A Spatial-Semiotic Narrative of the Martyr's Memorial Site in Amman

Ahmad El-Sharif

Associate Professor of Linguistics

Department of English Language and Literature, Al-alBayt University

P.O. box 130040, Mafraq 25113, Jordan

Tel: 962-2-629-7000   E-mail: a.el-sharif@aabu.edu.jo

Abstract

Social semiotic approaches to spatial discourse analysis are employed to analyse the predefined arrangements of spaces and semiotic resources in three-dimensional spaces. These spaces and resources are recognized as spatial-texts that construct a discourse which communicates predefined meanings and ideologies. Aiming to advance the growing interest in spatial semiotics in different socio-cultural contexts, this study scrutinizes the spatial semiotic resources in the Martyr's Memorial and site in Amman, the Capital city of Jordan. The analysis is constructed through an approach of locative and reflective observation of the researcher's, and the visitors', experience with the different semiotic resources in the Memorial site. Then, these resources are interpreted on the basis of social semiotic approaches of spatial-discourse analysis. The study demonstrates that the Martyr's Memorial and its site encompass manifold semiotic resources which make a series of spatial-texts which are organized and arranged along a predefined narrative path. These spatial-texts make a coherent discourse that communicates and unfold well-established meanings and ideologies about the Arabic, and Islamic, conception of martyrdom, the role of the Jordanian Armed Forces, and the legacy of the Hashemite ruling dynasty. Such meanings and ideologies are reproduced on the basis of social, religious, and historical backgrounds.

Keywords: Social semiotics, Spatial-texts, Spatial discourse analysis, Martyr, Memorial sites, Museums, Amman

1. Introduction

On 12th of December, 2016, a military ceremony took place at the Martyr's Memorial in Amman, the Capital of Jordan, as part of the Jordan's celebrations of the Great Arab Revolt's

centennial. The ceremony, which was attended by His Majesty King Abdullah II, marked the reopening of the Memorial after extensive two-year renovation process. The most notable part of the ceremony involved the reburial of the remains of a fallen Jordanian soldier who died in the Jerusalem battles during the Seven-Day War in 1967. The martyr's remains were transported from a Jordan Armed Forces cemetery at the Prophet Samuel site in Jerusalem, where some Jordanian soldiers were buried anonymously, to the resting place of the Unknown Soldier, in the centre of the Memorial.

The media coverage of the regal military ceremony and the revered reburial of the unknown martyr has re-aroused the interest of Jordanian citizen in the Martyr's Memorial and its site. As memorials and museums are cultural and heritage sites which attract visitors and host community's cultural and social activities, the authorities of the Martyr's Memorial have initiated a campaign to encourage Jordanians and tourists to visit the Memorial, and to promote it as one of the main venues for citizens, tourists, and official delegations. Since its re-opining, several local and international media outlets have aired reports about the Memorial, and many visitors have appeared on these media to express their admiration of the Memorial and how it authentically preserved its iconic identity as a museum that documents all the historic stages of modern Jordan and the sacrifices of its people. Since then, the Martyr's Memorial has consolidated its ascribed symbolic value in Jordanian public discourse by showing it in large-scale pictures of Amman hanged at the lobbies of hotels and the waiting-halls of ministries and embassies, or even in video-clips of national and patriotic songs aired on local television channels. Such symbolic value suggests that the Martyr's Memorial has exceeded its function as a tourist attraction site to become a space to communicate a discourse of identity, membership, and affiliation.

In the last few decades, increasing academic attention has been drawn to how memorial sites, and museums, communicate meanings and discourses through the semiotic resources such as structural design, spaces, and exhibits. Social semiotics regards these resources as three-dimensional 'semiotic spaces' (Stenglin 2004, 2008; Kress and van Leeuwen 2006; Ravelli 2008; McMurtrie 2013; Ravelli and McMurtrie 2015). The semiotic spaces incorporate semiotic 'signs' whose interpretations rely on the predefined spatial arrangements, layouts, and positionings and which contribute in communicating intended meanings or promoting propagated ideologies. In this regard, structures, spaces, and exhibits are also understood as 'spatial-texts' which are articulated via three-dimensional structures, or spaces.

A large body of literature have approached the spatial-texts of memorial sites, and museums, and they have revealed how these sites are designed and arranged to serve a predefined set of functions which are allocated by the authorities which designed, or erected, them. For instance, memorials and museums are recognised as structures, spaces, and exhibits which are principally designed and arranged to serve commemorative, educational, and tourist functions (Sumartojo 2017). Meanwhile, a museum's architectural design is one of the most salient semiotic resources which can create both strong narrative progressions (through the museum's spaces and exhibits) and emotionally laden and affectively engaging "commemorative atmospheres" (Schorch 2013; Waterton and Dittmer 2014; Sumartojo 2016). Such commemorative atmospheres are designed around 'frames' which narrate, through

spatial-texts, detailed historical episodes of nation (Smith 2018) or to preserve a nation's collective memory and remembrance (Kosatica 2019). Here, the predefined spatial arrangement of these spatial-texts within the three-dimensional spaces of galleries and exhibits would shape "narrative storylines" (Smith and Foote 2017) about a nation and its history. On the other hand, memorials and museums are widely-acknowledged as spaces to communicate argumentative, and sometimes contesting, ideologies which may be propagated through the intentional inclusion (or exclusion) of a semiotic resource. Several studies on museums accentuate the argument that one of the primary functions of museums is to create sites of reconciliation, inclusiveness, and unification (*see* Martin and Stenglin 2007; Phillips, Woodham, and Hooper-Greenhill 2015; Smith and Foote 2017; Cole and Brooks 2017). In this regard, a semiotic resource, such as the linguistic code chosen to present (or label) an exhibit, is recognised as among the several tools to communicate such discourses. For example, bilingual, or multilingual, memorial sites in multi-ethnic communities may be understood to convey messages of 'inclusiveness' and 'reconciliation' among the members of those communities (Macalister 2019); on the other hand, the absence of one linguistic code may suggest messages of an intentional 'exclusion' of a particular ethnic group (Kosatica 2019). Finally, it is demonstrated that most war monuments are designed in the Western world on the basis of mythological and religious symbolism to propagate a discourse that idealises sacrifices, and hence, justifying the deaths of millions of young men in wars (Abousnnouga and Machin 2010); and this in term, encourages the discourse of the colonisation, and sometimes even the oppression, of other ethnicities.

Such wide-ranging of theory and scholarship on the spatial semiotics of memorials sites, and museums, demonstrates how such sites should not be appraised predominantly for their distinctive aesthetic and architectural features which highlight their monumental function, but for the meanings and discourses they communicate to the visitors through the predefined arrangement of structure design, spaces, and exhibits and which enable the visitors to interact with these memorial sites. In this regard, this study embarks on the study of memorial sites and museums as a manifestation of three-dimensional 'spatial-texts'. The case under study is the Martyr's Memorial Museum and site in Amman, the capital city of Jordan. This case-study tackles a new social context that has been hardly approached by the mainstream scholarship on social semiotics.

2. The Martyr's Memorial and Museum

The Martyr's Memorial Museum and site (*Sarh Al-Shaheed*) (henceforth just 'the Martyr's Memorial') is a refined architectural work of art and the national army museum that records the stages of Jordan's modern history and commemorates the Jordanian martyrs who sacrificed their lives while on duty. The Memorial site is located at the top of a hill in Al-Hussein's City for Sport and Youth in the capital city of Amman, The Martyr's Memorial was inaugurated by the late King Hussein of Jordan on 25th of July, 1977 during the celebrations of the King's Jubilee of his ascendance on the throne. The official website of the Memorial tells that it was designed by an anonymous Jordanian architect, and it was constructed in cooperation with local companies by Jordanian craftsmen and under the direct supervision of the Royal Engineering Corps (Martyr's Memorial 2019). In 2016, during the

reign of King Abdullah II, the Memorial had undergone substantial renovation and development, and it was reopened to the public on the 12th of December, 2016. The Memorial is annually visited by about 70,000 visitors from different countries of the world, among them Arab and foreign kings and heads of state and senior civil and military officials and delegations who visited Jordan (Martyr's Memorial 2019). The majority of the ordinary visitors of the Memorial are Jordanian citizens who visit it as individuals or in organized groups of university and school students. Visitors visit the Martyr's Memorial Museum to see exhibits that tell the history of the Jordanian armed forces from the Great Arab Revolt (in 1916 CE) to our present days. Most of these exhibits are of military nature; such as weapons, ammunition, clothing, machinery and light and heavy military equipment.

The visitors of the Martyr's Memorial begin their visit from a ceremonial entrance at the level of the City for Sport and Youth (in front of the Stadium). Then, they follow a gradual way up towards the Memorial by taking one of the two paths: ascending a ladder of one hundred stairs, or walking along an adjacent path on a slope. Both paths lead to the main ceremonial court of the Memorial at the top of the hill. The paths to the Memorial are surrounded by large pine trees and provided with wooden park-benches. The ceremonial court makes a large open space that provides the visitors an opportunity to have a rest after ascending the stairs. There, the visitors see few military exhibits such as vehicles, artillery and fighter planes which participated in the battles that the Jordanian army fought in defence of Palestine. In the middle of the ceremonial court, the distinctive building of the Martyr's Memorial (and the Museum) is erected. This architectural piece of art is renowned by its distinctive spiritual, and ideological, concept that is inspired by the famous structure of the noble *Kaaba* in Mecca (see Figure 1):
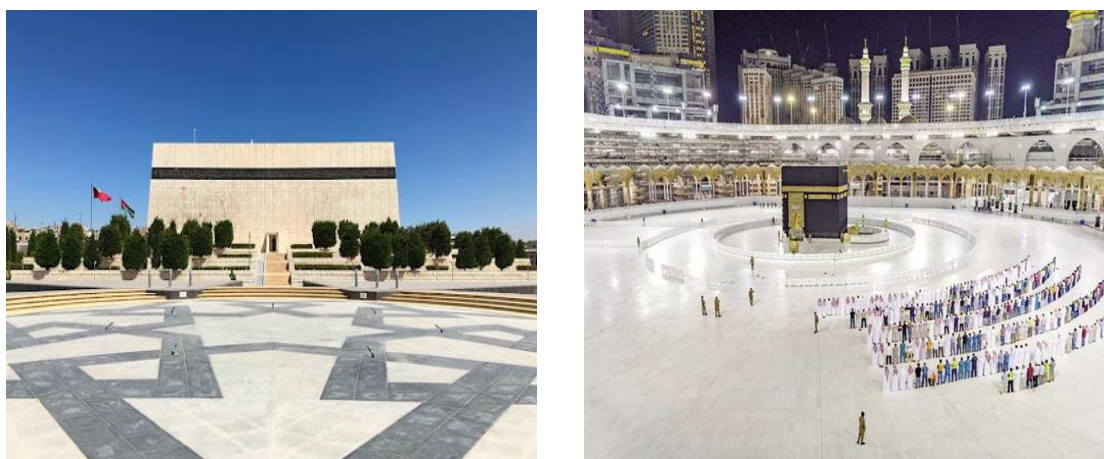

Figure 1. Two pictures of Kaaba in Mecca (right) and the Martyr's Memorial (left)

The visitors enter the Memorial building to the Museum via an entrance gate that opens on the west. The Memorial interior design is based on having a unified open and spacious space that encompasses the different sections and galleries of the Museum and which host several collections of exhibits. These sections and galleries are arranged to guide the visitor through a predefined, mono-directional, path during the entire visit.

