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## THE CONCEPT OF BEING AND THE PHILOSOPHICAL ESSENCE OF ONTOLOGY

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**Abstract.** This thesis provides a comprehensive analysis of the philosophical content of the concept of existence, the subject of ontology, and the primary forms of existence. The role of existence in human thinking, its manifestation as objective reality, and its inextricable connection with nature, society, and human life are highlighted. Also, the dialectic of existence and non-existence, the relationship between material and spiritual existence are analyzed from a philosophical point of view. The thesis pays special attention to the historical development of ontological views, the interpretation of the issue of existence in ancient and modern philosophy.

**Key words:** existence, ontology, matter, reality, substance, non-existence, material existence, spiritual existence, dialectics, objective reality, philosophical analysis.

**Login.** In the history of philosophy, the problem of existence is considered one of the oldest and most fundamental issues. Since the beginning of man's consciousness, he has been thinking about the origin of the universe, its structure, the laws of development, and the forms of existence. The question of existence is one of the central themes of human thought, playing a crucial role not only in understanding the essence of the universe but also in determining a person's place and function within it. Therefore, research on existence continues continuously, from ancient mythological representations to modern scientific and philosophical concepts.

Knowledge about existence plays a crucial role in shaping the human worldview. It allows a person to understand the environment, evaluate reality, and understand the meaning of life. From a philosophical perspective, understanding existence helps a person understand the relationships between the material and spiritual worlds and perceive the laws of nature and society. In this regard, the study of the problem of existence is not only of theoretical importance but also serves as an important methodological basis for human practical activity, social relations, and spiritual maturity.

**Body**



Ontology is the doctrine of existence and is considered one of the most important and fundamental branches of philosophy. "Ontos" means being, "logos" means doctrine. Ontology studies the essence, origin, forms of existence, and patterns of development of being. It plays an important role in the formation of a person's theoretical concepts of the world, nature, society, and themselves.

The concept of existence encompasses all existing things, events, and phenomena. It is not limited only to the material world but also includes spiritual, social, and spiritual reality. From a philosophical perspective, being is the most general expression of objective reality, referring to all things and processes that exist independently of human consciousness.

Within the framework of ontology, various forms of existence—natural existence, human existence, social existence, and spiritual existence—are analyzed in their interconnectedness. This analysis allows a person to gain a deeper understanding of the structure of the universe, its internal interconnectedness, and the laws of development. In this regard, ontology is of great methodological importance as the theoretical foundation of philosophical knowledge.

Ancient thinkers interpreted the essence of existence in different ways. They put forward important philosophical ideas for their time regarding the origin of the universe, its structure, and the source of existence. These views later served as the basis for the formation of ontological doctrines. In the worldview of ancient civilizations, the primary source of existence was linked to specific elements of nature or cosmic forces.

In particular, in Zoroastrianism, the basis of existence is associated with fire and light, and fire is interpreted as a symbol of purity, life, and divine power. In the Avesta, fire appears not only as a natural element but also as a symbol of goodness and truth. In these views, the universe is depicted as an arena of constant struggle between the forces of good and evil.

The ancient Greek philosopher Democritus put forward the idea that the universe consists of atoms and voids. According to his atomistic doctrine, all things in the universe consist of tiny, indivisible particles—atoms—whose movement and interaction create various bodies and phenomena. This idea subsequently exerted a great influence on the development of the natural sciences.

Socrates, on the other hand, linked the question of existence to human knowledge and moral perfection. According to him, the understanding of true existence is realized through knowledge, because knowledge leads a person to



the truth. Socrates' principle of "Know thyself" demonstrates that the essence of universal existence can be understood through the knowledge of a person's inner world. Thus, the views of ancient thinkers on existence served as an important theoretical foundation for the development of ontology.

Eastern thinkers also paid special attention to the problem of existence and expressed important philosophical thoughts about its essence, origin, and forms of existence. They analyzed existence not only from a natural and material perspective, but also from a spiritual-spiritual and divine perspective. In Eastern philosophy, views on existence are often formed in close connection with cosmological, metaphysical, and ethical teachings.

