aligned with nature. (Kılıç, 3-4).

In Greek philosophy, discussions about the nature of space were mostly carried out within the framework of fullness and emptiness (Kılıç, 3-4). Aristotle thought of nature as a form, and therefore considered motion as the realization of this form in matter. In other words, motion is the actualization, that is, the setting in motion of the potentiality present in matter. According to Aristotle, we should also keep in mind that this potential (kuvva) state does not completely lose its potential state when it becomes actualized. As long as the movement does not end, the change of form is

[3] See: Plato, Timaios, trans.: F. Akderin, İstanbul: Say Yay., 2015; The Timaeus of Plato, Edited by R.D. Archer-Hind, London, 1888.

[4] See: Heredotos, Tarih, İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Cultural Publications, 2012.

incomplete. From this perspective, it is possible to call a movement an incomplete act and an act an incomplete movement. For example, although going is incomplete, going is a completed act (Bolay, 71).

Aristotle suggests that there are as many forms of change as there are types of beings. Only if the categories are divided in the ore as attribute, place, relative, time, quantity, verb and passivity, can we say that there are three kinds of movements as attribute, quantity and space. The movement that affects quality is the movement of metamorphosis, while the movement that affects quantity is the movement of multiplication, decrease, growth and contraction. Movement according to space should be considered as a displacement movement (Ekşinar, 12). By defining space as the first non-moving boundary of the surrounding body (Aristoteles, *Fizik*, 155), Aristotle reduced the definition of space to the concept of the surface between the surrounding and the surrounded (Kaya, *Aristoteles*, 137-8). For this purpose, the three concepts that are considered as prerequisites for movement are discussed in the fourth book of Physics. These include location (*topos/place, 1.-5. section*), space (*kenon/void, 6.-9. chapter*) and time (*kronos/time, 10.-14. section*) The questioning style on these concepts is determined by a limited number of propositions as properties that any theory of space should explain:

- Space is what embodies the object in which it is a space,

- Space is not a part of the body,

- Space can be neither larger nor smaller than the object,

- Space is what the object can be separated from itself,

- Space should carry the upper and lower difference within itself. Of course, this is the assumption that forms the metaphysical basis for the theory of motion (Günaydın, 37).

Aristotle claims that no philosopher before him, except his master Plato, had a well-crafted question about place and a well-formulated answer, although it is accepted that there is such a thing as a place, according to him, what is a place? His master, who tried to ask and answer his question, was Plato (Kılıç, 19). He himself uses the concept of space (*topos*) in his work Physics in particular and does not develop a space theory. His is just a theory of space (*place*) or the theory of positions in space. However, since the Platonist and Democritoist views of space are not accepted by the thoughts of the Aristotelian system and the idea of empty space is not compatible with Aristotle's physics, Aristotle develops a theory of space only in space, excluding the unacceptable general understanding of space. The word topos refers to the presence of an object in a place in Aristotle, and topos has three meanings:

- Topos is something that is dynamic, vast, and difficult to comprehend,

- It's something that fills up like a container,

- And a place (Greek: stadion), to create, to mechanize.

Although comments can be made on space distinctions in this way, in short, space is the place that any object naturally holds and covers while moving, and its outer surface is in contact with the outer surface of another thing. According to this proposition, the place where something is located embraces and surrounds that thing (object) (Nalbantoğlu, 90). According to Aristotle, it is partly true that Hesiod thinks of chaos as the first object and that soil comes into being after chaos emerges as this view is based on the understanding that everything is in a place or space. Aristotle introduced various categories to define and classify existence, which played a critical role in both his philosophy of existence and his view of logic. The categories in question are ten: Substance, quantity, quality, relativity, space, time, location, situation, activity, passivity. Among these, *what* refers to the ore, *how many* refers to great quantities, *what kind of existence* refers to quality, *what is related* refers to relativity, *where* refers place, *when* refers to time, *how it is located* refers to its position, *in which environment* refers to what it is doing, what is being done, what is being done, and what is being done refers to passivity (Duralı, 43).

These categories were later reconsidered and re-evaluated by various philosophers such as Descartes and Kant. In his book Categories, where Aristotle deals with the subject of categories, he first discusses space while examining the other nine categories and highlights space as a continuous quantity: "Some of the quantities are discontinuous, some are continuous, and some are composed of parts that have positions within themselves relative to each other. Some of them are composed of parts that do not have a position. Discontinuous ones appear as numbers and words, and continuous ones appear as lines, planes and objects, as well as time and place (Greek topos) (Aristoteles, Kategoriler, 44-5). When examining quantities, Aristotle puts place in the first group by stating that some of them consist of parts that have a certain position relative to each other, while others are not determined in this way (Aristoteles, Kategoriler, 32). Determined quantities are essential quantities and have no opposites. Others are incidental. However, according to Aristotle, contrast for place is determined based on its distance: "However, especially in the case of place, the opposite of quantity arises, because since the center is at the furthest distance from the boundaries of the universe, the place towards the center is considered as below, while the above is considered as opposed to below. The definition of all the other opposites seems to follow from these; As a matter of fact, among the people of the same sex, those who are furthest from each other are called opposites" (Kılıç, 25-29). In Aristotle's *Physics*, every object - which must be a moving object – (Aristoteles,

Metafizik, 478) is in a space. Movement and space are two basic elements that must exist together. If there is movement, space must exist; if space exists, movement must exist (Haklı, 47).

There are two main reasons that reveal the importance of the place: First of all, everyone accepts that those who exist exist anywhere. The second is that the most general and foremost movement is relative to the ground (Kılıç, 29). Together with these, as a result of the criticisms made to the Aristotelian definition of space in the same period, the Stoic school adopted a different understanding of space and defined the space in which the body is located as the three-dimensional space covered by it. Similarly, as Aristotle pointed out, the definition of space as a three-dimensional entity necessitates the existence of an infinite void outside the realm. For this reason, the Stoics tried to prove the infinity of the void outside the realm by using original proofs as well as Archytas' argument (Günaydın, 48). Newton suggested that space should not be confused with objects found in it. According to him, there is an absolute space and space regardless of its content. His contemporary, Leibniz, on the other hand, put forward an opposite view and evaluated space not as any state of objects, but as a series of states that allow them to follow each other and the order of their possible coexistence. Dec. According to him, space is not an entity, but rather a relation. The whole of the relationships formed by the positions of objects and beings to each other are formed, and beings disappear (Usta, 26).