The Martyr's Memorial is the focal the point of the entire memorial site, and it involves most of the exhibits of the Museum. However, there are other exhibits scattered around the space Memorial site. This means that the Memorial site must be semiotically divided into major spaces and subspaces where the exhibits are arranged and displayed. Therefore, the Memorial site and the Museum spaces are listed according to their spatial arrangement in Table 1 below:

Table 1. The Major Spaces and Subspaces of the Martyr's Memorial Site

	Major Spaces	**Subspaces**	**Exhibits**
The Exterior Spaces	Ceremonial Gate, Main Entrance and Stairs		armed vehicles
	Buildings (Memorial, Life, Administration Offices)		
	Squares (Memorial, Tolerance, Peace, Renaissance)		armed vehicles, heavy artillery, planes, olive tree
The Memorial Building (the Martyr's Memorial Museum)	First Lower Level	Land of Sacrifice and Struggle	pictures of soldiers in their training and duties, 10 luminous glass-tombs, martyrs' uniforms, martyrs and soldiers' possessions
		the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier,	the tomb, a map of the world on the wall, the glass skylight (seven-pointed star)
	Upper (Ascending ramp) Level	Story of a Nation, Story of Humanity	Pictures, documents, maps, flags and banners, artifacts, and light weapons, which cover the following stages: • The Great Arab Revolt in 1916 • The Establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan between 1921-1945 • The Independence of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1946 • The first Arab Israeli War in 1948 • Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army between 1951-1966 • Battle of *Samu* in 1966 • The Six Day War in 1967 • The Battle of *Karamah* in 1968 • October War - The Golan Heights in 1973 • Jordan Peace Ambassadors since 1989 • Milestones in the Development of the

		Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army between 1999-2016
	The Martyrs' possessions closet	letters, diaries, light arms and weapons, personal documents and possessions
	national newspapers section	copies of national newspapers which highlighted the inauguration of the Martyr's Memorial
Upper (2nd) Level	The Kings' Hall	The Kings' official and military uniforms, The Kings' personal possessions, a painting, a copy of the entire Holy Qur'an written in small font, a lavishly-furnished room, the visitors' record
The Roof	The Martyrs' Square	Names of the Jordanian martyrs, decorative plants, an olive tree

3. Theoretical Background

Ravelli and McMurtrie (2015, x) define a spatial-text as "the synthesis of building, space, content and user". These spatial-texts fluctuate between the perspectives of recognizing the spatial-text as if it is a two-dimensional image and 'moving through' it in three dimensions (McMurtrie 2013; Ravelli and McMurtrie 2015). In the following sections, we will embark on the different tools and terminologies used in the wide-ranging of literature on the semiotics of memorials and museums.

3.1 Reading Memorials and Museums as Spatial-Texts

In memorials and museums, spatial-texts are manifested in several forms such as the architectural construction, sections design, and displayed exhibits. These spatial-texts are essentially arranged in terms of discourses and discursive formations that take place within three-dimensional space on the basis of chronological or thematic narratives. Museums are often designed around linear narratives, but that the straightforward unfolding of time, space, and materiality across these 'topological spaces' can be disrupted and 'folded' into a "space of multiple and partial connections" (Hetherington 1997, 214). Meanwhile, spatial-texts may be recognized as multimodal texts which are essentially synthesized by the different material resources used to construct the three-dimensional structure and its exterior and interior design. In the case of museums, these resources include the building architecture, their spatial dimensions, their interior and exterior decorations, the distribution of light and sound in their different sections and galleries. In addition, the resources also involve the organization and arrangement of the contents and exhibits displayed publicly in the different sections of the museum, or inside locked transparent glass cabinets.

Similar to texts and the discourses they communicate, the deliberate arrangements of spaces, exhibits, and artifacts in a memorial (or a museum) significantly influence the production and enactment, or even resistance, of meanings and ideologies. Identifying and unfolding the

meanings in a memorial's (or museum's) spatial-texts can reveal what the visitors 'read' and how they 'interact' with these three-dimensional texts, and how these spatial texts communicate a discourse. Accordingly, reading a memorial site or a museum as a spatial-text requires directing interest towards the interplay between their spaces and exhibits, their semiotic resources, and the visitors' modes of interaction. Such interplay is organized into a complex 'assemblage' which produces a particular set of interactions (Pennycook 2017).

Contemporary scholarship has addressed the significance and utility of using the terminologies and approaches of discourse analysis in analysing three-dimensional spaces, and that a discourse encompasses, not only verbal, but also visual material and/or embodied representations (Grant et. al. 2004; Phillips, Lawrence, and Hardy 2004; Cornelissen, Holt, and Zundel 2011). Such argument accentuates that analysing three-dimensional spatial-texts should involve looking deeply into the different forms of verbal and non-verbal forms of communication to reveal the underlying relations of 'social position', 'power', and 'control' on the basis of social semiotic approaches to communication.

Social semiotic approaches are basically based on *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (Halliday 1978; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014) in which meanings of communicational systems should serve three metafunctions: constructing social relations between the participants in communication (interpersonal metafunction), representing some aspects of the world (ideational metafunction), and producing texts related to other texts within a certain context (textual metafunction) (*see* Kress, Jewitt, Ogborn, and Tsatarelis 2001). Similarly, since three-dimensional spaces are best recognized as multimodal spatial-texts (Ravelli and McMurtrie 2015), then, their meanings as communicational systems may also serve three metafunctions (renamed as interactional, representational, and compositional respectively); all together simultaneously contribute to wider sociocultural contexts (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001).

Abousnnouga and Machin (2010a) suggest a model to the social semiotic analysis of three-dimensional spatial-texts, such as monuments, that is based on four levels. In the first level, the analysis focuses on the 'denotation' and 'connotation' (following the semiotics of Barthes 1973) of the spatial-text. Abousnnouga and Machin suggest the example of images and monuments which can be said to show (or 'document') particular events, particular people, places and things. These images and monument then 'denote' these people, places and things; meanwhile, their depiction or portrayal of the particular people, places, things and events, aims to get (or 'connote') general or abstract ideas across. Accordingly, we can interpret and deduce a sense of the kinds of identities, actions and values that are being communicated by the spatial-text, whether it is an image or a monument. The second level of analysis is the 'metaphorical association' between the resemblance between the spatial-text, such as monuments, and what they portray in terms of physical features and experiential associations. In this regard, a monument can be taller or shorter than what it portrays, or it can be angular, or rounded, raised up or at ground level, hollow or solid (Abousnnouga and Machin 2010a, 222). The third level of analysis involves unfolding the symbolic meanings, or the 'iconology' (following Panofsky 1972), of the spatial-texts reflected by their form of layout and choice of materials. Monuments could portray persons, animals, postures and abstract shapes to

symbolize particular people, values, and behaviours. Over time, the original meanings of these monuments, and which 'reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion' (Panofsky 1970: 7), may become 'conventions' and 'buried' for contemporary viewers. Abousnnouga and Machin accentuate that 'we need to trace the meaning of form, objects and materials used in monuments to understand their cultural and ideological meanings' (Abousnnouga and Machin 2010a, 222). Finally, the fourth level of analysis emphasizes the instrumentality of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in approaching the use of semiotic resources in spatial-texts by regarding them as spatial-discourses which communicate broad ideas. Similar to ordinary discourses, spatial discourses can be thought of as representations of the world with different kinds of participants, places, behaviours, and goals. Meanwhile, these representations can project certain social values and ideas which contribute to the (re)production of social life (Abousnnouga and Machin 2010a, 222). Accordingly, and on the basis of CDA, spatial-texts are analysed in terms of the details of the semiotic choices that they contain in order to reveal the broader spatial-discourses that they realize and represent.

In line of the previous approaches, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) developed and employed an approach in the analysis of visual texts. For example, they propose that, in three-dimensional spaces, vertical hierarchy can be explored using the notion of 'angle'. When a visitor is positioned higher than a space or an exhibit (high angle), this situation reflects the visitor's position of superiority in contrast to the inferiority of the space, or the exhibit. On the other hand, when the same visitor stands lower than a space or an exhibit (low angle), the visitor would feel some sense of humbleness, or at least, respect towards what is being observed. So, by following the same analogy, when the visitor looks at a space or an exhibit at his/her own level (eye-level angle), this situation reflects a degree of equality and social involvement between the visitor and the space or the exhibit he/she looks at (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006, 140). In this regard, Ravelli and McMurtrie (2015) argue that interactant visitors in public three-dimensional spaces may be positioned within the spatial-text as more or less equal to the other resources within the space in terms of 'power'. For example, a high structure, or a (a huge governmental) building with very high ceilings, can make the visitor feel small, and hence, with less power. Then, difference in power relations is plainly reflected in three-dimensional spatial texts via vertical and horizontal spatial hierarchies, and they can also be understood in terms of 'salience' (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006, 201). A salient three-dimensional structure is the one that is displayed more prominently in relation to other surrounding structures. So, a structure's salience reflects its importance and power and authority over the other minimalized, or marginalized, surrounding structure.

