

The Primacy of Existence as Becoming

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According to the traditional philosophical system, a thing is either essence or existence in terms of primacy and objective truth. And whoever says in the primacy of existence (asalat al-wujud) considers the essence as a mental conception, and whoever says in the primacy of the essence considers the existence as mentally abstracted.

However, the term existence has a severe confusion in the meanings among the philosophers, to the extent that a group considered it to be the most visible of things, and others considered it to be hidden of things. In terms of appearance and invisibility, it was said that what was said of primacy and its negation.

Mulla Sadra Shirazi is considered the most prominent of those who adopt the concept of the primacy of existence, and two meanings in existence have been used for functional purposes, although between them, there is an apparent difference and opposition, one of which we called (actual existence), where existence is an act, not entity, and the other is self-existence, where existence is a subject or entity. The meaning of actual existence is the actuality, being, and its synonyms of reality, realization (tahaqquq), actualization (tahassul), particularization, and personalization, which is realized by the direct presence of our detection. Its relationship to essence is that it expresses the existence of essence, its affirmation, its realization, its occurrence, and its becoming state.

These nomenclatures are synonymous and make essence and existence a kind of external union, where existence exists within itself, and essence is united with it, and it becomes true that the essence is

present by the existence accidentally.

As for the meaning of self-existence, it is the same essence when it is externally realized. That is, when a thing is mental, it is called essence or quiddity, and when it is external, it is called existence; therefore, between the external and the mind is a kind of resemblance for a thing, meaning that between essence and existence according to this meaning of similarity and imitation, in which the essence in mind is a subordinate shadow and imitator of what is in existence externally.

However, if we consider existence similar to the essence externally, and if it is in the mind of another, then the dispute over the primacy of either of them leads to a verbal conflict, for the essence here is neither a genus nor species, but rather that reality with a personal identity expressed by the self or identity. Those who claim the primacy of the essence and the deeming of existence only see the negation of the reality of the actual existence expressed in the being and actualization, and they do not want to deny the self-existence expressed by the personification of the self.

With this, it can be determined that what we have come to know about self-existence or the self-diagnosed may give the impression that we consider the external object to be a self that includes stability and stillness, while the possibilities that occur, or natural beings, are not subject to such a criterion.

Thus, the eventual possibility can be considered not merely a self-existence in the usual sense, but its reality as expressing "becoming-existence." It is composed of two related matters:

One of them can be expressed as a substance or an object that cannot be determined in isolation from the other matter. The second is that this indefinite thing is in a state of continuous and constantly changing actual existence, so it is in a becoming process in which the actual existence is renewed permanently and does not stop at any limit.

The process of becoming the essence of the external object is determined, and the self arises, or what we call self-existence. Without it, things would not have an essence in the sense that we perceive or that without the becoming existence, the world - if it exists - would be something other than what we know.

Therefore, we are not faced with two elements, such as essence and existence, but three elements are included in the external subject as follows:

First: is existential objectivity, which is perceptible according to mental analysis. It can be expressed in hyle and the material, as it is the origin on which the process of regenerations proceeds, and I do not say forms, since the latter arises from the action of the two things together, the object and becoming.

Second: Becoming, which is the uninterrupted renewal of the being of the object and its existence. From the logical point of view, Becomingity cannot be imagined without being contained in that existential objectivity. In opposition, this is not true, as the mind can imagine the existence of a thing without a becoming existence, while the conception of the becoming existence without something is neither possible nor reasonable.

Third: is the self, which is a composite of existential objectivity and its becoming. If one of these two elements was missing, the subject would not be as it is, and the witnessed world will be in peril.

Thus we know that primacy is not for existence or essence in their traditional sense, or what we express as actual and self-existence, but rather it is for what we call (**existence as becoming**).

But the becoming existence of natural beings on different levels in terms of their open capabilities, the most flexible of which are those of man; his identity is not determined by his present personality but has other capabilities that make him turn from what he is, rise and fall

without elimination.

Therefore, many Western thinkers have preferred to attribute man to exist without other beings, which they considered to be mere static entities, despite the disparity that occurs between flexibility and steadfastness among these beings, but in all cases, it is not comparable to the possibilities open to humans. Heidegger - for example - sees that man is an existence that is always thrown forward, Anticipating himself according to the new possibilities, so it is difficult to understand and compare mankind to other beings, as apparent from what modern human studies suffer from.

Translated by Zaid Kanady

The reference

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