

## MAHMUD IBN UMAR AL-ZAMAKHSHARI AND HIS CONTRIBUTION AS A KEY FIGURE IN ISLAM

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
Al-Zamakhshari was a prolific scientist and wrote about fifty works on various fields of science. Twenty-five of them have survived to this day. Linguistics "Asas al-balagha" ("Fundamentals of Word Mastery", "Foundations of Eloquence"), "Al-Kashshaf" works in the Islamic world, which include his commentaries (tafsir) on the Holy Qur'an in 1134. The work "Al-Kashshaf" is recognized as the most perfect among the works related to Qur'anic interpretation by Orientalists and Arabic scholars. Therefore, this work is still used as a textbook in medicine in different countries of the world. The objective of this paper is to review previous studies dedicated to Mahmud al-Zamakhshari and his works, and to analyze the depth of his contributions.	Academic productivity, distance learning, higher education, e-learning tools

### Introduction

Abul Kasim Mahmud ibn Umar ibn Muhammad al-Khorazmi al-Zamakhshari was one of the leading scientists of his time. Zamakhshari perfectly mastered various fields of science, especially the Arabic language and literature, religious sciences, as well as the art of calligraphy, which was valued among scholars at that time. He learned from his teacher Abu Mudar Isfahani (died in Marv in 1113), a famous scholar in the field of language, vocabulary and literature. Al-Zamakhshari was born on the 27th day of Rajab 467 AH (March 18, 1075) in the city of Zamakhshar, located 26 km west of the city of Gorogli (now Tashkhovuz region of Turkmenistan) near Khorezm. The majority of scholars consider him to be of Persian origin. However, since the Turks formed the main part of Khorezm during this period, it becomes clear that he is a representative of the Turkish dynasty and served as imam in the mosque in Zamakhshar (Izharul-Haq, 2012).

Izharul-Haq (2012) reports that one of his legs was made of wood, and historians say: "One of his legs was made of wood, and because he was wearing his long jacket down, the people who saw him thought he was limping." He broke one of his legs after falling off the horse he was riding on the route to Bukhara. He was forced to have his broken leg amputated due to his serious injury. After that, his father decided that he was no longer fit for hard work and wanted to apprentice him to a tailor. However,

Mahmud, who grew up with a desire for knowledge from a young age, asked his father to send him to study at a madrasa. His father, noticing his son's passion and desire for science, grants his son's wish. Zamakhshari was interested in many fields of science and began to show his great talent among his peers. He began to thoroughly master the sciences taught in the madrasa, especially the Arabic language and literature, and religious sciences. Then, when he reaches a certain age, he goes to Bukhara in order to improve his knowledge and develop in all aspects. After finishing his studies in Bukhara, Zamakhshari spent several years in the service of the Khorezmshahs, worked as a secretary, and tried to get close to the rulers. However, when he did not find a position he had desired and did not receive proper attention according to his abilities, knowledge, and virtue, he traveled to other countries and hoped that his goals would be achieved (Munir Ahmad et al., 2019).

In 1118, Zamakhshari fell ill with a serious illness, and after recovering from this disease, he renounced the service of rulers, position and wealth, and determined to dedicate the rest of his life only to science and writing works. Undoubtedly, the service of his mentors was very important in Zamakhshari's ability to fully master the sciences of his time and reach the level of a scholar. One such mentor is Abu Mudar Mahmud ibn Jarir Dabbi Isfahani, a famous scholar in the field of language, vocabulary and literature. Isfahani also lived in Khorezm for some time. In Baghdad, Zamakhshari studied the science of hadith from famous scholars such as Abu Mansur Nasr Khorisi, Abu Saad Shaqqani, and Abul Khattab ibn Abul Batar. While in Makkah, he studied Nahw and fiqh from famous scholars such as Abu Bakr Abdullah ibn Talhat ibn Muhammad ibn Abdullah Yabiri Andalusi, Sheikh Sadid Hayyati, and the science of vocabulary from Abu Mansur Mawhub ibn Khadar Javaliqi (Lala, 2012). During his life, Zamakhshari visited Marv, Nishapur, Isfahan, Sham, Baghdad and Hejaz, and Makkah twice. The scientist continued his scientific work here, thoroughly studied the grammar and vocabulary of the Arabic language, as well as the dialects, proverbs, and customs of the local tribes, and collected various information about the geography of the region.

Az-Zamakhshari had many students and followers in different cities. It is no exaggeration to say that the past five years have been especially fruitful in the Holy Makkah. Makkah is not only a holy place of pilgrimage for Muslims, but also one of the centers of science and education of the Islamic world, where one could encounter the most influential representatives of science and education of that time, as well as seek students and disciples. Students were pleased to meet famous scholars such as al-Zamakhshari, who came to Makkah to pray, and to participate in lectures and discussions held in madrasahs of the city. As a result of these activities, al-Zamakhshari became the only scholar who received the most honorable title of "Jarullah" (Neighbor of Allah) in the Islamic world. Arab scholar al-Shaykh Muhammad Abu Zahro says that during his stay in Makkah, he spent his time in Baitullah ul-Haram, he was always surrounded by students and disciples interested in ethics, and fans of poetry and aphorisms (Atayeva et al., 2012).

