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Original Research Article

The Impact of Modern Architecture on Expanding the Domain of Audience Consciousness and Its Derivation from the Merleau-Ponty’s Theory of “Body-Subject”*

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Abstract

Problem statement: Based on Cartesian duality, human and the world around him are separated into two different issues, which is noticed more by the visualization of modern environments. Many phenomenologists sought to eliminate this gap. In this regard, Maurice Merleau-Ponty introduced the body as a matter of immediate consciousness by bringing up a body-subject theory. Perhaps it can be said that the idea of dualism in art and architecture has become more widespread because of the fact that the message of the artwork and the criticism which is formed is ignored in this era, and at the same time the integrity of the senses is ignored. Finally, it seems that in the architecture, the senses for body and perception like a cubism picture in which the subject of art is the form of space.

Research objective: The purpose of this article is to identify the concept of body-subject and its impact on increasing the perception of the environment. In this regard, the main question of the research is: Does modern space architecture expand the realm of human consciousness?

Research Method: This research, with qualitative research strategy and interpretive approach, attempts to determine the effects of modern architecture on observer’s consciousness by explaining concepts such as cognition, perception, experience, consciousness, embodiment specifically in architecture and their relationship with each other.

Conclusion: Differentiation in form, is observed as one of the results of critique (as the foundation of modern thinking) in different aspects of modern architecture and it is effective in interaction with the audience in creating his cognition. Form as the language of critique in modern architecture, leads to cognition, which depends on the concept of perception and conscious experience and it depends on embodiment concept itself.

Keywords: *Modern, Architecture, Perception, Merleau-Ponty, Body-subject.*

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in adjustment with the concept ‘body-subject’’, supervised by Dr. Saeed Haghir, which was presented in University of Tehran in 2019.

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Introduction

Over the centuries, human beings have sought to expand their knowledge in many ways. It can be claimed that art and philosophy were integral parts of this process. In the last few centuries and with the arrival of the modern period, architecture considered as art is thought to be separated from this circuit, under the influence of many factors such as economy, politics, and so on. But is it right?

“Yi-Fu Tuan” poses this question. “How does modern architectural space affect awareness?” And further acknowledges that “The house is no longer a text encoding the rules of behavior and even a whole world view that can be transmitted down the generations. Modern society is also increasingly literate, which means that it depends less and less on material objects and the physical environment to embody the value and meaning of a culture: verbal symbols have progressively displaced material symbols, and books rather than buildings instruct.” (Tuan, 2001, 116-117)

But the main question is whether, we get all that we distinguish as consciousness when we are self-conscious? It can be said that art as a cultural representation and artificial environment can contribute to the development of awareness. Does architecture and what we know as a living environment contribute to this awareness?

Human is forced to live in a physical environment due to his corporeal existence, which is considered to be a human production in all cases. He lives, behaves, thinks and imagines in this environment. So human forms the environment and the environment forms him.

Merleau-Ponty as the founder of the body-subject theory creates the term “existence” as a sign of the insight that the behavior is neither purely physical nor entirely sensual. It is “manifestation of existential” ... therefore existence in the way Merleau-Ponty acknowledged represents a kind of semi-conscious behavior (Spiegelberg, 2018, 821). This is the behavior that man manifests through his presence in the environment.

Will the modern man-made environment in the last century have the same impact of Enlightenment art on expanding the audience’s awareness? Gardner states in his book -Art through the ages- that the goal of the modern artist almost from the beginning has been to “épater le bourgeois”¹, to shake up the stodgy citizen and make him see and think in a new way (Gardner, De La Croix & Tansey, 1980).

But how does the architect do this? Architecture, as one of the cultural and artistic attributes which are in constant interaction with humans, makes architecture play a significant role in improving the human perception. What kind of interaction is this and how can it develop our awareness? Architecture is more embodied than other art media, but it is neglected more than any other of them. As in many arts, it is tried to involve the audience with the work, but architecture fails more in this case due to its dependence to function, which is in its nature. In modern architecture, the emphasis on the function casts doubt on the fact that modern architecture atmosphere is not proper for the human conscious perception and his embodiment and ultimately does not have the ability to expand the scope of the observer’s awareness.

