Title: Ghazali's Doubt And The Redemption Of The Correlation Between Faith and Reason
Author: Salameh, Doumit, PhD.
Institutional Affiliation: Chairperson, Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Notre Dame University. Lebanon

Paper Abstract:
Ghazali's doubt may have its roots in Greek thought, but it clearly has its cure in the Qur'an Itself. Accordingly, intellectual certainty and real existence, though Ghazali was led to believe that they were independent the one from the other, presented themselves to him in the Qur'an as relying one upon the other to express, each in its respective domain, divine signs of the unquestionable existence of God. After all, and throughout all his writings, Ghazali never overlooked the fact that he was a Muslim to whom the revelation of the Qur'an was an immutable and an unquestionable certainty, and that the same revelation constantly exhorted those who were intellectually competent to develop their rational faculties. At this level, it would be legitimate to speculate that Ghazali's intellectual doubt took place when he himself, in questioning the reliability of the physical world--the main stage for God's action and revelation--fell to what he would later consider to be the fallacy of separating intellectual certainty from revealed certainty, something against which he never failed to warn his students after his crisis. This can be understandable. The Greek philosophical heritage was brought into the Islamic tradition at a much faster pace than the Islamic mind could handle. Regarded as his Islamic society's microcosm, Ghazali's talent enabled him to authentically reflect his society's concerns, and to project them even beyond his own time and space. It was only due to his constant faith in God that Ghazali could recover from his intellectual doubt. Thus, the question whether Ghazali, by recovering his intellectual certainty, had been led--necessarily or not--to admit the existence of God or to regain his supposedly lost Islamic faith, becomes irrelevant; and reciprocally, had Ghazali lost his confidence in reason, it would also become irrelevant to conclude from this that he had doubts about the existence of God.

Reason for Ghazali was never an issue treated by and for itself. It was always studied in relation to or for the sake of an issue which was mostly of a religious nature. Thus, reason was considered not only "the source of certainty" but also the real guide toward faith in God. Ghazali praised reason and considered it to be the most honored human faculty. He not only saw in it the faculty that leads to knowledge with certainty, but also the one through which a person can become religious and consequently may have access to heaven. Humans are not rational because they are religious, argued Ghazali, but they are religious because they are endowed with a rational faculty. The depth of Divine revelation, as far as humans are concerned, depends on the level of maturity and of awareness reached by human reason.

Biography:
Doumit Salameh is an associate professor in the Faculty of the Humanities at Notre Dame University (LEBANON) where he teaches philosophy and religion since 1991. He holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from St. Louis University (Saint Louis, Missouri - USA). He attended St. Joseph University of Beirut where he received a BA in philosophy with a minor in theology, and an MA in Modern philosophy (his thesis was on Nietzsche – in French). His main areas of concentration are Islamic philosophy (Ghazali in Particular), Qur'anic studies, comparative religions, and inter-religious dialogue.

He started college teaching in the US (St. Louis University, Webster University, and the University of Missouri in St. Louis). He was the coordinator for the committee that wrote the English version of the new philosophy textbook for the Lebanese Ministry of Education. He was the editor in Chief of the NDU Palma - Lebanon (a refereed Journal using French, Arabic, and English languages) for five years. He is the current Chairperson of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Department in the Faculty of the Humanities at Notre Dame University - Lebanon. He holds this position since 2000.

Paper Text

INTRODUCTION: We are living in a period of history where the fascinting advance in technology is enabling us to develop a global awareness of the vast variety of cultures in the world at large. At the same time, we are also experiencing social and cultural unrest in the different parts of the world, especially in those parts which are on the consuming end of technology and its cultural packages. In fact, technology is not, nor can it be an empty vehicule. By the mere fact of its development and production, technology carries with it a message which, in turn, is always cultural. At this point, one can say that the product of technology itself is never only a mere commodity, but also a cultural one. Accordingly, at least at the initial stage, the rejection or acceptance of technology was at the same time a statement in relation to the given culture on the part of the receiving and consuming end, especially that the latter felt a strong need for that technology, and was as yet unable or unprepared to sever from it, while using it, the attached cultural package. This has been a recurrent reaction throughout histroy. One should bring to mind how the consumers in communist societies used to react, initally, to products of 'capitalism', or the rise of fundamentalism in different parts of the world, those parts which happened to be mostly Islamist and which are most resistant to the suspect and unwanted *cultural package* that is carried along with the western technology, not to mention the different cultural reactions to basic universal values such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Due mainly to the 'global village' atmosphere considered in many ways to have been imposed by modern technology on the world's cultures at large, the chain of events has led to the present state of world affairs.