In addition, meanings of spatial-texts can be unfolded by measuring the relative physical distance between the interactants and a three-dimensional structure, or space. For example, the relative physical distance between a memorial (or an exhibit in a museum) can semiotically position the interactant visitor as more or less able, or invited, to make direct 'contact' with the spatial-text. And when the interactant visitors are positioned with the spatial-texts as more or less able, or invited, to make direct contact, they are more likely to be more or less 'involved' with these spatial-texts (Ravelli and McMurtrie 2015). Within the

contexts of museums, involvement may occur when an exhibition room, or an exhibit, is directly accessible, or perceptible, or instead, it needs to be approached obliquely because it is indirectly accessible, or imperceptible (*see* Ravelli and McMurtrie 2015). On the other hand, interactant visitors can be also positioned within the spatial-text as more or less free in terms of 'control'; this means that visitors can either move where they want, or they need to follow only a path predefined by the authorities of the space. When the interactant visitors are required to follow (a) predefined path(s) between the spaces of a structure, and the arrangement of spaces, and exhibits, is based on a sequential theme (e.g. a historical theme) by which the spatial-text unfolds meanings and messages, then, we recognize this path as the 'navigation path' (Ravelli and McMurtrie, 2015). This navigation path defines the manner by which the visitor is required to 'read' the three-dimensional spatial-text via a 'thematic development'; some spaces and exhibits must be 'read' before other ones in the same manner we need 'Given' information in a text before we learn 'New' ones.

The relative degrees of power (epitomized by the angle and salience), contact, involvement, and control collectively define the spatial and semiotic measurements which measure the visitors' 'social distance' with a space, or an exhibit. For example, if visitors are permitted to touch, or interact with, spaces and exhibits in a museum, then, they enjoy equal, or more superior, power than these spaces and exhibits, and they are in control of any permitted forms of interaction with the space, and that the visitor can easily contact and get involved with the space (or the exhibit); provided that the latter is relatively perceptible and easily accessible (Ravelli and McMurtrie 2015). On the other hand, when spaces, or exhibits, are differentiated and displayed separately, or the degree of involvement and contact with these spaces, or the exhibits, is restricted, then, the space, or the exhibit, is considered having 'strong framing' (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006). Strong framing works on increasing the degree of social distance between the interactants and the space, or the exhibits. Nevertheless, weak framing characterizes those exhibits which are shown together as unified components.

Finally, 'modality' is another concept that is borrowed from the tradition of discourse analysis and is used in spatial semiotics. Modality, in spatial-texts, refers to the extent spatial-texts are being classified in terms of their 'truthfulness' or 'reality'. In other words, are the exhibits made from actual and genuine objects? or they are just replicas or 'abstract' interpretations. In memorials and museums, modality is a pivotal factor when deciding to frame (either strongly or weakly) a space, or an exhibit. Generally, real and genuine exhibits are displayed in museums inside transparent glass cabinets and lockers, and the visitors are restricted from interacting physically with these exhibits. On the other hand, visitors are permitted to touch (or cautiously interact with) unframed unreal exhibits and replicas. Nevertheless, real exhibits are the ones which attract the visitors' attentions and appeal to their involvement because of the story or the 'narrative' they tell.

3.2 Binding and Bonding Spatial-Texts

One of the most central assumptions in analysing three-dimensional spaces is that meaning in a spatial-text is concerned with how the interactants are made to feel comfortable, secure, and affiliated within a space. Here, a space creates and communicates both 'Binding' and

'Bonding' meanings (Stenglin 2004). Binding is a spatial scale that describes spaces along a continuum between 'restricted' and 'unrestricted'; or from extreme 'openness' to extreme 'closure' (Stenglin 2008). The scale of Binding has an effect on a visitor's feelings of comfort and security within a space. For instance, an extremely 'Bound' space may induce an uncomfortable claustrophobic response by the visitor, and an extremely 'Unbound' space, on the other hand, may induce anxiety and agoraphobic response (Stenglin 2008, 426). Accordingly, median choices of 'Binding' in spaces produce 'comfort zones' to the visitors, and they allow the visitors to feel safe and secure within permitted freedom of movement and involvement with the spatial-text.

In three-dimensional spaces, such as memorials and museums, the feeling of comfort and security is evoked to the occupants (the visitors) through both horizontal and vertical 'enclosure'. To elaborate, evoking security happens by providing the occupants with adequate horizontal enclosure by walls and separations. Meanwhile, adequate vertical enclosures evoke security by providing solid floors and ceilings (Stenglin 2008, 431). Obviously, vertical enclosures, by walls and separations, are more salient and visible to the occupants; hence, they have greater effect on evoking feelings of security, or insecurity, than the horizontal enclosures. The American architect Francis Ching asserts that "Vertical forms have a greater presence in our visual field than horizontal planes and are therefore more instrumental in defining a discrete volume of space and providing a sense of enclosure and privacy for those within it" (Cheng 1996, 120). Accordingly, a space that adequately provides vertical enclosure tends to make the occupant visitors experience the extreme feelings of security; nevertheless, lack of vertical enclosure tends to provoke extreme feelings of vulnerability.

Bonding works with Binding in revealing the meanings and ideologies associated with a spatial-text. Bonding is constructed by the space, and its exhibits, to function as a measurement to tell how the spatial structures and exhibits are designed and arranged to promote social interactions. Thus, Bonding aligns the occupants of a space into groups with shared qualities, attitudes, and dispositions in a manner that reflects solidarity and affiliation (Stenglin 2008, 434).

To explain the complementary relationship between Binding and Bonding in a museum space, one can think of the example of a medium-size exhibition room in a museum; the space of this room is relatively Bound that it makes visitors feel secure and comfortable but unencumbered; so, the visitors can move freely between the exhibits which are made from real exhibits from national heritage. As the room space is relatively Bound and has adequate horizontal and vertical enclosures around the interactant visitors, the visitors maintain their sense of both freedom and security inside that Bound space, and they are encouraged to mutually identify with the space and its exhibits, feel affiliated to them, and unify them under the shared national heritage.

4. Research on the Spatial-Texts of Monuments, Memorials, and Museums

Several case-studies have explored how memorials and museums exhibits and spaces make three-dimensional spatial-texts which communicate predefined narratives to their visitors. In

the case of monuments, Abousnnouga and Machin's (2010a) analysis of a sample of eight English war monuments erected at different times and in different places in Europe and the United States demonstrates how important visual differences in the war monuments reveal changing attitudes to war, soldiery and nation. Meanwhile, these changes are found to simultaneously maintain 'visually realized' discourses articulated via the semiotic resources of the eight monuments such their iconology, religious symbolism, height, size, angularity, and solidity. Accordingly, some of the discourses realized by the war monuments implicitly idealises sacrifices and hence justify the deaths of millions of young men because of the two world wars, occupation of territories and oppression of civilians around the world in the interests of the ruling elite (Abousnnouga and Machin 2010a, 220). Nevertheless, Abousnnouga and Machin accentuate that unlike early monuments, which represented the power and immovability of nation and empire and the higher ideals of war and sacrifice through classical styles and idealized figures, later war monuments showed soldiers becoming more real than ideal; especially by representing their aggression, wounds and fear. Similarly, Macalister's (2019) work on the Cenotaph and Pukeahu memorial sites in Wellington (New Zealand) investigates the interplay between linguistic and non-linguistic elements in these sites and the messages of 'inclusiveness' and 'reconciliation' they are designed to convey. For example, Pukeahu memorial site makes a memory place that "speaks of a bilingual and bicultural New Zealand, of a partnership between Māori and non-Māori […] and, in partnership with Australia, that contributes internationally to making and maintaining peace" (Macalister 2019, 26). In addition, reconciliation between the Māori and 'European New Zealanders' (or *Pakeha*) is addressed by Pukeahu memorial site through 'complex references and cultural heritage markers' (Abousnnouga and Machin 2010a: 238), such as the tassels on the kākahu of Hinerangi (a bronze sculpture of a 'Māori cloak'). Here, Pukeahu memorial site establishes a recognition of New Zealand's bilingual and bicultural society and expresses its national identity.

In the case of museums, architectural design, for instance, can create both strong narrative progressions through museum space and emotionally laden and affectively engaging "commemorative atmospheres" (Till 2001; Oren and Shani 2012; Schorch 2013; Waterton and Dittmer 2014; Sumartojo 2016). For example, The Museum of New Zealand *Te Papa Tongarewa* in Wellington and the German Historical Museum in Berlin and *Yad Vashem* Memorial Centre in Jerusalem all are designed around 'frames' which narrate detailed historical episodes of nation (*see* Smith 2018).

On the other hand, several memorials and museums and 3D spaces design arrange their spaces and exhibits through different scales to narrate, and frame, multiple local, regional, or national narratives. In their study on Denver's History Colorado Centre, Smith and Foote (2017) demonstrate how discourses are arranged in the Centre's three-dimensional spaces of galleries and exhibits by arguing that the spatial arrangement of texts, media, and artifacts shape "narrative storylines" (Smith and Foote 2017), and these arrangements suggest sequences, connections, progressions, and pathways within, and between, exhibits. In order to reveal these narrative storylines, Smith and Foote suggest that the Centre structures and 'assemblages' (Pennycook 2017) involve a spatial arrangement that is tied to the meaning of an underlying

discourse. They conclude that the Centre, which includes iconic regional imagery as well as more dissonant episodes of Colorado's past, is designed to confront critical histories of the state and the American West as its spatial arrangements both contribute to, and detract from, the museum's presentation of a critically nuanced state history (Smith and Foote 2017).