Pallasmaa in his book-The Thinking Hand- declares, modernity at large has been obsessed by vision and has suppressed tactility (Pallasmaa, 2009, 93); and further, in the book Architectural Atmosphere, he points out that paying attention to the visionary architecture in our time has clearly increased the desire for tactile architecture. He believes that the visionary architecture is divider and controller, while the tactile and atmospheric architecture is including connective and integrating concepts (Borch, Pallasmaa, Böhme & Eliasson, 2017, 57-58).

But this criticism of modern architecture exists while Merleau-Ponty’s claim (that Pallasmaa uses its philosophy) is that one of the great achievements of modern art and philosophy ... has been to allow us to rediscover the world in which we live, yet which we are always prone to forget’. This world which we are to rediscover is the ‘world of perception’, which is the world as we perceive it, the “perceived world”

(le monde perçu) as it is often called. He claims is going to be that it is a characteristic of 'modern' thought, with its rediscovery of the perceived world, that it can accommodate these alien voices better than 'classical' thought did (Merleau-Ponty, 2004, 6-22).

How are these paradoxes explained? Does the Modern Architecture contribute to the expansion of the world of perception of its audience? Or it does not have such a freedom of the phenomena creation complication in today's world as artists of plastic arts have and it does not have this quality. In this research, the main questions are. Does the modern space architecture expand the realm of human consciousness and what is the relation of this effect with embodiment?

The research hypothesis is shaped in a way that differentiation; as a concept originated from criticism (as the modern thought foundation) exists in different aspects of modern architecture and has caused the creation of lived experience and body-subject and is effective in the expansion of audience's perception in modern architecture.

Literature review

The philosophic roots of cognition originate in Greece, the duality, which was carried on from Plato to Descartes with different descriptions and meant the immateriality of mind and its irrefragible disaffiliation with body. After Descartes modern philosophers such as Hume and Kant tried to find the mind function and its relation with the world. After the presentation of Darwin's theory in 1859 and the hypothesis of the human behavior pattern evolution which originates from the animal behavior, he tried to identify the laws of behavior in both animals and humans, which resulted in the book "The Descent of Man" and declared that "The mind is function of body". We can mention Darwin as the premier serious theoretician in embodied approach to studying human mind. After his researches, embodiment was expanded in different contexts. The embodiment topic, which is actually a reconnection between brain, body and the world, today is studied and is used in different sciences such as philosophy, cognitive science, neuroscience, artificial

intelligence, computer science, phenomenology, ethics, psychology, social psychology, neurology, linguistics, communication studies, gesture studies and etc. In 1998 Paul Ekman worked on face expressions and its relation to emotion in embodiment in psychology, proceeding Darwin's researches and based on them. A while before this and after behaviorists, who tried to make a relation between mind and action, gestalt theory followers responded to this subject holistically and introduced it as an image in mind, an insight or aha-experience. After that, Gibson's general ideas could be considered as being situated and embodied. He emphasized the importance of the interaction between the agent and the surroundings for intelligent behavior. Morris Merleau-Ponty, existentialist and phenomenologist philosopher, was the main reason of introducing the importance of human body to the twentieth century philosophy that was impressed by Gestalt theory. In 1962 he claimed that the mind is basically embodied and interacts with the surroundings, actually it is the body that creates a meaning for the mind and the word body-subject, therefore, he took a different position from mentalists and materialists. He says that not only the world determines our perception, but also our perception produces the world. His claim emphasized and agreed on the relation between the action and the perception. The perception is real motive. Therefore, embodied perception of the world, is not a passive sensational encounter, but it is the integrity of the body with the world; the body is our perspective for any contact with the world.

The embodied approach in cognitive science arose during the 1980s as a reaction against formalism and computationalism. These viewpoints of embodied accordingly, a number of overlapping, but not necessarily identical embodied views emerged under various names, such as embodied action, embodied cognition, embodied intelligence, embodied cognitive science, embodied mind, and embodied Artificial Intelligence (Lindblom, 2007, 76). And in all these areas the common content is in embodied cognition, restoration and revival of body in the center of cognitive science studies and is an emphasis on the

action between the agent and the surroundings and it is emphasized on the importance of experience and personal differences as much as it is emphasized on the proportion of rational rules and the function of a holistic insight.

In the experimental confirmation of this issue, findings of a scientific article declares that our data provide a detailed map of the human feeling space, where subjective feelings were strongly coupled with bodily sensations, and nearly all subjective experiences were qualified by emotional tone. Altogether these findings show that feeling states are categorical, emotional, and embodied (Nummenmaa, Hari, Hietanen & Gleason, 2018, 9200). These findings show the high activity of bodily saliency and the lower activity of emotional feeling in the creation of subjective cognition.