The famous German philosopher Immanuel Kant defines space as an a priori image of external objects that is formed in the mind and does not arise directly from sensation in the imagination. Kant tries to prove this claim in two stages: First, are time and space really not the result of experience, but necessary conditions applied by the mind to the senses? By asking the question, secondly, how is mathematics based on time and space possible? By asking the question. Kant bases his philosophy on time and space by answering these two questions (Ekşinar, 72). Bedia Akarsu expresses the process as follows in her article "Concepts of Space and Time in Kant": "Now, what are space and time? Are Democritus and his later descendants real beings, as Newton claimed? Or are they merely determinations of objects, as thought by Descartes, who proposed space as the essential attribute of matter and objects? Or, as Leibniz said, are the accidents inherent in objects even when they are not seen? Or are space and time things that are only related to the form of perception and therefore to the subjective structure of our soul (subjective here means having the same validity for all subjects) and without this structure we cannot attach these predicates to any object?" (Akarsu, 117).

Sigfried Giedion, considered the true historian of modern architecture (Tanju, 117), has defined space as an ideological space that contains the traces and signs of the dominant ideology. Another German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, conceived of

space as a place of interaction and experience. The one-sided interaction that occurs in the first turns into a two-way interaction in the second. In this way, space sometimes highlights the first, while in general it is the area where the interaction in Heidegger's definition takes place (Taşçı, 209). Heidegger, who proceeds by questioning the relationship between space and being, expresses that the answer to the question of what space is has not yet been asked to one side. "What does the language mean by the word space (space)?" Heidegger, who seeks an answer to this by asking the question, actually draws the framework of space. He answers this question as follows: "In this word, compilation and aggregation come into the language. This means cleansing, saving from the wild. Compiling and collecting reveals what is free, what is open for human habitation and residence." It is known that wherever there is compilation and collection, there will be a restriction. According to this description, the fact that a place can be defined as a space makes it necessary to have defined boundaries, that is, a framework. According to Nalbantoğlu, Heidegger's conception of space is as follows: "Space is an abstract category / concept, a hollow conceptual pattern unique to modern times. In the pre-modern and especially the earliest periods of human history, the existence of this abstraction was hardly needed. In summary, when we say space, we are talking about a category that is the product of recent periods, when things (die dinge) began to be objectified and represented mainly by the language of pictures and numbers in a new language world that began to appear roughly at the end of the Middle Ages" (Nalbantoğlu, 89) Finally, we can say the following: space does not mean anything on its own, so there is no such thing as absolute space. As Aristotle stated, space is an element that exists only with the objects and energies within it (Nalbantoğlu, 93; Taşçı, 208).

3. SPACE IN ISLAMIC THOUGHT

Translation movements, which have gained momentum since the third century of Hijri, were initially carried out with an eye on practical benefits such as medicine, astronomy and chemistry, but over time they continued as a wide-scale activity, including the fields of metaphysics, physics, psychology and ethics. Thus, a comprehensive translation movement took place and ultimately a significant part of the knowledge of the ancient world was transferred to the Islamic world (Günaydın, 49).

In Islamic thought, the concept of space forms an important part of the cosmological debates between the theological and philosophical traditions. The theologians who embraced an atomistic cosmology adopted the concept of space and expressed their views in this direction, except for some tendencies like the Mutazilite school originating in Baghdad. The discussions they engaged in on the subject of space, feeling the need to struggle with the Democritus-Ephlatonist (*such as Abū Bakr Zakariyya*

al-Rāzī) and Aristotelian (*such as al-Fārābī and Ibn Sina*) ideas, made the theologians' views on the concept of void more detailed and specific. When we exclude partial exceptions, we see that Muslim philosophers were mostly Aristotelian in their views on space. Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, one of these exceptions, defended an atomist-Ephlatonic understanding of space. According to him, as an ontological principle, space is absolute because it is independent of the existence of the bodies that occupy it, infinite because it is eternal, and empty space (*halā*) because it provides space for mechanical relations between atoms. On the other hand, the space occupied by objects and conceivable only with the existence of the object should be called relative space (Kutluer, 28/551).

Since ancient times, there have been two basic theories that promised to explain the structure of the natural body, and which have also found their counterparts in Islamic thought. The first of these is the atomist theory, put forward by Democritus and his followers, which explains the object as the combination of particles moving in a vacuum in various forms. In the Muslim world, this theory was accepted by many theologians, especially the philosopher Abū Bakr Zakariyya al-Rāzī. The second theory is Aristotle's theory called hylomorphism. In this theory, the natural body is explained as a continuous structure consisting of two inseparable elements, namely the hue and the form. This theory, which was adopted by Peripatetic philosophers such as al-Fārābī and Ibn Sina, continued to be the dominant theory used to explain the structure of the natural body in the Islamic world for many years (Baga, 77-8).

Muslim philosophers, in general, focused on the concepts of space and motion before evaluating the term time. On the one hand, Peripatetic philosophers tried to explain motion by categorizing it, and on the other hand, almost all of them agreed that motion is the change of location of a body. In addition, they defined space as an encompassing entity. There are also those who argue that space is not as clear as motion and time (Ekşinar, 64-5). These discussions on space and emptiness mainly revolve around two issues: Firstly, the question of the existence or non-existence of emptiness, and secondly, the question of whether space is two- or three-dimensional, that is, its definition (Günaydın, 67). These philosophers thought that space gains meaning as long as it is occupied. According to this view, space is a mental volume that an object occupies and reveals its own dimensions but has no physical existence. On the other hand, time, as a concept that is constantly renewed and has no physical existence, is used to determine an intellectual fact. For example, when we say, "Let's meet at sunset", sunset is a spatial event that occurs at every moment and at different points on the spherical planet and is continuous. For example, when we say, let's meet at sunset, sunset is a spatial event that occurs at every moment and at different points on the spherical planet and is continuous. But from the point of view of our location, the sunset will occur at a time interval determined for us, and this will be a

temporal and mental comprehension of a spatial and physical event. From this point of view, it is understood that time and space are united in the realization of events, and that they do not exist separately from each other (Dündar, 60). All of these views found their counterparts and representatives in the Islamic world. The Peripatetic tradition of thought, which produced ideas by accepting the Aristotelian definition of space, tried to find a solution to the problem of the non-spatiality of the universe, one of the most important problems in this theory, with Ibn Sina. The atomist view, which represented a weak vein in classical Greek thought, was strongly defended by theologians in the Islamic world. Except for Mutazilite thought, the theologian atomists accepted emptiness and claimed that emptiness has no ontic existence (*ademī, mavḥūm, itibarī*) as a natural consequence of their ontology consisting of substance and matter. The third view, also called Platonist in the Muslim world, actually belongs to Yahya al-Nahvī (*Philoponus*). This view was represented by some exceptional thinkers before Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, such as Abu Bakr Zakariyya al-Rāzī and Ebu'l-Berekāt al-Baghdādī. (Günaydın, 166).