One should ask what does all this have to do with the question of faith and reason in Ghazali. Ghazali was a Muslim scholar living in an Islamic society that was still shaken by, among other factors, the recent *intrusion* of the Greek wisdom. The Islamic culture in all its values, and at a very high cost over the years, has been developed and established around the revealed message of the Qur'an. In turn, the Greek culture with all its values –

and its gods included—has been developed and established around the constructs of the Greek mind as designed by the visions of numerous Greek scholars throughout history, and in particular by two most prominent ones, namely the Divine Master, Plato, and his outstanding student, Aristotle.

It was due to the translation projects, financed by the highest Sunni Islamic courts, that Greek wisdom not only became available to the Arab Islamic mind, but also, due to its powerful appeal, imposed itself to the point where one was forced to take sides either with or against it. At that initial stage, the Arab Islamic mind was unable to sever that foreign and yet appealing wisdom from its related cultural package, which was of a pagan, and therefore a threatening, nature. Once the translated Greek wisdom reached the Arab Islamic mind, and after it received an initial acclaim on the parts of both the Sunni authorities and the public, soon the conflict arose between, on one extreme, those who considered the Qur'an to be the sole source of wisdom and rejected anything else as *innovation* (*bid'aa*), and, on the other, those who found in the Greek wisdom the basic measure through which the revealed, and not always so clear, message of the Qur'an could properly be understood.[1] Many other opinions and schools have also developed within those two extremes. The consequent rise of different religious movements and schools on the one hand, and the writings of philosophers such as Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina in particular, on the other, along with the doctrinal and sometimes military confrontations with the Shiite Fatimids (*Batinites*) of Egypt, did not make the matter any simpler for a Sunni scholar such as Ghazali, who happened to live in that part of history on the forefront of an embattled Sunni Islamic empire.

GHAZALI'S DOUBT AND SEARCH FOR CERTAINTY
Throughout its early history, Islamic culture had been exclusively depending on one source of ultimate certainty, namely the Qur'an which was considered by Muslims to be the only literal Divine *revelation*. Accordingly, ultimate certainty for the Islamic mind could only be *revealed*. However, not long after the rise of Islam, and especially at the time of Ghazali, Islamic society was faced with another source that laid a claim to ultimate certainty: the Greek wisdom which was introduced to Islamic society through Islamic translation projects. It was no surprise that a person of Ghazali's intellectual caliber would be among the first to have genuinely felt a real tension resulting from the opening up of the Islamic mind to a foreign culture that, by strictly depending on the *natural* powers of the human mind, claimed to lead to ultimate certainty, irrespectively of, and independently from, the Qur'an or any divine intervention. Accordingly, and to a great measure, Ghazali's doubt crisis may be said to have been rooted in the tension resulting from the encounter of two apparently opposed cultures (the one grounded on a *revealed* certainty, the other on a *natural* one). Furthermore, Ghazali may be said to have sought his recovery, as will be discussed below, not only by reconciling between his Islamic faith and the Greek wisdom, but also by legitimizing the latter before the Divine Light of revelation.