In architecture, paying attention to these kinds of concepts; was started and carried on from the nineteenth century and with the concept of “architecture space”, but at that time no one paid attention to the sense of matter and the space experimental quality; even Louis Sullivan shows his own Cartesian understanding of architecture with the sentence “It is only the ideas that count”. With the passage of time, by the phenomenology becoming widespread, by research in cognitive science and by the efforts of neurologists such as “António Damásio”, this dualism wore off gradually. Phenomenology term firstly came out in philosophy but then because of the phenomenology nature which sets to describe and analyze experiencing any phenomenon or activity consciously, it step by step entered other sciences. David Seamon points out that phenomenology for Merleau-Ponty, phenomenology offers a way to bring the latent, undisclosed dimensions of human experience and meaning to direct attention. Though he says little about the significance of place directly, his perspective does much to clarify its integral relationship with the lived body and human situatedness (Hünefeldt & Schlitte, 2017, 60-66).

Although Merleau-Ponty has talked about art and embodiment areas, it can be said that few people in the architecture field have set to expand and spread his theories. His embodiment theories became

bases in which people like Juhani Pallasmaa, Alberto Pérez-Gómez, Gernot Bohme, Christian Borchert, Steven Holl, David Seamon and others work. Architects have also expressed their ideas in multisensory qualities field; such as SNAA group, Renzo Piano in his speech, Jean Nouvel in the book “Louisiana Manifesto”, Peter Zumthor in the book called “Thinking Architecture” in the subject of creating the atmosphere discusses the effect of senses in architecture; but the following text of the so-called “Buildings that have a strong impact always convey an intense feeling of their spatial quality. They embrace the mysterious void called space in a special way and make it vibrate” (Zumthor, 2010, 21) is poetic (Fig. 1); in the field of embodiment, Holl explained in his book “Parallax” that “the change in the arrangement of surfaces that define space as a result of the change in the position of the viewer is transformed when movement axes leave the horizontal dimension. Vertical or oblique movements through urban space multiply our experiences.” (Holl, 2000, 26) He introduced this conception of perception in architecture in the moving body which had borrowed from Merleau-Ponty in this way; David Seamon also by discussing the “place-ballet” pointed out that this concept “is an environmental synergy in which human and material parts unintentionally foster a larger whole with its own special rhythm and character.” (Seamon, 1980, 163) and engaged the embodiment approach of Merleau-Ponty with environmental physiological. Pérez-Gómez believes in architecture and art, regardless of their ever changing and interchanging universes of discourse, traditionally takes the responsibility of providing an “embodied” metaphysics for society (Perez-Gomez, 1987, 57).

But in the Modern architecture era, few architects have worked on this issue. Le Corbusier as one of the most important Modern architects implies “The architect, by his arrangement of forms, realize an order which is a pure creation of his spirit; by forms and shapes he affects our senses to an acute degree and provokes plastic emotions” (Le Corbusier, 1985,

1) (Fig. 2). Modern architects will refuse to mention the embodiment markedly. This can be perceived as disregarding this quality, while creating a space.

The difference between this article and the preceding research done is in the clarification of the relationship between human cognition dimensions and body-subject theory and its relation to modern architecture; the studies on the nature of Merleau-Ponty's theory is diverse and more complete than the studies on its relation with architecture cognition dimensions. Also, the research done on this issue and on architecture, focuses on the areas of the atmosphere, the definition of place and meaning without any attention to human perception in epistemological approach; and it does not make any attempts to recognize Merleau-Ponty's philosophy in its architectural dimension from this point of view. However, the focus of this article is particularly on how embodied perception works and what is its role in the expansion of embodied perception in modern architecture.

Research Methodology

In this research, the factors which form individual's perception and its relation to modern architecture are investigated by qualitative method and through document analysis and accordingly it is tried to find the position of body-subject theory; the meaning of perception in architecture space is defined and the role of modern architecture in the expansion of this perception is clarified. The following article is done in some different stages which overlap with

regards to the character of the qualitative research. The stages are as follows: 1. The identification of the researched notions, that in this article, it is human cognition dimensions and embodied perception of it and its relation to modern architecture; 2. Forming the hypothesis while improving and gathering data; 3. Gathering information; 4. Analyzing and interpreting the data; 5. Concluding.