al-Kindī's definition of space, accepted as the first Islamic philosopher, as the meeting of the final boundaries of the surrounding and the surrounded body, seems to have predetermined the Aristotelian line followed. According to al-Kindī, the ability of an object to leave its space or the same place to be occupied by someone else is an indication that the space has a reality that is not identical to the object that occupies space (Kutluer, 28/551). Since he considered that the concepts of space and mutamakkin (*object in space*) cannot be considered separately from each other, he found it impossible to have a space or an absolute void in which the object does not take up space. For this reason, al-Kindī denies the existence of an infinite void beyond the universe (Günaydın, 50-1). His views on the nature and definition of space are almost the same as Aristotle's views on this subject. In his treatise called *Fi Hudûd al-Eşya va Rusumiha*, there are two small definitions about space, one of which is understood to be his own definition, and the other, which begins with the phrase "*it is said*" and which he accepts. The first of these is that space is the boundaries of objects, and the other one is that space is the meeting of the final boundaries of what surrounds and what is wrapped (Kaya, *Kindi*, 180). It is quite obvious that both of these definitions are identical to Aristotle's definition of the boundary of the surrounding body and the surrounding body (Haklı, 50).

al-Kindī expresses the descriptions of space by some philosophers as follows: "According to some, space never exists. Some, like magenta, have said that it is an object. Some philosophers have said that he exists and is not an object. Aristotle, on the other hand, said that there is space and it is obvious." al-Kindī, who gives place to these views, tries to make a description of the place. According to him, the existence of the place is obvious and obvious. When there is a change in the body

in the form of increase, decrease or movement, they have to take place in something larger than the body and surrounding the body. This thing that surrounds the object is called space because sometimes it is possible to see air where the gap is located, and sometimes it is possible to see water where the air is located. In other words, when water enters a container, the air comes out, there is space left. But the place is not disrupted owing to any disruption in these. (Ekşinar, 23). Movement is divided into two forms of being in space, that is, in the form of displacement, and not being in space. While movement in space is a matter for every object, movement that is not in space consists of increasing, decreasing, becoming, deterioration and transformation movements (Ekşinar, 24).

According to al-Kindī, the infinite time before the desired point to be reached is equal to the infinite time after it. If the time from infinity to a certain point is known, it is imperative that the time extending from this known time to infinity is also known. However, this means that the infinite is finite and constitutes an impossible contradiction. If we cannot reach a certain time, we cannot reach the one before it, the one before it, and none of them forever. Since an infinite distance cannot be exceeded and is endless, in other words, there is no possibility of reaching a certain point because infinite time cannot be traveled. However, we can talk about the fact that a certain time actually exists. Therefore, we have to defend time not as a slice of infinity, but on the contrary, necessarily as a slice of finality. Depending on this, al-Kindī argued for the first time in our history of thought that time, space and movement, which are physical phenomena and measurements of the body on the one hand, and the body on the other, are connected and relative (Bayrakdar, 225-6).

In his treatise "*On the Finitude of the Body of the World*", al-Kindī mentions four theorems about the existence of finitude and lists them as follows:

- Lengths of the same kind are called equal if one of them is not greater than the other,

- If a length of the same kind is added to one of two lengths of the same kind, their equality is broken,

- Two lengths of the same kind cannot be infinite if one of them is smaller than the other, for the smaller measures the larger or a part of it,

- The sum of two lengths of the same genus, each finite, must also be finite.

The conclusion we draw from these theorems is summarized as follows: Everybody that consists of a dual structure of matter and form, is limited in space and moves in time is finite, even if it is the body of this world itself. Since it is finite, it cannot be considered as eternal. Allah is the only one who is eternal and everlasting (Şerif,

2/245).

In Islamic philosophy, Ibn Sina is the only philosopher well-known for this original approaches to space and emptiness and whose views cover a wide range that can be directly compared with the views of other philosophers. Ibn Sina made satisfactory explanations about space and space in his works called Simā al-Tabīʾī, which is among the physics collections of *Shifa* along with *Kitab al-Nacat* (Haklı, 52). In these works, he drew attention to the phenomena of displacement and the replacement of one object by another, especially in order to reveal the ontological reality of space. According to this idea, the phenomenon of displacement indicates that there is a place that has been changed, while the phenomenon of one object being replaced by another indicates that there is a place left behind. These places, called spaces, exist independently of the substance of the object and its own qualities and quantities. Ibn Sina, who defines space as a surface that is the boundary of the surrounding body, not someone else's, criticized the alternative views excluded by this definition. Accordingly, space cannot consist only of matter and form as while the body leaves its place, matter and form do not separate from itself. According to him, views that describe space in terms of the three dimensions of the object or the dimensions of the void are wrong on the grounds that the dimension does not have the characteristic of being encompassing. For this reason, a surface that has width and depth but no depth can only surround an object as its space. According to Ibn Sina, all views that see the void as consisting of nothingness or absolute dimensions start from an erroneous view of corporeal existence because, due to many rational reasons, it is not possible to think of a space where there is no object. The relativity of space is not to the constitutive principles of the object called matter and form, but to the object consisting of these two principles. Due to the logical relationship between the object taking up space and the idea of space, an object that does not take up space cannot be considered, nor can a place without a body be considered. Therefore, vacuum is impossible in the universe. In addition to their space-occupying nature, objects are finite and their dimensions do not intertwine with the dimensions of another object (tedahul). The reason for this is that it is not possible for an object with infinite dimensions to neither move nor complete its rotation around its own fixed axis (Kutluer, 28/551).

In the context of examining the nature of space, it is possible to say that Ibn Sina tried to solve two basic drawbacks of the Aristotelian definition of space. The first problem is the recognition that the universe as a whole does not exist in space but has cyclical motion. Themistius tried to find a different solution by expanding the definition of space as the contact surface of the surrounding or surrounded object. Ibn Sina strongly rejects this definition, implying that a single object could have two spaces. According to him, the first problem is actually a manifestation of a more fundamental issue found in Aristotelian physics. Although the space does not change in circu-

lar motion, the question of how the motion occurs has never been explained within the framework of Aristotelian physics. It is possible to say that Ibn Sina solved this problem by defining linear and circular motion (*vaz'i*) not as two separate types of spatial motion, but as two separate types of motion that are independent of each other. The second fundamental problem of Aristotelian space is that some objects that are actually motionless are considered to be mobile in some cases. The reason for this is that movement is defined as moving from one place to another under normal conditions. When other objects covering a motionless object move, the space of the object, which consists of a surface, will constantly change and the object will be considered moving. In order to avoid this contradiction, Ibn Sina brings different records to the surfaces that can be spaces and states that the space can be a single surface or it can be composed of more than one surface. In other words, parts of the geometric surface surrounding the space may belong to more than one object. To give an example, the space of a stone lying on the ground is the sum of the upper surface of the soil contacting it from the lower side and the inner surfaces of the air contacting it from the other sides. Sometimes it is possible for some of these surfaces to be active and some to be calm. It is also possible for all surfaces to perform cyclic movements around the object even when it is at rest (Günaydın, 53-54).