In addition, memorial sites are designed with spatial arrangements that can perform multiple layers of functions when communicating a well-established narrative. Such functions can cooperatively strengthen the spatial, narrative and affective logics of the memorial site. In her study of the Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance, Sumartojo (2017) discusses how a memorial site has three roles: commemoration, education, and tourism. She accentuates that these functions may simultaneously strengthen, or disrupt, each other especially when focusing on the affective aspects of the memorial and the activities that occur around it. For instance, during commemorative ceremonies around a memorial, the site, with its exhibits and spaces, can "contribute to particular sensory perceptions, historical narratives, rhythms of movement and physical locations to coalesce particular ways of feeling about national identity" (Sumartojo (Sumartojo 2017, 169). So, in addition to exclusively communicate a narrative, the memorial site performs a pedagogical function that reminds us of the educational mission of the memorial site, and its close connection with commemoration. In this regard, one should acknowledge how museums are best recognized as spaces for the preservation of a nation's collective memory and remembrance. Kosatica (2019) illustrates how public remembrance may be understood and accomplished through museums spatial-texts. By focusing on the multimodal organization of 400 hundred exhibits in the War Childhood Museum in Sarajevo (Bosnia–Herzegovina), Kosatica argues that the exhibits reconstruct the war "discourses of history" exclusively within the framework of the children's personal memories and stories as illustrated through war-related exhibits (e.g. an Adidas hat, a bulletproof vest) and verbal narratives (e.g. a child's experience of staying in a 'basement' for a long period of time). Such exhibits, mostly collected from children, make rich spatial-embodied 'assemblages' that allow seeing the importance of objects, the body and the place alongside the meanings of linguistic resources. Kosatica concludes that since remembering is both 'a communicative and a social act'; then, the War Childhood Museum acts as a powerful performative spatial text that produces a critical, self-reflectional war discourse realized through a story about remembering (Kosatica 2019, 180).

To summarize, we recognize memorials and museums as manifestation of such spatial-texts because they make globally recurrent cultural and heritage (three-dimensional) spaces. These spaces are characterized by the presence of predefined arrangements of spatial and semiotic resources which allow visitors to interact with them non-verbally; and 'move through' them physically. The semiotics of the memorials (and museums) spaces demonstrates how these spaces, and their exhibits, are communicate different narratives, meanings, and ideologies.

The theoretical account and review of few case-studies world-wide presented above aim to set the ground for the analysis of the Martyr's Memorial and Museum in Amman by looking to the arrangements of spaces and exhibits in the entire site as the semiotic resources which create a spatial-text and discourse.

5. The Current Study: Questions and Methods

This study employs a social semiotic approach of spatial-text analysis to reveal how the structure and the arrangement of spaces and exhibits in the Martyr's Memorial in Amman communicate and unfold meanings and ideologies. The study stems from the tradition of the semiotic analysis of three-dimensional spaces that investigates how a spatial discourse is reproduced and enacted through the interaction between a space and its predefined semiotic resources in the one side, and the interactant visitors on the other. As we recognize discourse analysis as a variety of different methods and approaches for analysing written, vocal, or sign language in realistic or naturalistic contexts, spatial discourse analysis focuses especially on how social, economic, and cultural power relationships are established, maintained, strengthened, and propagated through the predefined and deliberate usages and arrangements of spatial semiotic signs. Accordingly, this study assumes that such interaction is an important communicative resource to the visitors of a space, and that the interpretation of this interaction will communicate and unfold different meanings and ideologies which characterize the society where this space is placed in the same manner as ordinary texts, and discourses, do. Consequently, this study aims to answer the following two questions:

1. *What are the different semiotic resources in the Martyr's Memorial which can be read as spatial-texts?*

2. *How do the usages and arrangements of these spatial-texts communicate and unfold meanings, narratives, and ideologies to the interactant visitors?*

In order to answer these questions, the researcher had personally visited the Martyr's Memorial in Amman several times over a period of three months. These visits allowed the researcher to construct an approach of data collection and analysis on the basis of the locative and reflective observation of the researcher's, and the visitors', experience with different spaces within the borders of the Memorial site. Locative observation involved mapping and documenting spaces and exhibits and recording how they were arranged and displayed. Here, documentation and recording were achieved by taking static photographs using an Olympus (SZ-12) digital camera. Meanwhile, the researcher's locative observation allowed him to watch and document the visitors' interactions with the spaces and exhibits in the Museum. These documentations, records, and photographs provided the researcher with the necessary data for the reflective observation. This process also involved the content analysis of the data on the basis of classifying, counting, totalling, comparing, and analysing the spaces and exhibits as they appeared in the photos and described in the researcher's documentations and records.

6. The Spatial Semiotics of the Martyr's Memorial

Because of the several layers and multifaceted aspects of the three-dimensional semiotic resources which construct the spatial-texts of the Martyr's Memorial, the researcher has opted to a spatial descriptive presentation to unfold the meanings and ideologies communicated in these spatial-texts. Accordingly, the presentation involves dividing the spaces of the Martyr's

Memorial into three major spaces as it is illustrated in Table 1 above: the *Exterior Space*, the *Interior Space* (including the *Lower Level*, the *Intermediate* (ramp) *Level*, and the *Upper Level*), and the *Roof Space* (*the Martyrs' Square*). Meanwhile, these major spaces encompass other subspaces where the exhibits are displayed.

6.1 The Exterior Space

The Martyr's Memorial Museum stands at the top of a hill in the capital city Amman. It forms a visually distinctive landmark for the pedestrian and commuters between two vibrant roads which connect the eastern and western parts of Amman. This hill is the only elevated geographic area within the landscape of Al-Hussein's City for Sport and Youth and its adjacent park which makes the Memorial building (*Sarh* 'edifice') the most salient structures in the area. Even from a distance, the Memorial building looks as a landmark in the Sport City district in Amman because of its large size, its outstanding visual and architectural structure, and its high placement at the top of the hill (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. A distant angle-view of the Martyr's Memorial Museum and its main entrance

The visitor to the Memorial site finds that there is ladder of wide stairs and a parallel ascending pathway formed between the main (pedestrian) ceremonial entrance from the parking space near the Stadium. Both the stairs and the pathway lead the visitors towards the Martyr's Memorial building and its surrounding courts by the gradual ascending a ladder of 100 stairs within seven stages (each stage is about 7-11 stairs). The stairs and the pathways are 'framed' from the surrounding forest of pine trees by a short stone-wall and hedges (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. A view from the ceremonial entrance that shows the ascending ladder of stairs, the pine trees, and the Martyr's Memorial Museum

At the end of these stairs, the evident salience of the Martyr's Memorial is realized to the visitors by the vast front-court and the Memorial's white walls, its distinctive architecture, its immense size, and its high placement when looking to the opposite direction towards the west; where the stadium is erected. At this point, the visitors instantly appreciate the 'power' of the Memorial because they have to look at it from a low angle (see Figure 4), and they experience a sense of humbleness and respect to the huge structure (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006, 140).

Figure 4. A low angle-view of the Martyr's Memorial Museum with a (real-size) military vehicle placed in the Memorial Square

Two features of the semiotics of the external space of the Martyr's Memorial are significant when looking at the pathway as a spatial-text (starting by the ceremonial entrance up to the front-court at the top); these are the military exhibits and the upward ascension towards the Memorial.

Few steps after the ceremonial entrance, and before starting the ascending journey toward the Memorial, the visitors are welcomed by two military vehicles. These vehicles introduce the visitors to the main theme and contents of the Memorial Museum. This idea is reinforced again when reaching the front-court at the top of the hill and before the last series of steps towards the entrance of the Memorial Museum where other military vehicles are placed at each corner of the court along with a Hawker-Hunter fighter plane and a Helicopter. It is narrated that these vehicles and planes had participated during the battles and wars which Jordan had fought against Israel between 1948 and 1967.

The military equipment constructs the first spatial-text that introduces the visitors to the Memorial spaces, and they reflect a Bonding relationship between the (Jordanian) visitors and the soldiers who fought the battles and wars on these vehicles and planes. This Bonding relationship is accentuated also by the fact that these exhibits, despite being real, are weakly 'framed'; allowing visitors to be in close physical contact with them. Accordingly, from the early stages of their experience with the Memorial site, the visitors feel that they are, physically and socially, close to the Memorial's spaces and its exhibits.

Another semiotic feature of the Memorial spatial-text is the gradual ascending journey via several sets of ladders. The visitors' gradual journey towards the Memorial Museum is centred around the idea of physical and spiritual ascension. This ascension makes a metaphorical conceptualization of the ascension of the martyr's spirit towards Heavens; as depicted in Islamic tradition. Meanwhile, the green landscape of pine trees and hedges that surrounds, and weakly 'frames', the ascending ladder of stairs reinforces this reading to the visitors. In fact, gradual ascension makes one of the few thematic patterns that are repeatedly employed in the narratives of the Memorial spatial-text; thus, making it a 'rhythm' that creates cohesion (*see* Ravelli 2008) between the different spatial-texts of the Memorial site.

After ascending the hill and standing in the main square, the victors encounter two new buildings next to the Memorial; the 'Administration Offices' building to the right-hand, and the 'Life Building' to the left-hand. The 'Life Building' includes a cafeteria and other facilities. The Memorial is surrounded by four squares: the front square (named the 'Memorial Square'), the 'Peace Square', the 'Tolerance Square' and the 'Renaissance Square'. Each one of these squares are public and permissible spaces used for ceremonial events (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. A military ceremony organized in the Memorial Square in front of the Martyr's Memorial and attended by King Abdullah II

The distinctive architecture of the Martyr's Memorial creates strong a frame that distinguishes it from the surrounding buildings and squares constructed decades after the inauguration of the Memorial. Through the combination of these geographic and architectural features which can be recognized as idiosyncratic semiotic resources, the Martyr's Memorial acts as the centre of the whole space of the Memorial site: it is a focal point and attracts the focus of the visitors' attention. In contrast, the other two structures (the 'Life' and 'Administration Offices' buildings) are marginalized; and thus, beyond the scope of the discourse of the Memorial's special-texts.