Theoretical foundation of research

• Embodiment

"If all cognition is 'just' coupling of the body with the world, we wouldn't need a brain". Instead, embodiment stresses the interplay between the environment, brain and the sensorimotor processes of the rest of the body, which are pivotal for cognitive activity to take place (Lindblom, 2007, 9). body-subject is the inherent capacity of the body to direct behaviors of the person intelligently, and thus function as a special kind of subject which express itself in a preconscious way usually described by such words as 'automatic,' 'involuntary,' and 'mechanical' (Buttimer & David, 2015, 155). In general, it can be said that people are not separate from their world but immersed in it through a multifaceted net of intentionalities, including those of body and emotions (Seamon, 1982, 135). Accordance with both biological and phenomenological principles, the mere possibility of experience presupposes the possession of a body; our perceptions and actions depend on the actuality of having a body. As the most distinguished phenomenologist of embodiment,



Fig. 1. "The therme vals" by Peter Zumthor. Source: archdaily.com



Fig. 2. "Villa Savoye" by Le Corbusier. Source: archdaily.com

Merleau-Ponty, has argued the reason is to be found in the fact that the body is not (just) an object of experience but it is our “vehicle for being in the world” (Jelić, 2015, 18). That is what our perception is formed by. Understanding the sensual perception requires a careful consideration of body (Piravi Vanak, 2010, 68). But if the embodiment is only dependent on the senses and human body, we will be equal to animals, so it can be said that this body is an embodied concept; the cognition of this concept activity structure is important. The term embodiment can also refer to the fact that the brain alone is not enough for cognition: the body in its physiological and neural complexity gives rise to subpersonal processes which are not accessible to conscious awareness, but are pertinent to brain activity and necessary for at least certain forms of cognition (Jelić, 2015, 18-19). The body immersed in the universe gives humans the cognition ability that is formed by unconsciousness.

The most important ring connecting Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy to psychoanalysis is the concept of the body-subject (Piravi Vanak, 2010, 37). According to which the boundary between the body and the world disappears. He is one of the pioneers of contemporary post humanism. The body-subject is a system that is capable of perceiving the world with its own body and shaping the world by that. This agent forms his own perception of matter and the substance enhances this perception.

Merleau-Ponty reads and understands the world in terms of the possibilities that it offers to action, and furthermore, believes that we are responding emotionally to the ways or means of providing them. This qualitative aspect of our response is a reaction to what Merleau-Ponty calls “physiognomy” of objects,

that is, the specific and qualitative quality that all forms seem to reveal to us (Hale, 2017, 85). This is what we know in architecture as a form. In architecture, form is experienced and experience is the base of perception and awareness in the body-subject.

• **Experience**

Experience includes not only passive experience as in vision or hearing, but also active experience as in walking and speaking. Conscious experiences have a unique feature: we experience them; we live through them or perform them. Other things in the world we may observe and engage. But we do not experience them, in the sense of living through or performing them. This experiential or first-person feature—that of being experienced—is an essential part of the nature or structure of conscious experience (Smith, 2013). The lived-experience is against ‘Erfahrung’; ‘Erfahrung’ is a second-hand intermediate experience (applied in natural sciences), but in the humanities and art, an ‘Erlebnis’-type of experiment- happens which is immediate (Negin-Taji, Ansari & Pourmand, 2018, 74). Merleau-Ponty maintains that our experiences are interconnected and reveal to us real properties of the thing itself, which is much as it appears and not some hidden substance that lies beneath our experience of its appearance (Merleau-Ponty, 2004, 20). This kind of experience that can be called “lived experience” can be examined from two perspectives as outlined below (Fig. 3).

The first aspect is the essence of experience, and the latter determines the scope and having an experience. From a practical point of view, the phenomenological feature of the experience in architecture level has the potential of further exploration in the scope of physics. James believes that experience is something that