Apart from his views above, Ibn Sina also expresses the following thoughts: If any surface does not surround an object, we cannot talk about a space situation. If the surface surrounds the object, it is the end of space and the entity covered. Arguing that the surface that covers space may not always be static, but sometimes it is mobile, Ibn Sina states that if the thing covered is mobile, the space that covers it may also be mobile to adapt to it (Dündar, 66).

Stating that there are two common definitions of space: the thing that the object determines and the thing that surrounds the object, Ibn Sina states that the second definition is especially preferred by philosophers and that they look for four conditions for something to be a place:

- The object must be in the space,

- The object must be able to leave that place,

- While there is an object in a place, another object should not be there at the same time,

- When an object leaves a space, the space should not leave with that object and other objects should be able to be there (Haklı, 54). The greatest evidence of those who claim that "space has a reality separate from the object" is the observation that after something in a place leaves that place, another object arrives there; This situation shows the existence of movement (Haklı, 55).

According to Ibn Sina, if a surface does not surround any object, then it is impossible to talk about space. If the surface surrounds the object, space is also the end of the embodied entity. In this case, Ibn Sina argued that the covering surface as a space cannot always be stationary, sometimes it can be mobile, and claimed that if the covered thing is mobile, the space covering it can also be mobile by adapting to it (Dündar, 66).

The Andalusian Muslim philosopher Ibn Rushd begins to study the space problem by emphasizing the ontological reality of space. If we can speak of space as the personal predicate of an object -which it is- it is inconceivable that the object in question is spaceless. Although the earth is not larger or smaller than the covering object, space is in a state of reality that is different from the object, but surrounds it. What is meant by space is not the place that an object shares jointly with other objects, but on the contrary, its real place. Since the embodying-embodied relationship in this way is in question up to the limits of the corporeal realm, it cannot be argued that space is a dimension or an empty space in which the surfaces are separated from itself. According to Ibn Rushd, relative to the concept of movement, it is possible to define space as the encircling boundary where movement takes place and ends (Kutluer, 28/552).

Ibn Rushd divides existence into two in the form of what is and is not movement within its structure. Thus, the entity that has movement within it is associated with time. On the other hand, the being that does not have movement in its body has divine characteristics. There can be no temporal before or afterness for this being because it is without before and without after. In this context, the reason for an entity that has movement in its structure is actually an entity that does not have movement in its structure. Time cannot interfere in any way with an entity that does not contain movement in its body. In this way, an entity that does not accept movement in terms of its ability to exist rather than a temporal priority comes before an entity that has movement within it. Time is a concept that consciousness comprehends with reference to movement. However, Just as the motionless beings defy any relation with time, time and motion could not be thought as distinct from each other. Ibn Rushd defines the concept of moment as the beginning of the future and the end of the past, making it the common denominator of both concepts of time. According to him, the present, that is, the time we are in, exists invariably between the future and the past and must exist. Therefore, it is impossible to conceive the present without a past (Dündar, 68-9).

Aristotelian thought had a significant influence on Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (Günaydın, 34). Razi thought that time could only be known through reason and embodied all that is known and unknown given that it could not be associated with any sense and does not have any material structure, an approach that is reminiscent of of the statements in Timaios. (Günaydın, 60). In Mabāḥis al-Mashrikiyya, al-Rāzī lists

three short proofs, or more accurately, warnings (tanbih), which he cites from Ibn Sina and whose origin is also found in Aristotle's *Physics*. Although Aristotle had defined four different types of motion, he had considered the change between places (*ayn*), which is called transmigration, as motion in the real and general sense. The same idea, later expressed in more systematic language by Ibn Sina, is summarized by al-Rāzī. According to him, the change in the category of place is a necessary and sufficient reason for the existence of motion without any change in substance or other categories such as quantity and quality. In this regard, the first argument is that the category of place, which consists of the relation of substance to space, directly necessitates the existence of space. The second evidence is that the phenomenon of displacement is fixed by experience so that if it is observed that after an object leaves its place, another object can be found in its place, the intellect judges that objects come and settle in succession and that there must be an existence separate from their essences. This common position shared by the bodies (*mushtaraq mavda intıqal*) is the place itself. The third argument is based on the fact that up and down are necessary knowledge. Following Aristotle, Avicenna stated that natural motion reveals that these directions are absolute, whereas al-Rāzī made no reference to the theory of natural motion. The reason for this is that the existence of space is clear and comprehensible (*badihī*), which Avicenna tries to show with evidence and al-Rāzī clearly states. If a knowledge is clear and comprehensible; there is no point in putting forward theoretical proofs for it. The best that could be done is to remind the reality to those who reject it. As al-Rāzī states, if one accepts that the existence of space is a theoretical knowledge, it would be possible to raise different doubts against these evidences, so "the premise means that the knowledge of the existence of space should be understandable" (Günaydın, 85). Al-Rāzī, who analyzed all the arguments put forward in the debates that took place around the two views of *satih* (*Aristotle*) and *bu'd* (*Plato*) throughout the history of the concept of space, eliminated the weak arguments of both sides, and also showed that some strong criticisms could be constructed and put forward against both views and thus were not decisive in the debate (Günaydın, 167).

Al-Fārābī, called Muallim al-Sānī, did not deviate from the Peripatetic line of thinking in matters such as motion, the concepts of time and space, and the structure of the universe (Kaya, *Farabi*, 12/ 150-1). He counts space among the types of categories and describes it as "the presence of something surrounding it on the surface of the thing signified. (*Some of the categories*) construct what the thing signified is (*essence*), some construct where it is (*place*), some construct when it is in the past or future (*time*), and some construct that there is something surrounding it on its surface (*space*)" (Kılıç, 48).

Al-Fārābī makes the definition of space more specific. According to him, the inner

surface of the enclosing body and the outer surface of the enclosed body are called space. Since there is nothing beyond the universe that surrounds it from the outside, it is impossible to talk about the universe having a space. Referring to Aristotle's concept of natural space, al-Fārābī emphasizes that there is no fullness or emptiness beyond the universe (al-Fārābī, *Uyūn*, 65). Nevertheless, according to al-Fārābī, the real concept that completes the essence of space is the encompassing boundary. When the concept is viewed from the perspective of category logic, the answer to the question of where it is, for example, at home, may not always be in accordance with the definition of space as an encompassing surface. As a matter of fact, one who is at home is not surrounded by the house. This is because the relation between the encompassing and the encompassed, which is meaningful in terms of natural philosophy, is not always the same as the relation between the place and the occupant of the place as a category of logic (Kutluer, 28/ 551).