The exterior space of the Memorial is rich with semiotic resources which stems from Islamic concepts. The building is constructed from white limestone which reflects the main theme of the site as the martyr's Heavens where their spirits rests in its final abode in peace and serenity. Furthermore, the cubic architectural design of the Memorial is based on the concept of the *Kaaba*; the most revered religious shrine in Islam. Meanwhile, and near the top of the Memorial, there is a black banner that extends around the entire Memorial building and on which verses from the Quran are inscribed by gold-water paint. These verses glorify martyrs and martyrdom and fighting on behalf of Allah. All these spiritual and religious signs create a Bonding spatial-text which makes the visitors affiliate themselves with Jordan's Arabic and Islamic roots.

The main, and only, entrance to the Museum building points to the west; facing the front Memorial Square (see Figures 2, 4, and 5 above). It could be an architectural necessity that the Memorial's main entrance faces the west direction; though, this observation might additionally contribute to the semiotics of the Memorial as the west direction has been associated with death in many ancient cultures (Campbell 1981). The size of the entrance gate is relatively small in proportion to the width of the building; yet, this does not necessarily mean that it is not perceptible, or 'unwelcoming'. In fact, the relative small-size of the entrance gate can be understood from the spiritual theme of the Memorial as a place that the visitors repair to with

the same reverence that they observe in places of worship such as mosques and churches. Generally, the design of these places accentuates and favours the controlled distribution of light to provide an atmosphere of submissiveness and reverence. In addition, as all the four exterior walls of the Memorial do not include glass-windows which allow natural sunlight to illuminate the interior spaces of the Memorial: the Museum, apparently, the small entrance gate is designed to control the access of sunlight into the interior spaces of the Museum; especially, that it is made from dark solid wood. In this regard, it is found that controlling the distribution of natural sunlight inside the Museum makes a rhythmic semiotic sign that characterizes the Museum's interior space.

6.2 The Lower Level Space

Once crossing the threshold of the Martyr's Memorial Museum, the visitors are constantly guided through one predefined pathway that starts from the lower level. After passing the main information front-desk, the visitors are welcomed by a large wall which displays the insignias of all the divisions of the Jordanian Armed Forces. When turning to left, the visitors come into the first section in the Museum named 'Land of Sacrifice and Struggle'. Similar to most museums, this section involves white-and-black pictures fixed on the two opposing walls and provide vivid illustration of the soldiers while in training, in duties, and in action. All the same, this section involves the Museum's most spectacular semiotic resources which are read as spatial-texts; the military uniforms of Jordanian martyrs, the illuminated transparent glass-tombs, and 'the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier'.

Ten uniforms of Jordanian martyrs of security incidents against domestic and international terrorism are displayed on the right-hand side of the section (see Figure 6). The uniforms are displayed unframed; and hence, inviting visitors to be in close and direct contact with these exhibits. Furthermore, the uniforms are displayed unwashed and some of them involve marks of dry-blood and ruptures resulted from the fatal incidents; all of which reflect the real modality of these exhibits. Furthermore, each displayed uniform carries the name-tag of its owner. Displaying the name-tags makes a significant semiotic resource for the uniform spatial-text as they construct a strong Bonding relationship between the Jordanian visitors and the martyrs who are the sons of well-known and respected Jordanian families and tribes. Kinship and tribal affiliation are among the most prominent characteristics of the Jordanian society, and it is constantly referred to as an epitome of being a 'genuine Jordanian'. What is more, these uniforms are meant to construct another strong Bonding relationship between the martyrs and the militant, or veteran, visitors as the displayed uniforms represent different divisions of the Jordanian Armed Forces. Among these uniforms, there is the uniforms of the iconic martyrs Muath al-Kasasbeh (Note 1) and Rashed Al-Zyoud (Note 2). One can distinguish how the placement of the martyrs' military uniforms in their original physical state literalize the notion of embodiment by showing the traces left by the body' (Albano 2007, 20). These traces function as the tangible embodiments of the martyrs' personal stories that 'imbue the exhibition display with emotional and imaginative power within the exhibition context' (Albano 2007, 25). At this point, the uniforms of those young martyrs narrate the sacrifices of the Jordanian youth who fought against domestic and international terrorism through mutual cooperation between the several divisions of the Armed Forces.

Figure 6. A partial-view of the space where military uniforms of Jordanian martyrs
are displayed

The 'Land of Sacrifice and Struggle' section also narrates the life of Jordanian soldiers and martyrs by displaying different models of light weapons and equipment which have been used by Arabs and Jordanian soldiers. These exhibits are displayed inside ten transparent glass-tombs and placed directly on the floor. The ten glass-tombs are almost in the prototypical size of a tomb and are illuminated from the inside by artificial warm lights to create a contrast with the dim space of the section (see Figure 7). The exhibits are mostly old, and out of service, light weapons and equipment, such as: pistols, rifles, Arabian daggers and swords, leather bags, steel helmets, and even anti-tank mines. As a spatial-text, these exhibits are real exhibits that narrate to the visitors the life of soldiering and the course of military actions during the several events which the Jordanian soldier had experienced starting from the Great Arab Revolt in 1916 until the Arab-Israeli wars in the 1970s. Furthermore, the exhibits implicitly narrate part of modern history and the arms-race between the colonial powers of the age through the source of these weapon and equipment which are mostly British and German.
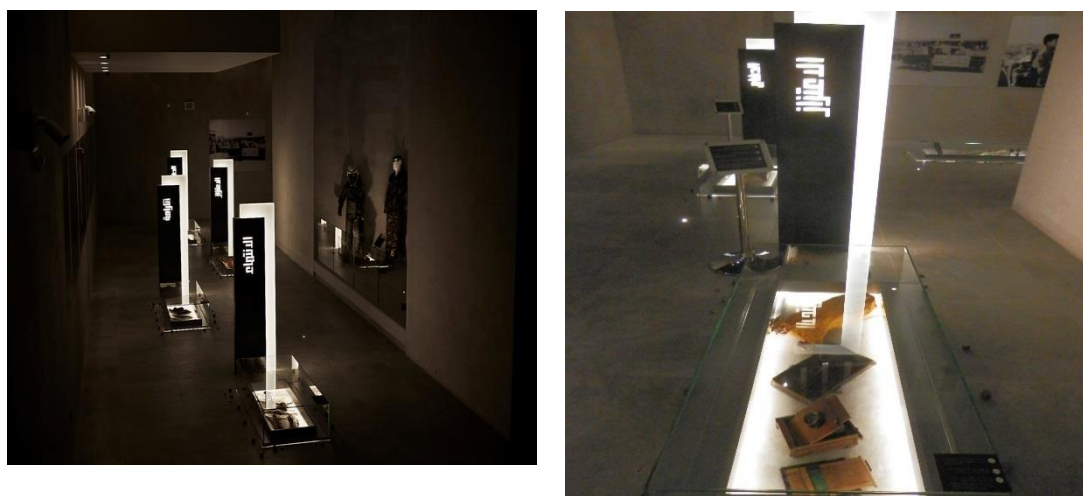

Figure 7. Illuminated glass-tombs and exhibits displayed inside them

Although the exhibits are framed inside the glass-tombs, the visitors are permitted to approach the exhibits and attenuate the level of physical, and social, distance with them by bending down on their knees to the tomb level and watch the exhibits from a close, but relatively, high angle through the transparent glass-framing and warm illumination. In fact, this posture also resembles that of the Islamic ritual when a mourner visits a real tomb and recites prayers, such as *Al-Fateha* (the first chapter in the Holy Qur'an), on the tomb while bending down on their knees.

In term of modality, the 'Land of Sacrifice and Struggle' space radically shifts between the Given ('real') and the New ('ideal') (Kress and van Leewuen, 2006) as presented by the real exhibits and the 'unreal', or 'ideal', ten illuminated glass-tombs. These tombs, which symbolically embrace Jordanian martyrs, are conceptualized as sources of light that illuminates the space around them in contrast to the conventional poignant image of the tomb darkness. The epitaph of each of the ten tombs is also decorated with a moral value (Defence, Dignity, Courage, Strife…etc.) illuminated against a dark background. One can suggest that artificial light is used here as a semiotic 'visual metaphor'; especially as light contrasts with the dim spaces or dark backgrounds. The artificial illumination that contrasts with darkness is another frequent rhythmic theme found in the different spaces of the Museum, and it is one of the most significant design practices used to create cohesion (*see* Ravelli 2008) between the Museum's three-dimensional spaces.

The third section in the lower floor is 'the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier'. This space is separated from the 'Land of Struggle and Sacrifice' section, and it is framed by concrete walls. It is accessible by an open entrance few steps to the right-hand of the last illuminated glass-tomb. Architecturally, this section is located at the centre of the Memorial's building, and it is designed as a large 'burial chamber' with all its interior walls are painted in black. In the centre of the 'burial chamber', 'the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier' lies on the floor. The Tomb is designed from heavy dark glass that resembles a granite burial 'casket'. This casket is also decorated with an illuminated verse of the Quran that glorifies martyrs. Next to the front wall of the Tomb, there is a large map of the world (captioned 'the Jordanian Martyrs Worldwide'); the map-background is dark and some areas on it are labelled with illuminated writing that name the places where Jordanian soldiers fall under the flag of the United Nation Peace-Keeping missions. The roof of this chamber is high because it is also the roof of the Memorial's building. In addition, a small glass skylight is placed on the roof of the chamber that takes the form of the symbolic seven-pointed star. Through this glass skylight, a beam of sunlight perpendicularly falls on the Tomb (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the seven-pointed-star skylight, and the world map that shows the countries where Jordanian martyrs fall

The space of 'the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier' involves several semiotic resources which reflect the main theme of the Memorial's spatial-texts which commemorate those Jordanian martyrs who fell in different battlefields. First of all, the 'burial chamber' is a relatively Bound space; thus, it gives the visitors additional feeling of security as a comfort zone with the necessary freedom to tour inside the chamber space. There are no restricted areas around the Tomb, and the visitors can easily stand before the Tomb or the map of the world; and thus, interact with them. Similar to the 'Land of Struggle and Sacrifice' space, the space of 'the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier' is depicted as a source of light in contrast to the dim space surrounding it. This rhythmic theme is semiotically expanded by the addition of the natural sunlight that perpendicularly falls from the roof skylight onto the Tomb. In addition, there is the seven-pointed-star skylight which stands for the *Sab'a al Mathani* ("*Al-Fatiha Chapter*; *aka*, the Seven repeated [verses] of the Holy Qur'an". This star is a symbolic sign that also appears on the Jordanian flag and the Coat of Arms of Jordan. This semiotic arrangement tells that

Al-Fatiha Chapter is constantly recited from the skylight. And in another 'reading' the sunlight that falls from the skylight provides the Heavens light that guides the martyr's spirit to their final resting abode in Heavens. Remarkably, there is a garden on the roof of the Memorial's building that surrounds the skylight. Accordingly, the arrangement of the several semiotic resources in the 'burial chamber' with the Binding space of the Tomb constructs a strong Bonding relationship to which Jordanian visitors affiliate. What is most remarkable in this space is that it genuinely combines the Given ('real') semiotic resources with the New ('ideal') ones. This combination is materialized in the Tomb itself as it is a real tomb that embraces the remains of an unknown Jordanian soldier who was martyred at the walls of Jerusalem and his remains were repatriated and buried in this tomb in a military ceremony on the 12th of December, 2016 attended and inaugurated by the King and high-rank army officers.