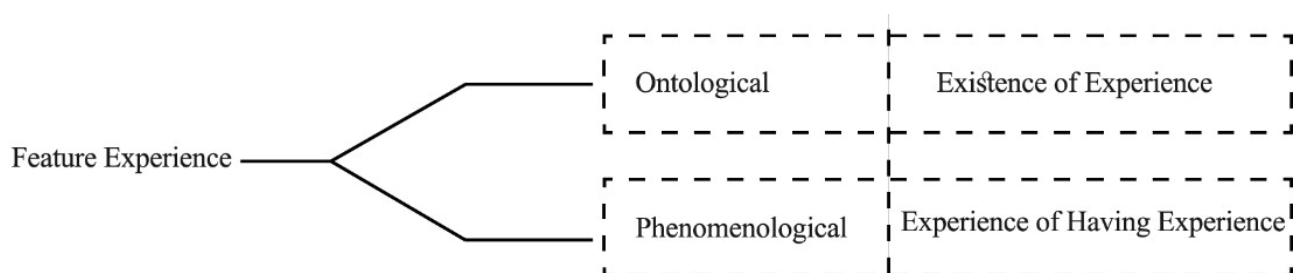


Fig. 3. Macro-level experience classification. Source: Authors.

I have agreed to notice. Or “something that has not been noticed does not enter into the experience.” This attention can be intentional or unintentional (Pakzad & Bozorg, 2012, 164-166); and this issue is called intentionality in phenomenology.

• **Intentionality**

“Intentionality” is at the center of the phenomenology (Piravi Vanak, 2010, 56). Intention in Husserl’s view as the founder of phenomenology is based on the assumption that consciousness is always consciousness of something. In the context of the relationship between embodied action and intention, the reports suggest that the body acts in an intentional way which tackles the behavior needed as a whole and proceed to carry it out in a fluid, integrative fashion (Buttimer & David, 2015, 156). From Husserl’s point of view, the verb of thinking is preceded about what is thought about, because no meaning and sign can appear in conscious before it becomes noticeable (Partovi, 2015, 29). Therefore, if something can be experienced, in this experience, we have an action between the intertwined object and subject. It can be said that this connection is possible only through intentionality. In fact, the intention is within the experience space, and it is obvious that it leads to a lived experience. In the experience space, we can have a conscious experience (what comes after intentions) and an unconscious experience (Fig. 4).

• **Consciousness**

Since the late 1980s, and especially the late 1990s, a

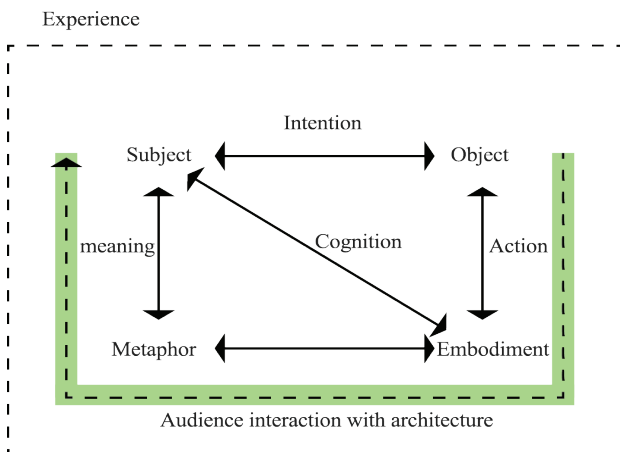


Fig. 4. The relationship of experience and intention in audience interaction with architecture. Source: Authors.

variety of writers working in philosophy of mind have focused on the fundamental character of consciousness, ultimately a phenomenological issue (Smith, 2013). Consciousness is embodied (in the world), and equally, body is infused with consciousness (with the cognition of the world) (ibid.). Merleau-Ponty assumes consciousness, cognition, and body-subject as an interconnected set. On the other hand, we know that the brain consists of the expansion of the interfaces between sensory neurons (perception) and motor neurons (action). Thus, our brain, which is the center of a mass calculation, organizes the recognition, action, and interaction of action recognition (Morin, 2012, 72). In figure 5, the motor system, the sensory system and the nervous-brain system feed on each other in a cycle, expanding and amplifying each of these systems leads to the other’s expansion, and thus the development of consciousness is shaped.