When we consider al-Fārābī's definition of space as the inner surface of the enclosing body and the outer surface of the enclosed body (Dündar, 64), we see that his understanding of space differs from Aristotle's understanding of space with minor differences. While Aristotle defined the boundary between the encompassing body and the encompassed body as space, al-Fārābī, despite knowing the term boundary in Aristotle's definition of space in his *Physics* (*Simā al-Tabīʿī*), defined space as encompassing the thing. Accordingly, space encompasses the thing and therefore the thing is encompassed by space (Fârâbî, *Harfler*, 29). In al-Farabi's *Uyūn al-Mesāil*, after defining space as the surface of the encompassing body and the surface of the encompassed body, he argued that there is no absolute emptiness, that the simple bodies in the realm have only one space, and that there is no emptiness and fullness beyond the spherical realm composed of simple bodies (Fârâbî, *Felsefe*, 210). It is clear from these explanations that since there is no absolute void and there is no body encompassing the universe, the universe is both limited and there is no void or fullness beyond it (Haklı, 52).

Al-Fārābī emphasizes that the universe was created as a whole in a space in which the concept of time cannot be mentioned, in a state of continuous formation and decay. He states that celestial bodies, like the sphere we live in, are formed in a time that is the result of the movement in the created universal whole, and from this point of view, it is understood that conscious beings living in space feel time and that space itself is outside of time (Dündar, 63). From this point of view, al-Fārābī's ontological perspective on space is very similar to al-Kindī's (Dündar, 64). According to him, the category of space is the attribution of an object to its own space. This category is not space itself, nor is it a combination of object and space. In short, this category is the category that answers the question "where is it?". For example, when it is said that it is in the school, the category of space is not the school itself, but what is un-

derstood from the answer "it is in the school" as here, too, it expresses the relation to the school (Ekşinar, 31).

Al-Fārābī states that space is divided into two:

- The actual space. As an example of this, expressions such as at home, at school, etc. can be said.

- Relative space. Expressions such as above, below, at the top, in the middle, behind, to the left can be given as examples.

Any object is either in relative space or in actual space (Çapak, 129).

In connection with space, al-Fārābī defines motion as the displacement of a body. The movements of celestial bodies are non-moving (vad'i) and circular. The movement of beings subject to creation and dissolution, on the other hand, depends on space (Fârâbî, *Uyûn*, 67; Fârâbî, *Felsefe*, 210; Aydın, *Metafizik,* 191). Circular movements are not like other movements; therefore, time occurs only in the movements of these celestial bodies. From this sentence, we understand that he argues that time depends on motion. If there is motion, time begins with the beginning of motion; therefore, time ends with the end of motion (Ekşinar, 30). Al-Fārābī forms his ideas on motion under the influence of Aristotle and considers motion in two different categories: celestial and terrestrial (Dağ, 31).

According to Ibn Arabī, another Muslim philosopher, time and space are an infinitely vast container for all phenomena. (Yusuf, 55). In his understanding, there is no physical time and space. From this perspective, it can even be concluded that time and space do not have an abstract existence, that these entities are just an illusion, and that this illusion is perceived only as a human delusion or fantasy. Although it can be concluded that the concepts in question do not have a concrete or abstract existence, it is not easy to deny this since we are constantly intertwined with these concepts in daily life. Considering that the existence in the universe consists of a single entity in the light of Ibn Arabi's concept of unity in mystical existence, it can be concluded that time and space cannot be considered as separate entities (Dündar, 72-73). Arguing that time does not actually exist, Aristotle also thinks like Ibn Arabi. He expresses that time is a product of human thought in his work Physics with the following words: "Time consists of two parts, one of which came into existence. This first piece that existed has passed away, that is, it has passed. The other part does not exist yet. So it's in the future. So how can something come into being from something that hasn't existed yet?" He made statements supporting Ibn Arabi's ideas (Lettinck, 348). According to Aristotle's idea, in order for something to exist, it must exist now. However, Aristotle argued that *now* cannot be considered as a moment in the concept of time, but can only be a point on the timeline (Dündar, 73). However,

according to Ibn Arabi, although the circle consists of points, the point is not a circle. In this context, time is the sum of consecutive moments, and it can be inferred that a single moment cannot be time. According to Ibn Arabi, everything needs God not for its own essence, but for its existence. The existence of being in time and space is a momentary existence. In the concept of moment, there is no existential continuity. Ibn Arabi argued that in order for the being to experience its existence, it must first exist in a divine consciousness. For this reason, existence exists in the knowledge of the creator before it exists, that is, it continues its existence in a divine layer before existing in a temporal and spatial coordinate in the universe (Dündar, 75).

According to Ibn Arabī, space exists. Existing space is the answer to the question 'where?' and is defined by settlement. According to Ibn Arabī, time is counted by breaths that correspond to movement, motion and repetition. Ibn Arabī explains the settlement, that is, the spatial expression created by these breaths that return to their origin due to their circular characteristic, with the word istiva. Although the Turkish equivalent of istiva is sitting on a throne, according to Ibn Arabī's ontology, it is perceived as settlement, and God's istiva in the heavens and the earth actually means that He has the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. In this context, the word that corresponds to concepts such as sitting on a throne, which is said to establish dominance or rule in a place, is associated with the concept of space. According to Ibn Arabī, there is a difference between place and space. The one who is settled in space is asked the question, 'Where? According to him, while the act of settling belongs to the place, the thing in the place can be separated from the place. According to this opinion, God can be in space but not in place. It can be said that 'consciousnesses settled in a place experience that place together with its time-space elements (Dündar, 76-7).

According to Ibn Arabī, if time is understood through movement, movement needs space to be realised. In this context, the physical space, which is known today as three-dimensional - six-dimensional according to Ibn Arabî - determines the directions of movement (Dündar, 77-8). Ibn Arabī shapes the ontology of time-space with the principle of ever-renewing creation and states that successive events and movements should be compared with the concept of time. According to him, for a being to have a physical reality, movement must be observed in its existence. In this framework, Ibn Arabī states that time and space do not exist in reality at the same time: 'Time and space are the result of physical objects. But time is an imaginary thing that cannot exist on its own. When we ask the question 'When?' it is shown to us by the movement of the celestial spheres and the inhabited things. Therefore, time and space do not exist in reality. According to these explanations, there is no physical time and space in Ibn Arabī's understanding. One can even conclude that time and space do not even have an abstract existence, that these entities are only an illusion,

and that this illusion is perceived only as a human delusion or fantasy. Although it can be concluded that these concepts do not have a concrete or abstract existence, it is not easy to deny this, according to Ibn Arabī, since we are constantly pre-occupied with these concepts in daily life (Dündar, 72-3). In the light of these definitions, Ibn Arabī shaped his ontology of time-space with the principle of ever-renewing creation. However, daily habits cannot comprehend the aforementioned ever-renewing creation. According to him, the concept of distance in space is not a created concept and is impossible. Physical objects do not travel distance; they can only be in one place at one moment of existence and in another place at another moment of existence. According to Ibn Arabī, it is understood that there can be no distance between the starting and ending points of the movement of the object in the moment, which is the smallest unit of time (Dündar, 78-9).