In particular, according to Abu Nasr al-Farabi, the first being is the eternal and eternal Creator. In his teaching, all beings originate from the "First Cause," and all existence exists by the will and power of this supreme source. Al-Farabi interpreted existence as a system with a specific order and hierarchy, substantiating the organic connection between the material and spiritual worlds. According to him, the laws of existence can be understood through human reason and knowledge.

Al-Biruni, on the other hand, defines existence as the universal basis of all things and phenomena. He attached great importance to the study of the laws of existence through observation, experimentation, and scientific analysis of nature and the universe. In Biruni's views, existence appears as a system in continuous motion and change. His scientific legacy is significant for combining empirical and rational approaches to understanding existence.

Thus, the views of Eastern thinkers on existence made a significant contribution to the development of ontological teachings and created an important theoretical basis for human understanding of the world and self.

In philosophy, existence is divided into the following main forms:

Natural existence encompasses the natural world that exists independently of human consciousness. This form includes the universe, the Earth, animate and inanimate nature, and natural processes and phenomena. Natural existence constitutes the material basis of all other forms of existence and manifests as the environment of human existence.

Social existence refers to the complex of human relationships, social institutions, and economic, political, and cultural processes. This form of being is formed as a result of human activity and reflects the laws of societal



development. The existence of society has a historical character and changes and develops over time.

Human existence represents a person's biological, social, and spiritual existence. Man is simultaneously a part of nature and a member of society. Therefore, human existence is manifested in the unity of material life, consciousness, thinking, and social activity.

Spiritual existence encompasses human consciousness, thinking, knowledge, ideas, values, beliefs, and spiritual experiences. Although it has no material form, it exerts a strong influence on the life of society and the individual. Science, art, morality, and religion are important manifestations of spiritual existence.

Virtual reality is a new form of existence formed as a result of the development of modern information technologies. It is manifested through the digital environment, the Internet space, artificial intelligence, and computer models. Today, virtual reality is becoming increasingly important in human education, communication, and work activities.

Thus, these forms of existence are inextricably linked and represent the existence of the universe as a unified system.

In the context of modern digital civilization, virtual reality is gaining particular importance. As a result of the rapid development of information and communication technologies, internet networks, artificial intelligence, and digital platforms, a new reality is emerging in human life. Virtual reality is a digital reflection of the real material world and is widely used in various fields of human activity - education, science, economics, medicine, culture, and communication processes.

Computer technologies are creating an artificial environment for humans, creating entirely new forms of perceiving reality. For example, virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), the metaverse, and digital simulations are taking human interaction with the environment to a new level. This fundamentally changes the forms of human knowledge acquisition, information exchange, and social activity.

At the same time, virtual reality is raising new philosophical questions on the agenda. In particular, issues such as the boundary between the real and virtual worlds, digital identity, information security, and the impact of artificial intelligence on human thinking are becoming important objects of modern ontological analysis. In this sense, virtual reality is emerging not only as a technological phenomenon but also as a new philosophical reality that requires a rethinking of human ways of perceiving reality.



## Conclusion

The concept of existence serves as a vital theoretical foundation for understanding man's place in the universe, the essence of existence, and the meaning of life. It allows a person to deepen their understanding of nature, society, and relationships with themselves. By understanding existence, a person achieves an understanding of the internal laws of reality, cause-and-effect relationships, and developmental processes. In this regard, knowledge about existence plays an important role in the formation of a person's worldview, thinking, and life position.

Ontology is a fundamental philosophical field that deepens human thinking. It creates the theoretical foundation of philosophical knowledge by analyzing the origin, structure, forms, and developmental patterns of existence. In the context of modern science and digital civilization, the importance of ontological analysis is increasing, becoming an important methodological tool for understanding the relationships between material, spiritual, and virtual existence. In this sense, ontology appears not only as a central branch of philosophical theory but also as an important intellectual foundation that serves to understand the development of man and society.

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