Intelligence, thinking, and consciousness are three related subjects. Intelligence, thinking and consciousness are defined as strategic art, dialectic art and the art of understanding, and the art of contemplation. Intelligence needs certain conditions to show itself and grow. It is necessary to be fed by events and be strengthened by experiences. Low complexity and conflict weaken the intelligence, but high complexity and conflict also cripple it. The issue of intelligence is directly related to the consciousness. Cognition depends on intelligence, and intelligence depends on the cognition that it possesses (ibid.,

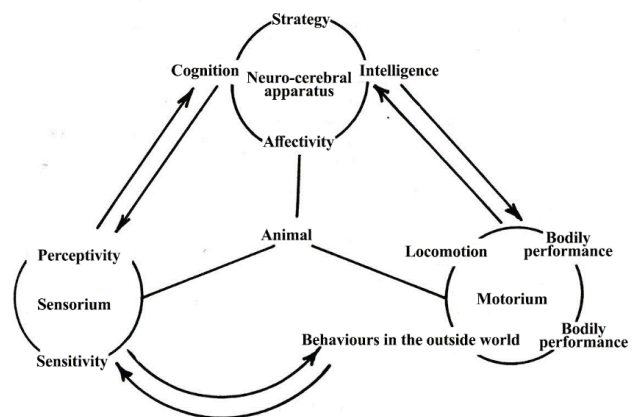


Fig. 5. The connection between the animal and the environment. Source: Morin, 2012.

229-235). What is needed to enhance intelligence is to create the intention in the audience to experience an event. In the diagram above, the perception is determined between the sensory system and the cognition system for a human. From the cognition stage, if no new perception occurs, then the human will accumulate in the stage of knowing everything he finds, and he repeats itself and returns to its animal features.

Art as one of the cultural factors (cultural factors include: science, philosophy, religion, mysticism and art) (Haghiri & Kamelnia, 2018, 26-27) is a way to turn on the engine of this perception and this helps to expand embodied consciousness by the audience interaction. Making the audience conscious about architecture, contrary to other art media, can be regarded as fundamental because of its nature and its close relationship with human life. Merleau-Ponty assumes that the consciousness of the world is not based on self-consciousness: they are strictly contemporary. There is a world for me because I am not unaware of myself; and I am not concealed from myself because I have a world. This pre-conscious possession of the world remains to be analyzed in the pre-reflective cogito (Merleau-Ponty, 2005, 347). Therefore, the initial connection of humans to the world is prior to consciousness.

• Perception

We need to pass through an intermediate stage; to transform particular objectivity into subjectivity and make it a criterion for our assessment and behavior; this stage is perception. Perception is defined as “the process of organizing and interpreting sensory information to make them meaningful.” Our brain combines visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile information in order to achieve an integrated understanding which is the process of perception (Pakzad & Bozorg, 2012, 105-109). Merleau-Ponty believes that “we are condemned to meaning”; In his opinion, modern thought displays the dual characteristics of being unfinished and ambiguous. It seems as though today’s artists seek to add to the enigmas which already surround them, to send yet

more sparks flying (Merleau-Ponty, 2004, 106-107). Therefore, he considers the modern architecture work as creating meaning, not as Pallasmaa thinks, a conceptualization. On the other hand, our perception is not a passive reception, but an active exploration in the environment. These two factors -the creation of meaning and active discovery- are the context in which modern architecture is underway.

The phenomenological turn in spatial theorizing originates with the application of Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s discussion of the primacy of perception in the experience of the body. From this philosophical perspective, the body becomes the ground of perceptual processes that end in objectification (Low, 2003, 13). On the other hand, according to Pakzad’s view, perception can be understood as a person’s reaction (Pakzad & Bozorg, 2012, 145). Obviously, since our real experience of perception rather than analyticity is completely synthesis, this process is highly self-conscious (Lawson, 2015, 75). But even perception needs imagination, because our perceptions are not the products of our sensory mechanisms. But essentially these are intentional and imaginative (Borch et al., 2017, 50). So, before recognizing what an object is (recognition at the stage of perception), that object must have drawn your attention or, in other words, you have noticed it. Mostly, it is not possible to pay attention to all the stimuli for recognition. Attention is the result of a limited-capacity information processing system (Pakzad & Bozorg, 2012, 160-161). On the other hand, Merleau-Ponty believed that the movements of the body produce perception, and perception also demands more movement from the body (Hale, 2017, 146). So, it can be said that embodied perception occurs through movements and through a distinction that attracts the attention of the audience, and the possibility of conscious perception is provided.