After all, and throughout all his writings, Ghazali never overlooked the fact that he was a Sunni Muslim to whom the revelation of the Qur'an was an immutable and an unquestionable certainty, and that the same revelation constantly exhorted those who

3

were intellectually competent to develop their rational faculties. At this level, it would also be legitimate to speculate that Ghazali's intellectual doubt took place when he himself, while investigating the material world--the main stage for God's action and revelation--fell to what he would later consider to be the fallacy of separating intellectual certainty (not so easily accessible - if ever - in tne material world, and characteristic of the Greek wisdom) from, and opposing it to, revealed certainty (so obvious in the created world and in the Qur'an, and an essential part of the Islamic culture). After his crisis, Ghazali never failed to warn his students against this fallacy. One has to realize that the Greek philosophical heritage, the importance of which was strongly felt by educated Muslims, was brought into the Islamic tradition at a pace much faster than the Islamic mind could handle. Regarded as his Islamic society's microcosm, Ghazali's talent enabled him to authentically reflect his society's concerns, and to even spread them beyond his own time and space. It was only due to his constant faith in God that Ghazali could recover from his intellectual doubt. Thus, the question whether Ghazali, by recovering his intellectual certainty, had been led--necessarily or not--to admit the existence of God or to regain his supposedly lost Islamic faith, becomes irrelevant; and reciprocally had Ghazali lost his confidence in reason, it would also have become irrelevant to conclude from this that he had doubts about the existence of God. This is clearly addressed by Ghazali in **Munqidh**.[2] and in the whole work of **Mi'yar al-'ilm**, particularly in the Introduction, and in the chapter on "Being as necessary and as possible (*mumkin*)."[3] In **Mi'yar al-'ilm** 's introduction Ghazali wrote:

> I have two main objectives in writing and publishing **Mi'yar al-`ilm**: the first is to explain the theoretical sciences (*Tafheem turuq al-fikr wa al-nazar*), and to clarify Logic ( *wa tanweer masaalik al-'akyisati wa al-`ibar*)... Because they are acquired (*mustah-salat*) and not innate (*lam takun bi al-fitrah wa al-ghareezah mabdhoulah wa mawhoubah*), these sciences are subject to miscalculations (*madhallat al-aqdaam*). The second is to help understand the content of **Tahafut al-Falaasifah.[4]**

A few pages later, Ghazali described the objective of **Mi'yar al-'ilm** in more general and yet more fundamental terms. The "instinctively established axioms" mentioned in the following text are placed by God in us, the God who also made the universe source of the sensible data. We do not need, according to Ghazali, to establish the co-ordination between God's action in us and His action in the sensible world. The co-ordination has already been established. We only need to bring it down to the level of our own comprehension. He wrote:

> Our objective in writing this book is to co-ordinate the sensible data with the instinctively established axioms (*wa al-darouriyyaat al-jabliyyat*) and to consider them (i.e., axioms) as our guidance to rational pursuit (*mi'yaran li al-nazar*) so that, at the abstract level (*ghawaamidh*), we would place no doubt in the veracity of these axioms (*lam nashikka fi luz£mi ma yalzamu minha*). [5]

The "abstract" for Ghazali goes "as far as" and not "beyond" the existence of God. He never failed to make clear that it is only with God's blessing and support that such rational pursuits into the abstract (*ghawamidh*) are possible.[6] In his description of the doubt process in **Mi'yar al-'ilm**, Ghazali made it clear that it was a doubt of a scientific

nature, a doubt that never questioned the existence of the Creator and His created world; it was rather a doubt about previous interpretations of this world.

On *being* as necessary and as possible Ghazali wrote:

> Know that the possible being (al-*mumkin*¯) is a common denomination that can have a variety of meanings. First and as a common practice (*istilaah `ammyy*) it can mean what is not impossible... Second, what is not necessary... Third it can express, in a more restrictive manner, a possible being which under no circumstances can be considered necessary... the necessary being (*waajib al wujoud*) is the being the non-existence of which is an impossibility (*mahaal*). Being is necessary either through an internal necessity, or through another being than itself...[7]