In Ibn Arabī's philosophy, the concepts of time and space are mutually reciprocal and both are described as non-existent entities that have no external existence. The following words belong to him: 'Time and space are appendages of the natural body. Time is a non-existent thing that has no external existence. It is revealed by the movements of the celestial spheres and the movements of the spatialised when the question of when is attached to it. Therefore, space and time have no external existence (Özkan, 76).

Finally, we would like to mention two important authors. The first of these is Ikhwān-Safā. Although he seems to have an Aristotelian understanding of space, his analyses of space and time are not clear enough.[5] Al-Ghazālī, on the other hand, states that the spatial dimension depends on the body itself and the temporal dimension is subject to motion. In other words, the extension of the dimensions of matter constitutes space and the continuation of its motion constitutes time. Although the universe we live in has certain dimensions and an end, there is no separate space outside the universe. Moreover, since the concept of time is created together with the universe, there can be no concept of time before the universe (Gazzâlî, 35).

CONCLUSION

As can be understood from the above lines, the concept of space was discussed in a wide range of dimensions both in the pre-Islamic period and by Muslim philosophers. In fact, it is possible to see this discussion as one of the elements of a multi-dimensional discussion platform. It is possible to see this discussion as one of the elements of the multidimensional discussion platform. The concept of space, which refers to place, home, dormitory, space, and space, finds expression around three main views: the approach of those who interpret it as a container or reservoir,

[5] See: İhvân-ı Safâ Risâleleri I-IV, Edit: A. Kahraman, (Trans.: The Board), İstanbul: Ayrıntı Publications, 2012.

the relational view of space, and the multidimensional view of space, which suggests that space and things complement each other. Space is one of the important elements of the universe and it is impossible to think of the universe independently of it. In traditional thought, any attempt to analyse the universe is invariably accompanied by speculation on space . While Plato was trying to explain how the universe was formed and its basic principles, he also questioned what space was. In his History, Herodotus not only described the wars fought, state relations, characteristics of societies, traditions and customs, but also attempted to give the names, characteristics and even quantitative measurements of the places he visited. In his work on categories, Aristotle deals with space while analysing the other nine categories and views it on a continuum . In Islamic thought, al-Kindī's definition of space as the meeting of the final boundaries of the encompassing and the encompassed body seems to have had a particular impact on Aristotelian thinking. According to al-Kindī, the fact that an object can leave its space or the same space can be occupied by another object shows that space has a reality that is not identical with the object occupying space. Avicenna, who defined space as the surface that is the boundary of the encompassing body and not of another, criticised the alternative views that this definition excluded. Averroes, on the other hand, began to examine the problem by emphasising the ontological reality of space. If we can speak of space as the essential predicate of the body, which it is, then the body cannot be thought without space. Although it is not larger or smaller than the body that occupies space, space is a reality that is different from the body and encompasses it. Al-Fārābī's definition of space is more specific. According to him, the inner surface of the encompassing body and the outer surface of the encompassed body are called space. According to Ibn Arabī, time and space are concepts that exist beyond being the basic elements of nature. Existing space is the answer to the question 'where?' and is defined by settlement. Today, we are obliged to examine space not only as a metaphysical concept, but also as the earth and the world, and even to feel responsible for it. Because forgetting the earth is actually forgetting time and space (Kılıç, 5).

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EXTENDED SUMMARY

Mekânın dil kurgusunun önemli unsurlarından birisi olduğu konusunda şüphe yoktur. Öyle ki, fiil dediğimiz temel unsurun geçişli ya da geçişsiz olmasına tesir edebilecek derecede etkisi bulunmaktadır. Bu açıdan mekân unsurunun gerek Batı düşüncesi nazarında ve gerekse İslâm düşüncesi ekseninde işgal ettiği yeri bilmenin önemli olduğu kanaatindeyiz. Zira mekân kavramı sadece *cümlede eylemin gerçekleştiği yerden* ibaret değildir. Varlıkta işgal ettiği pozisyonun dışında uzayda kapladığı yer ve boşluk ile olan diyaloğu da dikkate alınmak durumundadır. Gerek Batı düşüncesinde ve gerekse İslâm düşüncesinde mekân kavramı çoklu düşünme sentezinin unsurlarından birisidir. Müslüman filozofların eserlerine bakıldığında mekânın işgal ettiği yeri görmek imkân dahilindedir. Aristo mekân konusunda belirleyici olmuştur. Gerek kendi döneminde gerek kendisinden sonra Batı düşüncesinde ve gerekse Meşşâî felsefede Aristo'nun baskın düşüncelerine rastlamaktayız. İslâm düşüncesinde zaman hem somut hem de soyut haliyle işlevsel bir bütünlük arzetmektedir. Bu sebeple çalışmamızın Batı düşüncesi çerçevesinde Aristo temel inceleme alanımızı oluşturmuştur. Aristo dışında Platon da düşüncelerini mercek altına aldığımız bir diğer Yunan düşünürüdür. İslâm dünyasına geldiğimizde, doğal bir refleks olarak mekân konusundaki düşünceleri vermeye Kindî ile başladık. Ardından İbn Sînâ, İbn Rüşd, Fahreddin er-Râzî, Fârâbî ve İbn Arabî'nin görüşlerine çalışmamızda yer verdik. Bu belirlemeyi yaparken filozofların eserlerinde mekâna verdikleri önemi dikkate almaya çalıştık.

Mekân sözcüğünün Arapça *kevn* kökünden gelmesi, bu ontolojik yaklaşımı desteklemektedir. Kevn, Ferit Devellioğlu'nun sözlüğünde *olma*, *var olma*, *varlık*, *vücut bulma* anlamlarına gelir. Aynı kökten türemiş *kevneyn*, *cismani ve ruhani alem*, *kevni*, *acunsal, kozmik*, *kâinat, var olan şeylerin cümlesi, yaratıklar, mevcut olan, varlık (being, to on)*, *tekevvün* ise *var olma, meydana geliş, oluş* anlamları taşır. Etimolojik açıdan *mekân*'ın *kevn*'den türemesi, kelimenin mevcut yapısı içerisinde ontolojik bir söylem taşıdığını göstermektedir. Kur'an-ı Kerim'in birçok yerinde geçen mekân kelimesi gündelik dildeki manasıyla nesnelerin veya kişilerin bulunduğu yeri ifade etmektedir. Sözlüklerde mekân ve yer kavramlarının kullanılma biçimleri farklı şekillerde ortaya çıkmaktadır. Örneğin *Türk Dil Kurumu Sözlüğü*'nde mekân şu şekilde açıklanmaktadır: *Yer, bulunulan yer, ev, yurt, uzay, fezâ*. Üç madde dört farklı anlama göndermede bulunmaktadır: *Toprak, konum, adres ve boşluk*. Sözlükte mekâna dair üç maddenin vurgu yaptığı anlamalar (toprak, konum, adres ve boşluk) yer kavramı için de geçerlidir.