• Dialectic Cognition

Recognition is a primitive form of pre-reflective self-consciousness. It is an important starting point for an understanding of more elaborate forms of self-consciousness that are dependent on concept and

language. Phenomenological analyses show these processes to be more than purely mental or cognitive events since they integrally involve embodiment and intersubjective dimensions (Gallagher, 2016). To understand a phenomenon, psychologists believe that it can be identified step-by-step, that is, first, the general and fundamental features of the “object” are identified, and then there are the next and subsequent stages to get closer to the details. First, the basic characteristics are those qualities that if they change, they will make difficulties for us and do not make “identity”; In other words, these are changes that make it impossible to adapt or change identity. Secondly, there are subtypes, which the process of their “identity” comes after the process of the initial ‘identification’ of perceptual steps with the object. Their change does not change the identity, because in the early stages of the process, adaptation has been done (Haghir & Kamelnia, 2018, 32). In relation to knowledge, René Alleau thinks there is a kind of logical analogy, which is the same logic or is an opposite and complementary one. “It can be said that all our knowledge in the last analysis is based on two logics, one is deductive logic and the other is the logic of identity, perhaps in the end, it can be seen that they are equal in epistemological approach.” Edgar Morin, in his book *-La Connaissance de la connaissance-*, says that there is no dialogue between two logics but there is a dialectic (Morin, 2012, 179-180). Consequently, in order to understand a phenomenon, we need a change, this category in architecture requires a change of space, in a way that the dialectic of cognition is not interrupted. Cognition comes from the perspective of Alleau with analogy and identity, and what has become known as a change in space with it until now, will occur in the analogy section. But what is the position of awareness, which is derived from embodiment and leads to cognition, in modern architectures?

• Architecture

According to the definitions, presence in the architectural space is like immersion in space by virtue of the embodiment. In fact, the person does not

experience architecture, but experiences his embodied interaction with architecture. This makes us think of what interactions are going on between human beings and the architectural space. The artist creates the work as a way of seeing the world, so both of them-the architect and the architectural audience- see the world in a new way through the medium of the work.

The built environment, like language, has the power to define and refine sensibility. It can sharpen and enlarge consciousness. Without architecture feelings about space must remain diffuse and fleeting (Tuan, 2001, 107). In fact, the art form of architecture does not only provide a shelter for the body, it also redefines the contour of our consciousness (Pallasmaa, 2009, 23). Architectural space, not only improves in one cycle of consciousness through intelligence which is mentioned above, but it also allows intelligence to expand.

Edward Casey contended that the emergence of place as a productive notion only occurs with the recognition of the importance of the body in spatial orientation and ordinary perception. Richardson says embodied space is “being-in-the-world”, which means, the existential and phenomenological reality of place: they are its smell, feel, color, and other sensory dimensions (Low, 2003, 12-13). On the other hand, space becomes tangible in a condition that a person feels less identification with space, and the atmosphere gets out of transparency (Haghir & Kamelnia, 2018, 33). But architecture, more than any other form of art, involves our immediacy of perception (Holl, Pallasmaa & Pérez-Gómez, 2016, 38), because architecture has permanent connection with human beings, it is habituated more than the other forms of art. The process of familiarity with the space and staying in it, can make the space habituated and the audience ignores the details of it. This mode of sensory perception is called “Habituation” by psychologists; Habituation, firstly, eliminates disturbing stimuli of the space, but if you want to focus on the space, the stimulus has to be constantly intensified. This habituation clearly shows the need for differentiation as a stimulus in our attention to space. What is the role of modern architecture in this field?

• Modern architecture

Modern architecture which takes its roots from the Enlightenment era, has criticized its approach as a foundation. The critiques of architects such as Le Corbusier, Adolf Loos, Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius and many others about the past architecture have created works that are very distinctive in their context.

In the field of architecture, the existence of floors, walls and ceilings is the connection between the inside and the outside. "Thomas Thiis-Evensen" shows that the relative degree of the interior or the exterior arena of buildings in relation to the floor, wall and ceiling can be explained through movement, weight and matter, what he calls "architecture existence" (Partovi, 2015, 172-173). The critique of modern architects about the classical space has led to the creation of a new architectural space that offers new action to the audience. For example, in modern architecture, spaces that diverge from the classical perspective rule, play with the perception of depth in architecture, they are triggered by our own physical



Fig. 6. "Water fall" by Frank Lloyd Wright. Source: archdaily.com



Fig. 7. "The Wexner Centre of the Arts" by Peter Eisenman. Source: archdaily.com

movements. What we see in the Le Corbusier Villa Savoye or in Wright's works (Fig. 6). Criticism as the center of idea of modern art and architecture has changed the form of artwork and has defined various styles. The pace of change is so dramatic that we can see the emergence of at least ten major modern styles, regardless of trends in Organic architecture, Eco-tech, Hi-tech, Folding, etc. The transformation of form into modern architecture, itself is a result of critique, gives rise to a conscious understanding of space, and it is a conscious understanding that creates styles. Today, new architectural points of view, such as Peter Eisenman's critique -Critical functionalism- are no exception to this (Fig. 7).