6.3 The Intermediate (Ramp) Level Space

After finishing from the section of 'the Unknown Soldier Tomb', visitors pass through the same 'burial chamber' entrance and take a right-hand passage to the second level of the Museum which is named 'Story of a Nation, Story of Humanity'. This section is designed as a narrow gallery that has two walls on each side. This gallery extends along a ramp that gradually ascends around the interior walls of the Memorial until it reaches the Upper Level. This space is the longest one with the largest number of exhibits in the Museum. These exhibits mostly consist of pictures, maps, historical texts and documents, flags and banners, few artifacts and equipment, and some personal belongings of Jordanian martyrs (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. The beginning of the Intermediate (ramp) Level named 'Story of a Nation, Story of Humanity'

The narrative path of this space follows a historical account starting from 'the Great Arab Revolt in 1916' to the different historical events during the history of modern Jordan (especially wars and battles with Israel) until the participation of the Jordanian Armed Forces with the United Nations Peace-Keeping missions in areas of conflict; such as Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and Afghanistan.

The arrangement of the exhibits in this space follows the typical pattern of spatial-texts with Given historical information (exhibits) precedes the New ones according to historical timeline. Furthermore, the exhibits are arranged along a one-way controlled narrative path along a relatively Binding space that restricts the free movement of the visitors. The exhibits do not vary much in terms of their modality, most of them are either developed and processed pictures, artificial historical texts, or replicas of exhibits (such as military maps and newspaper pages). These exhibits, though unreal, construct a Bonding relationship between the Jordanian visitors and their homeland as the exhibits narrate the story of the establishment of Jordan from a land of scattered and disorganized rural populations and fighting nomadic tribes to a modern state. In addition, being mostly unreal, or replicas, the exhibits are weakly framed; allowing visitors to be in close physical contact -and free to interact- with the exhibits.

As it sounds from the historical narrative path of the exhibits, the historical sequence of events creates cohesion between the different parts of this space. To elaborate, the spatial-texts of this section start by narrating the different events of the Great Arab Revolt (1916); then they provide semiotic, and textual, information about the establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan (1921-1945); then, the Independence of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (1946); then few exhibits narrate episodes of the first Arab Israeli War (1948) and the Jordan Armed Forces (1951-1966); then, the exhibits elaborate the spatial-texts with photos, maps, and videos which narrate episodes of this conflicts; such as the Battle of *Samu* (1966), the *Six Day War* (1967), the Battle of *Karamah* (1968), and *October War* (1973). The last chapters to narrate involves exhibits, mostly pictures, which elaborate the role of Jordanian soldiers as Peace Ambassadors (since 1989), and provide both pictorial and textual accounts on milestones in the development of the Jordan Armed Forces under the reign of King Abdullah II (between 1999 and 2016).

However, in the middle of this space, an interruption of cohesion takes place when a large glass-closet is conspicuously placed on the left-hand wall in front of the parts on the Arab-Israeli War. This glass-closet displays real examples of the Jordanian martyrs' possessions. There is no unifying thematic relationship between these possessions as they vary in terms of their category, function, and age. For example, the closet displays personal pictures and portraits, identity and professional certificates and passports, personal letters and diaries, personal copies of the Quran and praying rugs, wrist-watches and mobile-phones (see Figure 10).
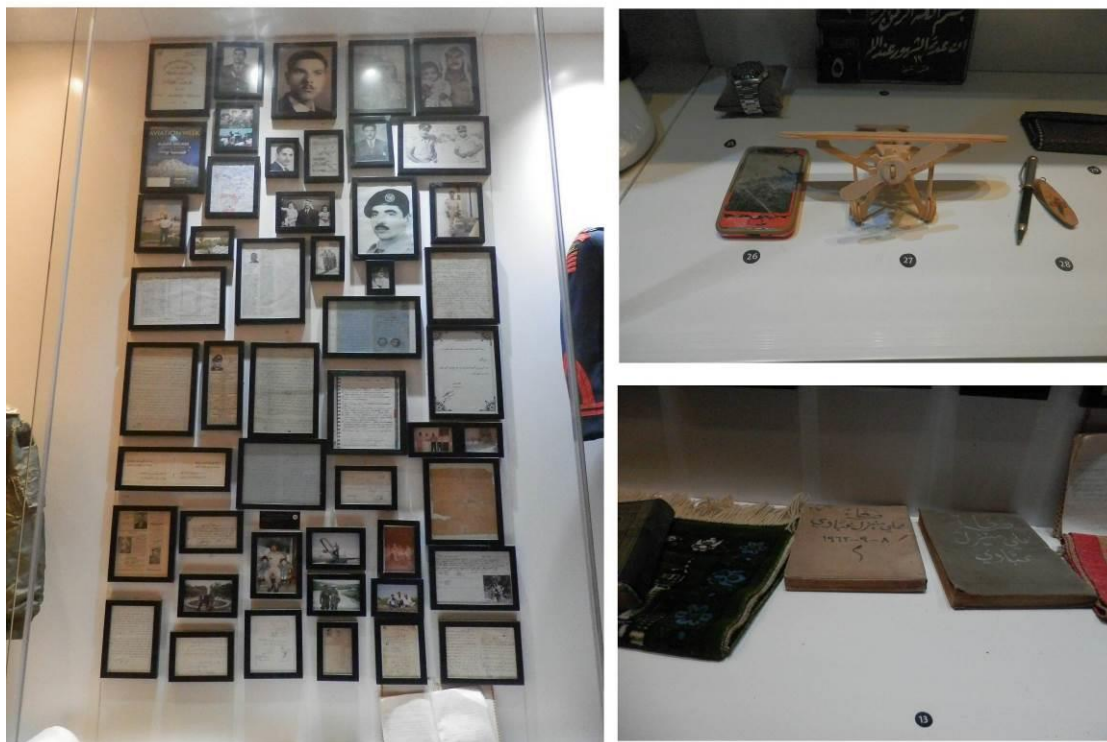
Figure 10. Exhibits in the martyrs' possessions closet

Placing real exhibits in this section has the discursive significance of levelling the modality balance between the real and ideal exhibits in each space of the Museum. This relative balance has been observed in all spaces inside and outside the Museum as no space displays solely real exhibits, or unreal ones. What is more, these real exhibits construct the Given information known to the Jordanian visitors who are familiar with the significance of these possessions; especially that they, and their captions, reveal the identities of their former owners who are the sons of well-known Jordanian families and tribes. Within the context of the Memorial Museum, these personal possessions have turned into artefacts which suggest 'the evocative power of objects, whether imaginative or emotive, that enlists them as bearers of both the form and content of life narratives' (Albano 2007, 18). Similar to the case of martyrs' uniform in the Lower Level, these possessions are 'performative narratives' (Schiffrin 2003) which construct a strong Bonding relationship between the Jordanian visitors of the Museum who regard them as commemorating their martyrs too.

6.4 The Upper Level Space: The Kings' Hall

At the end of the ascending ramp of 'Story of a Nation, Story of Humanity' gallery, the visitor arrives to the Upper-Level of the of the Martyr's Memorial Museum. This level makes the penultimate space: 'the Kings' Hall'. The hall encompasses the least number of exhibits in the Museum compared to the previous two ones. The exhibits involve a selected collection of the military uniforms and personal possessions of the monarchs of modern Jordan. The exhibits are displayed in large transparent glass lockers, and each contains a traditional dress or a military

uniform and few possessions of one monarch. The possessions vary in their types and functions; so, we find swords, pistols, ornaments, or pairs of shoes (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. A view of from 'the Kings' Hall'

The semiotic resources of this space construct the coherence of the Museum spatial-texts which commemorates Jordanian martyrs. One of the glass-lockers involves a military uniform and the personal arms and possessions of King Abdullah I, the grandfather of the current King and the first ruler (and 'the founder') of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. King Abdullah I was considered a martyr. He was assassinated on the 20th of July, 1951, by a lone-gunman on the steps of *Al-Aqsa* Mosque in Jerusalem while he was entering the mosque to attend the Friday Prayers. This event has been constantly emphasized in Jordan as a proof of the Hashemites' historic, and legitimate, role as the custodians of one of the holiest shrines of Islam: *Al-Aqsa* Mosque. The exhibits of this space communicate this ideology by constructing a Bonding relationship between the Jordanian, and Arab, visitors and the Hashemite monarchs who have dedicated their lives for the Palestinian Cause.