Mekân tarihini hatırlayamadığımız kadar geçmişe dayanan ancak her zaman bu kavramla değil de yer, yeryüzü, toprak, bölge, dünya, hatta günümüze daha yakın zamanlarda uzay, uzam, yayılım olarak kullanılan anlayışın boyutlarını göstermektedir. Bu sebeple mekân, var olanın bulunduğu yer ile diğer varlıklarla kurulan ilişki

alanı olarak tanımlanabilir. Sözlük anlamı olarak, yer, bulunulan yer, ev, yurt anlamlarında kullanılmakta olan mekân insan ve diğer canlıların hareketine izin veren veya kısıtlayan yerdir. Gerek harekete izin verme gerekse kısıtlama önce bireyi, sonra da mekânın içinde gelişip olgunlaşan toplumu, biçimlendiren birer etkendir. Kent ve toplumun makineleştirildiği modernizmde mekân, hacim, boyut ve ışık ile açıklanmaktadır. Mekân konusunda üç temel yaklaşım vardır. Birincisi, mekânı kap ya da hazne olarak yorumlayanların yaklaşımıdır. Bu görüşe göre, mekân, içine bir şeyler yerleştirilinceye kadar boş bir kap olarak var olur. Mekânın içine bir şey konulsun veya konulmasın, var olan bir şeydir. Bu çerçevede bazı düşünürler, kap ya da hazne olarak mekânın sonsuz olduğunu yani dış sınırlarının bulunmadığını söylerler. Bazı düşünürler ise mekânın sonlu olduğunu savunurlar. İkinci yaklaşım, bağıntısal mekân görüşüdür. Bu görüş, mekânın yalnızca birlik var olan şeyler arasındaki dışsal bir bağıntı olduğunu söyler. Buna göre, mekân, aralarında hiçbir şey olmadığında var olanlar arasındaki şeydir. Şeyler var olduğunda mekân da onlar arasında var olur. Ancak şeyler var olmadığı zaman, aralarındaki mekândan da söz edilemez. Üçüncü yaklaşım ise, mekânı ön plana çıkarır. Kap olarak mekân görüşüyle, bağıntısal mekân görüşünün bir sentezini yaparak, mekân ve şeylerin birbirlerini tamamladığını öne süren *çok yönlü mekân* görüşünü savunur. Mekân, mutlak boşluk denilen halâ ve cismin işgal ettiği farz edilen hacim anlamında kullanılan *heyyiz* kavramıyla kavramsal bir ilişki içindedir. Mekân hakkındaki tartışmalar daha çok *boşluk (halâ)* ve *doluluk (mela)* kavramları etrafında olmuştur.

Geleneksel düşüncede evrene yönelik her inceleme girişimi mekân ve yeri gündeme getirmiştir. Çünkü tarihsel süreçte doğa, insan ile doğa ve toplum ile doğa arasındaki ilişkilerin anlaşılmasında, mekân ve yerin önemine her daim vurgular yapılmıştır. Mekân Hesiodos'un da belirttiği gibi her şeyden önce gelmesi gereken şeydir. Fakat yine de Hesiodos'ta mekân anlayışı çok açık ve net değildir. Pitagorascılar ise varlığın temeli olarak gördükleri sayıları mekânlı düşünmüşler, ancak asıl olarak sayılar ve bu sayıları ayıran boşluğu temele almışlardır. Pitagorascılardan Arkütas, mekânı etraflıca ele almış ve sonlu evren anlayışına da önemli eleştirilerde bulunmuştur. Sonrasında mekân boşluk ile ilgili olarak gündeme gelmiş ve Elea Okulu varlığı bütün olarak görüp boşluğu yadsırken, Atomcular ise asıl olarak atomları ve bu atomların içinde hareket ettiği boşluğu savunmuşlardır. Aristoteles ise bu şekilde rastlantısal olarak atomların bir araya gelip cisimleri oluşturmasını eleştirip yerine amaçlılık ilkesine dayalı bir evren sistemi önermiştir. Yine Aristotelesçi anlayıştan önce Platon'un mekânı kap gibi düşünmesi ve bunu bazen bir yatak gibi her şeye dayanak olmasını bazen de bir kokulu merhem gibi her şekli almaya müsait olmasını hatırladığımızda, Aristoteles hocasının mekânla ilgili bu görüşlerinden etkilenmiş olmakla beraber kendisi oldukça farklı bir mekân anlayışı ortaya koymaktadır. O hocası Platon'un mekânı ve maddeyi bir tuttuğunu bildirmekte, oysa mekânın maddeden farklı olduğunu açıklamaktadır

