

THE ESSENCE OF EXISTENCE: AZ-ZAMAKHSHARI'S ONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Annotation: *This article scientifically analyzes Mahmud Az-Zamakhshari's views on existence and its essence, the transience of existence, its types, causality, and the interconnectedness of divine will from the perspective of Islamic philosophy and theology.*

Key words: *theology, ontology, philosophy, temporality, relativity, causality, majesty, honor, existence, nonexistence.*

Ontology is a branch of philosophy that studies existence and its essence. In the history of Islamic philosophy, this issue has often been studied in connection with theology. In particular, the ontological views of Mahmud al-Zamakhshari play an important role in deeply analyzing the essence of existence from the perspective of Islamic philosophy. Zamakhshari explained existence in relation to Allah's attribute of creation. According to him, existence is the result of Allah's will and power, meaning that all beings were brought into existence from nothingness by Allah. In his commentary "Al-Kashshaf", he interpreted the issues of existence and creation based on verse 82 of Surah Yasin ("When He wills something, He only says to it, "Be", and it is") [1]. He connected existence to Allah's supreme power. In his interpretation of this concept, Zamakhshari emphasized divine will, causality, and the continuity of creation.

In Zamakhshari's views, Allah and existence are directly interconnected. According to him, all beings are phenomena that reflect Allah's divine attributes. However, the essence of existence does not equate precisely to the essence of Allah. Here, Zamakhshari adheres to the fundamental principle of the Mu'tazilite school, which states that Allah's absolute attribute of creation is central – existence is formed through Allah's will and power. Through this perspective, Zamakhshari linked the cause of all beings to Allah's will.

The transience of existence: existence is not a permanent phenomenon but a temporary and ever-changing state. Zamakhshari substantiated this idea in his commentary "Al-Kashshaf" using Quranic verses, such as verse 68 of Surah Az-Zumar: "Everything originates from Allah, and when the Creator wills, it returns to nonexistence" [1].

Zamakhshari divided existence into two main types: **Necessary existence** ("**wujūd al-wājib**") – existence exclusive to Allah. This existence does not depend on any external cause to exist. Zamakhshari described Allah as the necessary existence, emphasizing that His existence is logical and indispensable. **Possible existence** ("**wujūd al-mumkin**") – the existence of created beings. This type of existence depends on Allah's will and power, meaning these beings can either exist or not exist.

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According to Zamakhshari, the connection between possible existence and necessary existence is realized through Allah's creative power. This concept reflects the distinctions between the Mu'tazilite and Ash'arite schools of thought in Islamic philosophy. While the Mu'tazilites emphasized human intellect and free will, they studied existence not only through divine will and causality but also through the logical analysis of human reason.

The principle of causality played an important role in Zamakhshari's ontology. According to him, existence and its essence were intrinsically linked to Allah's will and power. Additionally, he explained causality through reasoning: every event and being had a cause, but the ultimate source of all causes was Allah [1].

In Az-Zamakhshari's works, the concepts of existence and nonexistence are typically explained based on Quranic verses. For example, he considered nonexistence as the state preceding creation. According to him, nonexistence is the initial condition of beings, while existence is the reality brought into being through divine power.

Zamakhshari viewed existence not as a permanent phenomenon, but as a temporary state. According to him, the existence of worldly beings is subject to Allah's will and the limits of time. For instance, the existence of humans and the creatures of nature is not eternal; they can return to nonexistence. From this perspective, the temporality and relativity of existence held a special place in Zamakhshari's thought. He interpreted this idea based on the Quranic verses from Surah "Ar-Rahman", 26-27: "All that is on the earth is perishable. But the Face of your Lord, full of majesty and honor, will remain forever" [2].

When analyzing the structure of the world, Zamakhshari acknowledged its limited and bounded nature in space. While recognizing the infinite power of Allah, he explained that Allah is capable of creating other worlds beyond our own. Furthermore, the thinker clarified that even in his time, the Earth was in constant motion, as existence itself is in motion.

According to Az-Zamakhshari, even when a person stops moving, it is still considered a form of movement, as it refers to the body remaining in one place for a brief moment, which is essentially a motion. The following reflections of the scholar Al-Ashari are explained as such: "The movements of a person in motion are accidental; "stopping" pertains only to speech: when the body stays in one place, it is said to "stop in one place". However, stopping has a meaning different from movement" [3].

In another part of his work, Al-Ashari explained an important idea of Az-Zamakhshari: "Movement is existence, movement is striving... the existence of another place is the movement of the body within it". It is evident that conclusions related to the field of physics are linked to the metaphysics of the thinker. According to the Mu'tazilites, objects are in a state of "motion" when they are created by Allah. However, it should be emphasized that, according to Az-Zamakhshari, Allah does not destroy and recreate the world; instead, He preserves nature in its original state while changing its form.

In conclusion, it can be said that Mahmud al-Zamakhshari's ontological views are an important part of Islamic philosophy. He analyzed issues such as existence and nonexistence, necessary and possible existence, causality, and temporality based on Quranic verses. Zamakhshari connected existence to Allah's power and will, employing a dialectical and logical approach to explain the essence of beings. His ontological views reflect not only the core principles of the Mu'tazilite school but also his significant contribution to the development of Islamic theology and philosophical thought. His ideas remain highly relevant for contemporary philosophy and theology research.

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