This passage contains Ghazali's general guidelines of what he understood by "*necessary being*," "*possible being*," and "*impossible being*." Even though these concepts are used in a logical context, as the content of the whole work suggests, they nonetheless help in expressing Ghazali's deep metaphysical concern.[8] By giving "the possible" the meanings of "what is not impossible," "what is not necessary," and that "which under no circumstances can be considered necessary," Ghazali was referring to his rejection of *necessary causation* he had already discussed in **Tahafut**. Moreover, by defining the "necessary being" as "the being the non-existence of which is an impossibility," Ghazali was trying to highlight, once again, the scope of his doubt which never did nor could question the existence of God. At this stage, one cannot help but think of Anselm's (1033-1109) reply to Gaunilo concerning the existence of the "Necessary Being which cannot be thought not to exist." Ghazali's procedure is, of course, of a logical nature, but obviously has deep metaphysical implications which cause no harm, according to Ghazali, to the neutrality of the science of logic itself. In the whole work of **Mi'yar al-'ilm**, Ghazali was trying to emphasize the distinctive and coherent nature of the logical sciences, once cleared of discrepancies caused by instinct (*awhaam, s. wahm*) and by imagination (*khayaal*), both faculties being themselves of sensible order and meant to act on the material sphere of beings.[9]

Ghazali's intellectual doubt can be perceived as caused by the way reason was applied. The ultimate task reason had, according to Ghazali, was to seek the truth of things, a truth that was universal and immutable. The material world was in a constant flux and change; it was the world of doubt, of error and of deception. The sense data at first would appear to be perfectly clear (*jaliyyat*). However, Ghazali argued, even the strongest of the senses, sight, after experiences and observations, proved to be deceiving and defective: the shadow, which appeared to be standing still, was proven an hour later never to have been completely at rest. Geometrical proofs demonstrated that what was seen by the eye to be a small star in the sky actually surpassed the earth in size.[10]

Finding the sense data to be deceptive, Ghazali decided to seek certainty from rational data. At this level, certainty would appear to be beyond doubt. Thus, "ten is more than three, and one and the same thing cannot be simultaneously affirmed and denied, incipient and eternal, existent and nonexistent, necessary and impossible."[11] However, cautioned Ghazali, the unreliability of sense data was detected, but not from within the same level of perception, i.e. sense perception. It was due to the judgement of reason that

the sense data's deceptive nature was discovered. Accordingly, there may be in the case of rational certainty, Ghazali speculated, a higher level of judgement that would prove its unreliability. "It may be," wrote Ghazali, "that this state beyond reason," which he later called the state of ecstacy,[12] "is that which the *Sufis* claim is theirs... or it may be that this state is death."[13]

Taking a closer look at what was presented by Ghazali as a "state beyond reason," we found that ecstasy was one and death was another. Presenting death as a stage beyond reason is another way of saying that there is none. With ecstasy Ghazali presented "fruitional experience" (*dhawq*) and not "study" (*al-ta'allum*) to be the means to achieving it.[14] One may conclude that this was a clear invitation to those who were uneducated, the `awaam*, to depend on prayer and to practice Sufism in their search for certainty, and not to venture into philosophical controversies, which was the domain of those who were educated, i.e. *al-khawaas*.[15]

Ghazali's initial doubt about rational certainty revealed itself to be a precautionary step. Whether considered methodical or authentic, its main objective remained the same: to confirm and defend and not to destroy rational certainty and the immaterial nature of the object of its truth.

Mi'yar al-'Ilm, a work subsequent to and intimately related to **Tahafut**, and anterior to **Munqidh**,[16] offered an earlier description of his doubt.[17] There Ghazali seemed to be arguing that the ultimate truth would have to be concerned with immaterial and unchangeable natures. In this material world, reason was vainly exhausting itself; and to force the process of reason's application to the material world would be to force reason into alienation. Reason applied to physical and sensible objects, Ghazali feared, falsely perceived itself to be of the same kind of being as that of its object, i.e. material and changeable. This is where lay its deception and the source of its skepticism. Ghazali's analysis seemed to conclude that, applied to this ever-changing world, reason was losing its sense of universality, of immutability, and of identity. Whence Ghazali's conclusion that intellectual truth was to be found on an immaterial level, where physical proofs are incapable of confirmation or negation--which is to say they are irrelevant. On this Ghazali wrote:

> It became clear to me that sure and certain knowledge is that in which the thing known is made so manifest [to the mind] that no doubt clings to it, nor is it accompanied by the possibility of error and deception, nor can the mind even suppose such a possibility. Furthermore, safety from error must accompany the certainty to such a degree that, if someone proposed to show it to be false--for example, a man who would turn a stone into gold and a stick into a snake--his feat would not induce any doubt [in] or denial [of my finding].[18]

The truth Ghazali was in search of, as he made it clear in the above quoted passage, overrides the physical evidence; and as such, its object undoubtedly is of an immaterial nature, and accordingly, cannot be affected by the material dimension of being, regardless of its condition. This approach, claimed Ghazali, was not adopted by the

philosophers. This explains why their efforts lead, as he discussed throughout **Tahafut**, not only to inconsistencies, but to "alienation of" and "scepticism about" reason itself. [19]

Ghazali would protest saying that, if any accusation were to be made about the downfall of philosophy, predicting somehow the advent of Ibn Rushd's **Tahafut al-Tahafut**, the blame should be addressed not to him, i.e. Ghazali, but to those philosophers.

Ghazali gave an explicit analysis of the various stages of his doubt in **Munqidh**. At the very beginning, he renounced servile conformism (*taqleed*) promoted by the Ta'limites in relation to their infallible imaam, which was to say he accepted from the inherited values only those that passed the tribunal of reason. Thus he adapted the approach of independent investigation (*istibsaar*) in his search for the essential truth (*haqa'iqu a l-`umour*),[20] which he also called certainty (*yaqeen*), accepting nothing as granted. He defined certainty as

> that in which the thing known is made so manifest that no doubt can cling to it, nor is it accompanied by the possibility of error and deception, nor can the mind even suppose such a possibility. [21]

It is a certainty of an immaterial object. To this certainty, the inconsistencies of the physical world cannot induce any doubt. At the same time, Ghazali set the goal of his search: to reach the "fundamental truth of things" (*haqa'iq al-umour*).

This careful approach in searching for the truth may bring to mind a pioneering personality in the later philosophical tradition, Descartes (seventeenth century) and his methodical doubt. In his <u>Meditations on the First Philosophy</u>, Descartes had the same objective as Ghazali, namely to find an immutable certainty, even if that certainty were to be that "nothing in the world is certain."[22] Reading the <u>Meditations</u> closely, one finds that the similarities between the two doubts become very noticeable. Like Ghazali, Descartes wanted to "rid [himself] of all the opinions which [he] had formerly accepted;"[23] such an acceptance was called by Ghazali "servile conformism." [24]Descartes, Like Ghazali, experienced doubt in sense data and rejected them because they were deceptive.[25] Descartes, in his process of methodical doubt, presented the possibility of hallucination as one of the main factors in his questioning of rational certainty.[26] Descartes' ultimate foundation of certainty was not the thinking substance (*cogito ergo sum*); rather it was God whose perfection could not be claimed by the "thinking substance" which is longing for an immutable certainty. In the Third Meditation Descartes wrote:

> ...I must inquire whether there is a God as soon as the occasion presents itself; and if I find that there is a God, I must also inquire whether He may be a deceiver; for without a knowledge of these two truths I do not see that I can ever be certain of anything.[27]

Ghazali, unlike Descartes, did not question his personal existence nor the existence of God. The existence of God was for Ghazali, as mentioned earlier, an unquestionable certainty unequivocally felt through the revelation of the Qur'an. Ghazali, as a Muslim believer in God and in the Qur'an, could have no ground nor did he have the need to question his personal existence, because the certainty Descartes was after was already granted to Ghazali through his act of faith. Descartes' questioning of the Divine existence

was, like all his doubt procedure, only methodical and intended for the education of others. Descartes, accordingly, did not go through the agonizing struggle Ghazali had to endure. He intended to present a method for those who were in search of truth. Descartes wrote: "It were far better never to think of investigating truth at all than to do so without a method." [28] His **Discourse on the Method** is a well-known illustration of that principle. [29]

Ghazali had to confront al-Farabi and Ibn Sina who, by using Greek rooted philosophies, claimed to be defending the Islamic faith. Like Ghazali, Descartes, while trying to establish an independent defense of his faith and an independent theology, was fighting against the Aristotelian schools who were monopolozing the defense of Catholicism.