The space of 'the Kings' Hall' is characterized by its weak Binding (or 'unboundness') as there are no spatial boundaries between the different exhibits; providing the visitors with a sense of expansiveness and freedom after passing through the previous Bound spaces in the Lower and Intermediate Levels. The visitors have more freedom of movement in this space but they are not permitted to physically interact with the real exhibits which are framed inside the glass-lockers. To level the modality balance between the real and unreal (or the ideal), this space involves a painting and a copy of the entire Quran written in small font; both are fixed on the front wall of the Hall.

The Kings' Hall space is characterized by its reliance on natural sunlight by virtue of the large glass walls which separate between the Hall and the roof garden (the Martyrs' Square) that is located on the adjacent roof the Memorial building (see Figure 12). This framing is suggestive to the narrative path of the Memorial site as it signals the end of the ascending journey of ordinary visitors and the conclusion of the spatial-texts of martyrdom and the story of modern

Jordan as narrated by the aforementioned spaces and exhibits in the Museum. This argument is supported by the fact that only high-profile guests and visitors can get access to the roof garden space or write their impressions about their visit to the Memorial in the Visitors' Memorial Record located in a regally-furnished office adjacent to the Kings' Hall.
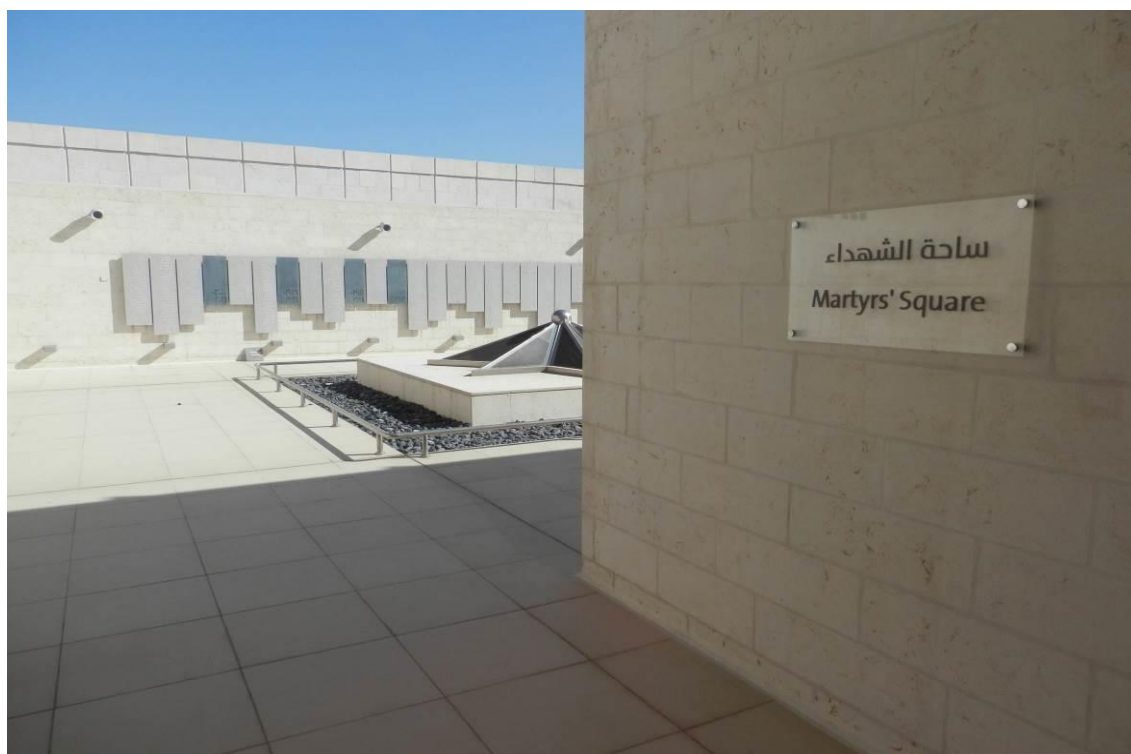

Figure 12. The 'Martyrs' Square', or the roof garden of the Museum (Note 3)

6.5 The Roof Space: the Martyrs' Square

As its name implies, the 'Martyrs' Square' involves lists of the names of all Jordanian soldiers who fell in the different wars, battles, events, and in duty since the independence of Jordan. These lists are engraved on black and grey marble plaques hanged on the interior walls of the square. In the centre of the square, lies the seven-points-star skylight which is located over 'the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier' (see Figure 13). The square involves also a small garden, and at its centre, there is an olive tree (named 'the Tree of Life'). The tree is watered by the visitors, especially the King, during the ceremonies held in the square in national days and events (see Figure 14).
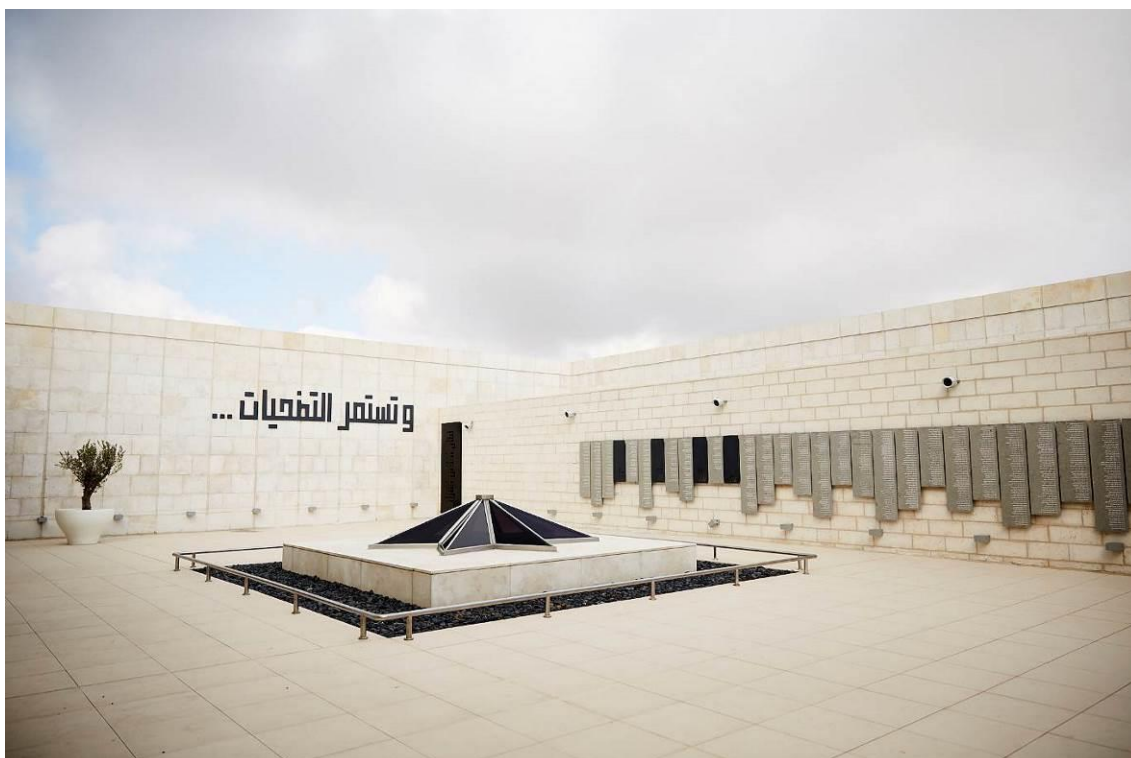
Figure 13. The 'Martyrs' Square', or the roof of the Museum (Note 4)

The 'Martyrs' Square' is a restricted space. Nevertheless, it opens occasionally for high-profile visitors and organized trips. Furthermore, the square is used as a ceremonial space on national days and events. The most important ceremony is the one organized on the Day of the Army (10th of June) and the Arabization of the Jordanian Army Command (1st of March) which are annually attended by the King himself (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. King Abdullah II is attending a ceremony in the Martyrs' Square and watering the sacred 'Tree of Life'

Apart from the martyrs' names, the garden, and the olive-tree, this space does not display any other exhibits. However, this space continues the narrative path of the spatial-texts of the entire Memorial site. This framed and unbound space is meant to signify the ultimate stage in the ascending journey that started from the main ceremonial entrance, up the gradual stairs to the top of the hill and the Memorial, and then the gradual ascending inside the Memorial's Museum. The whole ascending journey is recognized as a symbolic journey that resembles the ascendance of the spirit of the martyr to its final abode in Heavens. Being framed to control access to this 'Heaven'; only a martyr (defined by their names) is permitted to this space in order to be commemorated and immortalized. Accordingly, both the martyrs' names and the garden are meant to make the 'final chapter' in the spatial-texts of the Martyr's Memorial. In terms of modality, as this space epitomizes Heavens; so, it constructs another ideal, or unreal, semiotic resource. Still, the lists of the names of the real Jordanian martyrs make the Given information which would level the balance between the real and the ideal in this space. What is more, the engraved names of the Jordanian martyrs construct the most important Bonding relationship between the Martyr's Memorial and Jordanian visitors who come to the Memorial with the hope to read the immortalized names of their beloved relatives and acquaintances who fell martyrs in defence of Jordan and peace.

7. Discussion: The Spatial-Discourse of the Martyr's Memorial

The spatial presentation above demonstrates that the different spaces and exhibits in the Martyr's Memorial and Museum are designed to reproduce meanings, narratives, and

ideologies in the form of coherent spatial-texts which narrate the story of modern Jordan and its armed forces. These spatial-texts communicate a spatial discourse that semiotically epitomizes the legacy of the Jordanian army and idealise its martyrs (*see* El-Sharif 2021). As a memorial site, the Martyr's Memorial reconstructs the different stages of the history of modern Jordan, especially the Great Arab Revolt and the Arab-Israeli conflict, to one official commemorating narrative that is reproduced from the spatial discourse of martyrdom and military life. This narrative is constructed and conveyed multimodally in the Memorial within spiritual and Islamic discourse that is materialised through the architectural design and the spatial arrangements of the semiotic resources. The most prominent aspects of this spiritual and Islamic framework are the 'iconology' of the *Kaaba*-like iconography, and the rhythmic employment of semiotic 'visual metaphors' (the 'ascending journeying' and the 'martyrs as a source of light' metaphors).