Antik Grek düşüncesinde mekânla ilgili ilk açıklamalara, büyük bir metafizikçi sayabileceğimiz Parmenides'in ontolojisinde rastlamaktayız. Hocası Xenophanes, Tanrı ile alemin bütünlüğünü savunan panteist bir öğreti ileri sürerken bunu daha da geliştiren Parmenides, bütün varlıkları tek bir varlığa indirgeyen monist bir öğreti ileri sürmüştür. Bu öğretiye göre sadece tek bir varlık vardır; duyularımızla evrende gördüğümüz çokluk sadece bir görünüşten ibarettir. Bu öğretiyi biraz daha açacak olursak, varlığın karşısında yokluk bulunmaktadır; sadece varlık vardır. Yokluk, yoktur ve hiçbir şekilde düşünülemez. Varlığın başlangıcı olmadığı gibi sonu da yoktur. Aynı şekilde varlık ne bir başka varlıktan ne de yokluktan meydana gelir. Varlık, bölünmez, hareket etmez. O, sadece kendisiyle özdeştir. Düşünce ile varlık birbirinden farklı şeyler olmayıp aynı şeylerdir. Eski Yunan felsefesinde mekânın mahiyeti hakkındaki tartışmalar daha ziyade *doluluk-boşluk* kavramları etrafında olmuştur. Aristo, tabiatı form olarak kabul eder ve bundan dolayı hareket, bu formun maddede gerçekleşmesidir. Başka bir deyişle hareket, maddede bulunan mevcut kuvvenin fiiliyata geçmesidir. Aristo'ya göre bu potansiyel halinin fiili hale gelmesiyle, potansiyel durumunu tam olarak kaybetmediği bir mahiyete sahip olduğu hususunu gözden kaçırmamalıyız. Hareket sona ermedikçe şekil değiştirme tamamlanmamış demektir. Harekete tamamlanmamış fiil, fiile ise tamamlanmamış bir hareket diyebiliriz. Mesela, gitme tamam değildir, fakat gitmiş olmak tamamlanmış bir fiildir. Aristo, varlık türleri kadar değişme çeşidi olduğunu söyler. Yalnız kategoriler cevherde, nitelik, yer, nispet, zaman, miktar, fiil ve edilgenlik olarak bölünürlerse nitelik, miktar ve mekân olmak üzere üç çeşit hareketin var olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Niteliğe tesir eden hareket, başkalaşma hareketidir. Niceliğe tesir eden hareket, çoğalma, azalma, büyüme ve küçülme hareketidir. Mekâna göre hareket ise yer değiştirme hareketidir. Aristo, mekânı *kuşatan cismin devinimsiz ilk sınırı* şeklinde tanımlayarak mekân kavramını kuşatan ve kuşatılan arasındaki yüzey kavramına indirgemiştir. Bu amaçla hareketin ön şartı olarak görülen üç kavram *Fizik*'in dördüncü kitabında tartışılır. Bu üçlü ve onlara ayrılan bölümler sırasıyla *mekân* (*topos/place, 1.-5. bölüm*), *boşluk* (*kenon/void, 6.-9. bölüm*) ve *zaman* (*kronos/time, 10.-14. bölüm*) kavramlarıdır.

Hicri üçüncü asırdan itibaren ivme kazanan tercüme hareketleri, başlangıçta daha çok tıp, astronomi ve kimya gibi pratik faydaları gözeterek yapılmakla birlikte, zamanla metafizik, fizik, psikoloji ve ahlak alanları da dâhil olmak üzere geniş çaplı bir faaliyet olarak devam etmiş ve nihayetinde Antik dünyanın birikiminin önemli bir kısmını İslâm dünyasına aktarmayı başarmıştır. İslâm düşüncesinde mekân kavramı kelâm ve felsefe geleneği arasındaki kozmolojik tartışmalarda önemli yer tutar. Atomcu bir kozmolojiyi benimseyen kelamcılar, Bağdat Mu'tezile okulu gibi bazı eğilimler dışında boşluk kavramını benimsemişlerdir. Mekân konusunda Demokritosçu-Eflatuncu (*Ebû Bekir Zekeriyya er-Râzî*) ve Aristocu (*Fârâbî, İbn Sînâ*) fikirlerle mücadele etme gereği duyarak giriştikleri tartışmalar, kelamcıların boşluk kavramıyla ilgili düşüncelerini giderek daha ayrıntılı ve belirgin hale getirmiştir.

Bazı istisnalar dışında İslâm filozoflarının çoğunluğu mekân konusunda Aristocu çizgiyi takip etmiştir. Bu istisnaların erken dönemdeki örneklerinden olan Ebû Bekir er-Râzî atomcu-Eflatuncu bir mekân anlayışına sahiptir. Filozofa göre ontolojik bir ilke olarak mekân içinde yer kaplayan cisimlerin varlığından bağımsız olduğu için mutlaktır; ezeli olduğu için sonsuz, atomlar arası mekanik ilişkilere yer sağladığı için de boş bir uzaydır (*halâ*). Buna karşılık cisimlerin kapladığı ve ancak cismin varlığıyla birlikte düşünülebilen yere *izâfî mekân* denmelidir.

Genel olarak İslâm filozoflarının zaman kavramını ele almadan önce onunla ilişkili olan mekân ve hareket kavramlarına uzunca yer verdiklerini görmekteyiz. Meşşâî filozoflar, bir taraftan hareketi kategorilere ayırarak açıklamaya çalışırlarken, hemen hepsinin hem fikir oldukları şey, hareketin, bir cismin yer değişikliği olduğudur. Diğer taraftan mekânı ise kuşatan bir varlık olarak tanımlarlar. Mekân konusunun, hareket ve zaman kadar açık olmadığını savunanlar da vardır. Boşluk ve mekân bağlamında yapılan bu tartışmalar genel hatlarıyla iki mesele etrafında cereyan etmiştir: Birincisi boşluğun varlığı veya yokluğu sorusu; ikincisi ise mekânın iki veya üç boyutlu olması meselesi, yani tanımı hakkındadır. Mekânın işgal edildiği sürece anlam kazandığını düşünmüşlerdir. Bu düşüncede mekân, bir cismin kaplayıp kendi boyutlarını açığa çıkardığı, fiziksel bir varlığı olmayan zihinsel bir hacimdir. Zaman ise sürekli yenilenen ve fiziksel bir varlığı olmayan bir kavram olarak, düşünsel bir olayı belirlemede kullanılmaktadır. Örneğin *gün batımında buluşalım* dendiğinde, gün batımı küre şeklindeki gezegenin her an farklı bir noktasında gerçekleşen devamlı bir mekânsal olaydır. Fakat bizim konumumuza göre gerçekleşecek olan gün batımı bizim açımızdan, belirlenmiş bir zaman aralığında meydana gelecektir. Bu durum mekânsal ve fiziksel bir olayın zamansal ve zihinsel bir şekilde kavranmasıdır. Buradan, zaman ve mekânın olayların gerçekleşmesinde birleştiği ve birbirinden ayrı varlıklarının olmadığı anlaşılmaktadır. Bu görüşlerin tamamı İslâm dünyasında temsilcilerini bulmuştur. Aristocu mekân tanımını kabul eden Meşşâî gelenek, İbn Sînâ'yla birlikte bu teorideki en önemli problemlerden biri olan *âlemin mekânsızlığı* meselesine çözüm üretmeye çalışmıştır. Antik Yunan'da zayıf bir damarı temsil eden atomculuk, İslâm dünyasında kelamcılar tarafından güçlü bir şekilde savunulmuştur. Kelâm atomcuları, Bağdat Mu'tezilesi istisna edilirse, boşluğu kabul etmiş ve cevher-arazdan ibaret olan ontolojilerinin doğal bir sonucu olarak boşluğun ontik bir varlığı olmadığını (*ademî*, *mevhûm*, *itibarî*) iddia etmişlerdir. İslâm dünyasında *Eflatuncu* olarak isimlendirilen, fakat aslında Philoponus'e (*Yahya en-Nahvî*) ait olan üçüncü görüş, Fahreddîn er-Râzî öncesinde, Ebû Bekir Zekeriyya er-Râzî ve Ebu'l-Berekât el-Bağdâdî gibi bazı istisnaî düşünürler tarafından temsil edilmiştir.