Conclusion

In the subject of perception that is implied from the body-subject in Merleau-Ponty's philosophy, paying attention or attracting is one of the main components of the creation of perception. Consciousness is not the origin of the process of perception, but it is the result of that. According to Merleau-Ponty's acknowledges, it seems that what we know or the extent of our consciousness can improve through embodied action; the action which is in direct contact with the form of space in which it is immersed. According to the writers' perspective, the form of space is considered as a medium of architecture; the form which is not merely an architectural appearance, but a part of the architecture that acts embodied with the subject. Architecture triggers bodily tendencies in the formation of cognition in interaction with human. Unlike what seems to be true, the absence of modern architects' direct indication to embodiment, is not the reason for creating the work without any attention to awareness. In modern architecture, due to the critiques over the former architecture, we can clearly see the creation of new form. In fact, the start point for form perception, is its dependence to concept and language. And the language of art and modern architecture, for sure, is nothing rather than its form. Embodied perception is dependent on its attention to form, which itself happens due to motion

and form distinction, and makes the process of aware perception possible. The form is experienced and experience is the foundation of perception and consciousness in body-subject. Merleau-Ponty talks about perception priority in body experience. From a practical point of view, phenomenological features of experience are also extremely physical in the modern architecture stage. To recognize a phenomenon consciously, human needs changes in it. What affects the formation of the atmosphere of the modern architecture is the application of the distinction between each of the main components of the effect of the context (which is due to criticism). It leads to the audience attention and provides the basis for conscious perception. Works by people such as Peter Eisenman, Hans Scharoun, Steven Holl, Peter Zumthor, and Olafur Eliasson are examples of this architecture. Those are not isolated from the critical thinking of the world, and neither is their work.

Figure 8 depicts the status of the body-subject from sense to cognition in a lived experience, what contemporary architecture considers to be, and is believed to expand my spatial consciousness to the experience of the modern architectural audience. The left part of figure depicts the foundation of architectural form understanding, and the right part depicts the process of feeling which leads to the

cognition of a body subject which encounters a space. Due to the distinction with the context in the form of modern architecture, which is in action with the body-subject, conscious perception is created. It should be noted that this figure is meaningful and extending in a dialectic and interconnection, and none of them can work alone. So modern architecture is not the only the object of cognition, but like other arts, it is a tool for knowledge and consciousness raising, and modern architecture is part of our body for the awareness and perception of the world.

Endnotes

1. to impress the bourgeois

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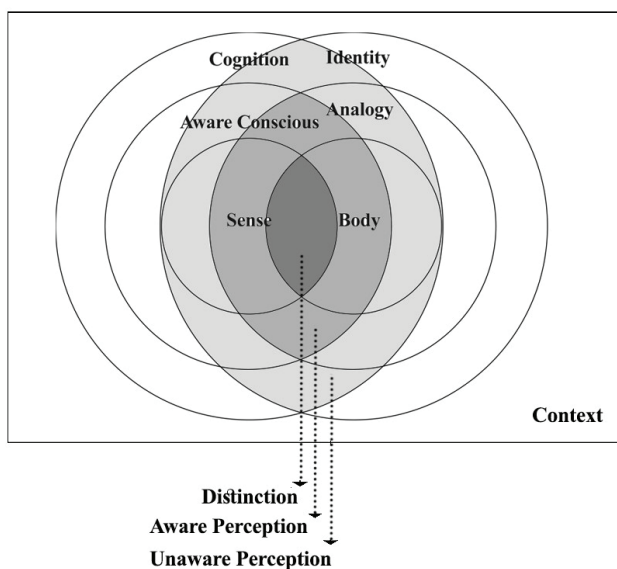


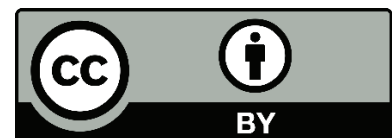
Fig. 8. The Relationship between Perception and Embodied Action in Understanding the Form of Space. Source: Authors.

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