Zamakhshari returned from Makkah and lived in Khorezm for several years and died on April 14, 1144. The great scholar Zamakhshari wrote more than fifty works on Arabic grammar, lexicology, literature, science of aruz, geography, tafsir, hadith and fiqh, most of which have reached current times.

## **Al-Zamakhshari's "Al Kashshaf"**

Among Zamakhshari's religious works, the most famous and widely spread around the world is his al-Kashshaf 'an haqa'iq al-tanzil (sometimes translated as The Discoverer of Revealed Truths) dedicated to his commentary on the Holy Qur'an ("Opening the eyes of closed truths in the Qur'an and narrations

by interpreting it"). This work is abbreviated as "Kashshaf". It is unique among commentaries because the Holy Qur'an is also analyzed from a philological point of view. According to the sources, Zamakhshari wrote this rare work in two stages. When he first went to Arabia for the Hajj pilgrimage in his youth, he began to interpret the surah "Baqara" and presented it to the emir of Makkah. Mahmud Zamakhshari's ability to show the miracle of the Qur'an and the height of his maturity amazes him. Atayeva et al. (2012) states that Mahmud Zamakhshari continued the work of tafsir only after mastering all the requirements for the science of tafsir and successfully completed it during his second trip to Mecca, between 1130-1134 (Munir Ahmad, 2019). Taking into account his age, Allama changed the way of writing tafsir in order to save time, he wrote the rest of the work "Kashshof" more concisely compared to the tafsir of Surah "Baqara" that he originally wrote. Despite the fact that it is more concise, the scholar wrote it in the style of "If you say so, I will say this" in the form of a question and answer, taking into account all possibilities. This work is considered one of the most necessary books for many Muslim people in Arab countries, especially scholars. Students of the world-famous Al-Azhar University in Cairo study the Qur'an and its interpretation based on al-Zamakhshari's work "Al-Kashshaf" and use it as an important program. Al-Zamakhshari's great contribution is that he made good use of many sources that were popular at that time regarding tafsir, hadith, fiqh, ilm al-qiraat, nahw, adab and other sciences and enriched his interpretation with them, which have not reached current times due to various reasons. For this reason, modern researchers can get information and insight about these lost works only from al-Zamakhshari's "Al-Kashshaf". This is of great importance from a scientific point of view. Another clear proof that "Al-Kashshaf" is very popular is the large number of manuscript copies, several commentaries written on the work, and its recent reprinting in Arab countries. Karl Brockelman, a German orientalist, estimates that there are about a hundred manuscripts of "Al-Kashshaf" and more than twenty commentaries and interpretations written by him in various manuscript selections of the world (Syamsuddin, 2019).

## **Al-Zamakhshari's "Asas al balagha"**

Mahmud Zamakhshari's another work "Asas al-balagha" ("Foundations of eloquence") is devoted to lexicology. It discusses the eloquence and perfection of the Arabic language. In order to express thoughts with beautiful phrases and words, to skillfully use the vocabulary, a person should be well aware of eloquence and a way of speech. For this, it was necessary to use the word correctly, in its place, to speak and write according to the rules. In this work, the main parts of literature, phraseological phrases, ways of their practical application are deeply analyzed (Atayeva et al., 2012).

## **Conclusion**

In his moral views, Al-Zamakhshari, while thinking about the status and morals of people of different classes and professions of his time in society, regardless of the type and identity of that person (king or ordinary person), first of all, he discusses the need to have good manners and humanity and says, "Silk clothes cannot adorn a person who is not adorned with good qualities and good manners." The scholar also noted that the culture of speech, that is, the beauty of words, is a means of politeness for a person. In his moral and educational views, Al-Zamakhshari also expresses his valuable thoughts about respecting one's elders, raising a child and the role of parents in it. When parents are to raise a child to be good-natured, polite, hardworking, intelligent, first of all, "they ought to always keep the child under control, without pampering them beyond the norm" says the scholar.

Zamakhshari's works were published in German, French and other languages. Contemporaries Abusamad Muhammad Sam'ani, Yagut Hamavi, Jamaluddin Qifti Zamakhshari highly appreciated the work. Some aspects of Zamakhshari's work have been studied by Eastern (A. Z. Validiy, Muhammad Kozimbek), Uzbek (A. Rustamov, U. Tursunov, U. Uvatov, Z. Islamov, M. Hakimjonov, etc.), Russian (Krachkovsky, Borovkov, etc.), studied by Western scientists (Brockelman, Zayonchkovsky, etc.).

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