In his search for the fundamental truth, Ghazali classified all sciences into four major groups: *Mutakallimoun*, Philosophers, *Ta'limites* (*Batinites*), and Sufis. Ghazali wrote:

> I then said to myself: the truth cannot transcend these four categories, for these are the men who are following the paths of the quest for truth (*al-haqq*). Hence, if the truth eludes them, there remains no hope of ever attaining it.[30]

It seems that the main purpose for which Ghazali classified the sciences was to protect `awaam from any threat to their religious beliefs. Accordingly, he divided Muslims into two main categories: `awaam and *khawaas*. The former were the common public. These people were very susceptible to imitations, and their religious beliefs were inherited from parents, *shaykhs* or leaders, or from their teachers. These people, argued Ghazali, should be barred from philosophy because they were easily deceived by philosophical arguments, and could not distinguish the false from the true. "...just as an unskilled swimmer must be kept away from slippery river banks," wrote Ghazali, "so `awaam must be kept from pursuing those books [of philosophy]." [31] This is a common theme in Ghazali's writings. Ghazali even urged `awaam, especially in **Iljaam** to stay away from *Kalaam* (rational theology) because of its philosophical techniques, which could lead them to heresy.

Khawaas, the elite, were thought of as being naturally endowed with intelligence. Their belief was the result of rationally argued conviction and not of a blind conformism (*taqleed*). It was not dangerous for these people to study different kinds of philosophical sciences, because they were not easily deceived, as they were able to distinguish between truth and falsehood. Ghazali even shunned anyone who would try to prevent those capable from learning these sciences, because if they were prevented, he felt harm would be done to Islam. This is what he wrote in **Munqidh** on this issue:

> The second evil likely to follow from the study of mathematical sciences, derives from the case of an ignorant friend of Islam who supposes that our religion must be championed by the rejection of every science ascribed to the philosophers....Great indeed is the crime against religion committed by anyone who supposes that Islam is championed by the denial of these mathematical sciences.[32]

That the scope of Ghazali's search for the fundamental truth was not necessarily confined to a religious context, nor to a truth of a religion, became clear in his analysis of the science of *Kalaam (*rational and apologetic theology). This science, Ghazali explained, is aimed at protecting the Islamic faith of those Muslims who feel threatened whenver they

are under attack by innovators."[33] In this case, wrote Ghazali, "I found it [to be] a science adequate for its own aim [i.e. the defense of Orthodox Islam], but inadequate for mine."[34] If *Kalaam* were to function beyond the Islamic context, it would negate its legitimacy as a science, because it was strictly an apologetic Islamic science. Thus, feeling confident about his own unshaken faith, and accordingly having no use for *kalaam,* Ghazali made it clear that his aim went beyond the defense of Islam.[35]

Ghazali was searching for what he called at times the fundamental truth (*haqaa'iq al-'umour*), and at others the original tendency (*al-fitrah al-asliyyah*).[36]

The domain of this search, Ghazali was implying, is that of philosophy, which was not a science that could be sought by anyone, even though it was about every human being, nor a science that would necessarily lead to heresy, as the Islamic Aristotelians (as he calls them) made it appear to be.