The iconology of the Martyr's Memorial is conveyed through a distinctive architectural design that reflects a universally-familiar practice that connotes ideas of return to God through an experience of pilgrimage. The erection of the Memorial at the top of a hill communicates to the passer-by, or the commuters in the area, that the Memorial is a stimulating destination; it is a place to visit, rather than a place to walk by (Macalister 2019, 20). The journey to the Memorial may require at least thirty-minutes from the gates of the Sport City, and it involves ascending one-hundred steps in a journey that is meant to resemble the ascension of the spirit of the martyr to Heaven. All these challenges are meant to resemble Muslims' one-in-life pilgrimage to *Kaaba*, in Mecca, the holiest place on earth according to Muslims. Additionally, the salience of the Memorial and its distinctive design make it even appealing to the non-Jordanian visitor who is interested to sporadically learn about the Arab-Islamic culture and heritage summarised in one space as such memorial sites make 'complex references and cultural heritage markers' (Abousnnouga and Machin 2010a: 238).

Following the iconology of the Martyr's Memorial as a symbolic representation of pilgrimage to Mecca, the symbolic journey towards the Memorial at the top of the hill makes a pivotal theme of the Memorial's spatial-discourse. The ascending journeying 'visual metaphor' is perceived and experienced by the visitors starting from the ceremonial entrance, and the ladder of stairs, until the end at the Memorial roof (the Martyrs' Square). Here, the metaphorical journey unfolds both spiritual and ideological interpretations that the spirit of the martyr rests in a superior place in Heavens (*see* El-Sharif 2021). On the basis of a universally-recognised belief, martyrs and martyrdom are represented enjoying a divine higher status over everything terrestrial and temporal because, as it is universally acknowledged, good is up (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Such spatial metaphoric conceptualization is perceived in several war, or martyrs, memorials around the world such as the 'Shrine of Remembrance' in Melbourne, the Dumlupinar Martyrs Memorial in Turkey, and the Martyr's Monument in Algiers. All these memorials are erected at the top of a hill and towering over the heights of the adjacent areas; so, visitors should follow an ascending journey towards them (*see* Sumartojo 2017; André 2019); What is more, this interpretation is accentuated in the logo of the Martyr's Memorial (which is placed at the two stone-columns at the ceremonial entrance). The logo involves the name of the Memorial in Arabic (Sarh AlShaheed) inscribed in Muhaqqaq script that was created by Arab

Calligraphers in the Abbasid era. This inscription is used for grand and imposing matters as the typographic treatment in the logo shows a vanishing stroke sides; then, slowly it evolves and accumulate in the middle (see Figure 15 below).

Figure 15. The logo of the Martyr's Memorial

The interpretation of this treatment of the logo - as dictated by its designer - is that:

"… in the crowded centre there is the 'battlefield'. Then, suddenly it creates that astonishing escalated ladder to the sky, as a visual interpretation of the Martyr's journey from earth to the Heavens." (Al-Azaat 2019).

Accordingly, the association between martyrdom and high status is a major theme in a martyr's memorial spatial discourse (*see* El-Sharif 2021), and it aims to ascribe to the martyrs a higher status that suggests "loftiness, as opposed to grounded, or even lowly or of the earth" (Abousnnouga and Machin 2010b: 145); or that that such memorials are erected high to maintain both physical and symbolic social distance to mark them out as special (Sumartojo 2017: 159).

Additionally, the spatial-discourse of the Memorial accentuates the legacy of the ruling Hashemite dynasty by bestowing on them the same superior status of the martyrs because of their historical achievements and their historical role as the guardians of the Islamic and Christian Holy Shrines in Jerusalem; despite the fact that only one monarch of the Hashemites is recognized as a martyr. Still, and as it is perceived from its spatial arrangement, the 'Kings' Hall' spatially reproduces and accentuates this ideology as it occupies the Upper Level of the Memorial. Furthermore, it is weakly framed from the Martyrs' Square, and this allows it to be naturally illuminated through the large transparent glass that separate the Hall from Square. This 'unbound' space conveys a sense of freedom and liberty that characterise the Hashemite rulership.

The spatial metaphoric conceptualization of the martyrs as *sources of light* is one of the most rhythmic semiotic resources inside the Museum. The interior spaces of the Museum are characterized by reducing levels of illumination to provide an atmosphere of solemnity and reverence. Meanwhile, the small quantity of light makes the visitor of the space feels more

Bound because illumination makes "the occupant more conscious of the volume and depth of a space as well as its height and width" (Stinglin 2008, 437). Such spatial organization is found in many Museums where spaces are strongly bound to the deep black space and illumination coming only from the projections; for instance, the Museu da Língua Portuguesa in Brazil (*see* (Ravelli and Heberle 2016)

In addition, depicting the tomb of the soldier as a source of light provides the visitors with constant experiences of *binary oppositions* between the reality of death and the idealism of martyrdom. Martyrdom is epitomized as eternal light of 'divinity' and 'hope' that beats the gloom of death. In terms of their thematic development, the juxtaposition between light and darkness in a three-dimensional space is in contrast with that found in paintings where "light, whatever its meaning, is in the area of the Given, the taken for granted, the now/present. 'Light' is Given, 'darkness' New" (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006, 192). Within the discourse of martyrdom, the gloom of death is the Given and taken for granted, and the light of martyrdom is the New. These spiritual experiences guide the visitors through a series of interpretations about the meaning of life and the value of scarifying one's own life for their homeland. These sacrifices are depicted as immortal beacons which guide the following generations in their life (*see* El-Sharif 2021).

On the other hand, the 'selective' themes and narratives assembled in the Martyr's Memorial could communicate suggestive readings because they are principally assembled to express one-side ideological narratives of the story of the modern Hashemite Kingdom and the development of its armed forces. In fact, the visitors are hesitantly invited to be involved in the interpretation of these spatial-texts via brief written captions displayed next to the exhibits. However, these selective arrangement and narratives suggests other parallel manifold, overlapping, and occasionally contested meanings, ideologies, and identities. In this regard, the interactant visitors can recognise the nuances of meanings and ideologies unfolded during tracing the sequences of events and incidents which are not explicitly communicated in the displayed exhibits or the provided narratives. These nuances are mostly articulated when the visitors think about the association between the story of the establishment of Trans-Jordan Emirate on the aftermath of the Great Arab Revolt against the Muslim Ottomans in 1916 with the support of the non-Muslim British. Thus, the visitors can read how the Museum imparts the Jordanian state's mainstream view of the Ottomans as enemies; a view that is also consolidated in school curricula, media, and even drama. Furthermore, visitors may question the paucity of semiotic resources which narrate the joint-role of the regular Jordanian army and the Palestinian militant groups (*Fedayeen*) during the different historical episodes of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The exhibits of the Memorial Museum marginalize, if not overlook, that undeniable role, and they missed, intentionally or unintentionally, constructing a needed Bonding relationship between the two most important ethnic constituents of Jordanian identity: the Trans-Jordanians and the Palestinians. According to CDA traditions, the exclusion, or marginalisation, of participants in a discourse may be intentional and ideologically motivated. Within the discourse of the Martyr's Memorial, there is an evident absence of referring to civil, and irregular, resistance or civilian martyrs. Despite that very few Jordanian women and children (or families) are represented in few pictures (most of which portray the suffering of the

Palestinian refugees during the Arab-Israeli wars), the actual effects of the several wars and battles, which Jordan fought, on Jordanian civilians are not depicted.

One possible justification of this marginalization, or overlooking, of civilians, or civil resistance, is that the Martyr's Memorial is basically designed to be a space of reconciliation and unification between the contested ideologies and identities which Jordanian citizens embrace as it is a primary function of museums is being sites of reconciliation, inclusiveness, and unification (*see* Martin and Stenglin 2007; Phillips, Woodham, and Hooper-Greenhill 2015; Smith and Foote 2017; Cole and Brooks 2017). Conversely, one may suggest that it is a primary function of memorial sites to provide evidence of a particular narrative against other contested and competing ones. As there are several narratives that marginalize, if not underestimate, the role of the Jordanian army during the Arab-Israeli wars. Thus, instead of being an emblem of shared values and consensus, the Martyr's Memorial aims to promote and privilege only the official Jordanian narrative. Here, such a justification is deemed understandable considering that memorial sites are often funded by higher political entities and elites or public agencies (Kosatica 2019, 161).

8. Conclusion

This study is an effort to advance growing interest in studies in spatial semiotics in a new cultural context. There are few studies which have embarked on study of three-dimensional spaces in Jordan from the perspectives of urban and architectural design; however, the study of these spaces from social semiotic perspectives is still unapproached. This study focuses on how social semiotic approaches to spatial discourse analysis make another tools to interpret and unfold the communicated meanings and ideologies in memorials and museums. By regarding a memorial's spaces and exhibits as spatial-texts, the interactant visitor can distinguish how memorials and museums make major institutions of identity and culture building. Memorials create a unifying 'social space' which enacts a discourse that reproduce social relationships between the different components of a society.

As one of the first studies on the topic, the present study has some limitations. For example, the case-study is limited to one three-dimensional structure. Therefore, further research, on a larger scale, is recommended to study and compare between the semiotic resources found in different cultures. Moreover, this study is limited to the spatial discourse of martyrs' memorials and military museums. The researcher recommends future research to consider other 'genera' of three-dimensional spatial-texts; such as the spaces of education, health and recreation, and worship.

Acknowledgement

Sponsoring information

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Notes

Note 1. A Captain-pilot in the Royal Jordanian Air Force who was brutally executed by ISIS after been captured in Syria.

Note 2. A Captain in the Jordanian Special Forces and was fallen in an anti-terrorist operation in Irbid (north of Jordan).

Note 3. This picture is taken from behind the framing glass between 'the Kings' Hall' and the roof of the Memorial. The picture shows also part of the seven-pointed-star skylight that provides natural sunlight to 'the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier' beneath it.

Note 4. The picture shows the lists of the soldiers' names and the glass skylight that illuminates 'the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier'. The phrase written on the background wall reads 'and the sacrifices continue…'

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