Secondly comes philosophy. Philosophy, explained Ghazali, includes six divisions: mathematical, logical, physical, moral, political and metaphysical.[37] Mathematical sciences do not entail denial or affirmation of religion. Their results are rigorously and demonstrably true. However, warned Ghazali, there are two drawbacks to the study of mathematical sciences. Admired for their precision and for the clarity of their demonstration, these sciences may lead the student to form a high opinion of the philosophers and to think that all their sciences resemble mathematics in clarity and in apodictic certainty. Moreover, the fact that some of these philosophers do not believe in God may lead the students to give up their faith out of pure admiration. The second drawback would be examplified by an ignorant supporter of Islam who thinks that one must deny all sciences in order to defend Islam.[38] This aspect has been discussed earlier in this chapter.

Metaphysics was another philosophical science to which Ghazali was reluctant to give his straightforward approval. Metaphysics as studied by the Muslim Aristotelians, Ghazali contended in **Munqidh** and throughout **Tahafut** ,[39] led them to unbelief (*kufr*, literally heresy) with regard to three issues, and to innovation (*tabdi'- bid'aa*) with regard to seventeen others, all discussed in detail in his **Tahafut**.[40] The main ground for his caution was that such philosophers could not generate from their metaphysics an apodictic demonstration according to the conditions they had postulated in their own logic. Ghazali was careful to mention in **Munqidh** and in **Tahafut** that he was attacking Muslim philosophers (metaphysicians) because of the errors they committed not only against Islam, but also against their own philosophy; these errors, Ghazali warned, could be avoided in metaphysics. To help the philosophers in their task, Ghazali followed up **Tahafut** by **Mi'yar al-'Ilm**, which contains, as the author of this study holds, Ghazali's major guidelines for a sound philosophy.

We conclude from all this that Ghazali was willing to accept philosophical sciences (including metaphysics) which, when used masterfully and appropriately, cause no threat to religious beliefs, but actually help enlighten them. If any move toward unbelief takes

place as a result of a philosophical pursuit, it would be due, Ghazali would argue, to an inconsistency only on the part of the philosopher himself.

Ghazali argued that logic, like mathematics, is a neutral science, without any relevance to religion by way of denial or affirmation.[41] He wrote:

> [Logic is the] study of the methods of proofs and standards for reasoning, the conditions of the premises of demonstration and the manner of their ordering, the conditions of correct definition and the manner of its construction. Logic simply affirms that knowledge is either a concept arrived at through definition, or an assent arrived at through demonstration. Nothing of this ought to be rejected. It is the same kind of thing *mutakallimoun* and religious speculative thinkers mention in their treatments of proof. The philosophers differ from them only in their expressions and idioms and their more exhaustive definitions and classifications. [42]

According to Ghazali, logic can be used to defend Islam. He substantiated this claim extensively in his **Mi'yar al-'ilm**. His espousing the science of logic earned him the opposition of the conservative religious thinkers of his time, and continued to be the subject of controversy in later centuries. Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) forcefully attacked Ghazali's use of logic, a practice he considered to be an *innovation* and a heresy.[43] In fact, Ghazali argued, the rejection of logic gives the logician a low opinion of the intelligence and, what is worse, of the religion of the one who rejects it.

Physics was considered by Ghazali to be that third branch of philosophy which concerns the world of the heavens and their stars, and the sublunar world with its composite bodies, such as animals, plants and minerals. Just as religion did not require the repudiation of the science of medicine which is concerned with the parts of the body, so also it did not reject the science of physics which is the science of the parts of the universe, as long as, so clarifies Ghazali, this science acknowledges that nature is God's creation, and that it needs God to sustain its existence. [44]

In conclusion, philosophy, then, was not indiscriminately rejected by Ghazali, as many scholars claimed, nor were the philosophers. Whenever the philosophers wrote something "reasonable in itself and corroborated by apodictic proof and not contrary to the *Qur'an* and the Sunna (if this is ever possible)," argued Ghazali, "then why should it be shunned and rejected?."[45] Ghazali adds:

> When a poor man in dire need of money, is averse to accepting gold drawn from the trickster's sack, he must be reminded that his aversion is pure ignorance which will cause him to be deprived of the benefits he seeks.[46]

The third group, the *Ta'limites*, according to Ghazali, claimed to have derived their prominence and their talk of an arcane knowledge of the meaning of things, from the infallible *Imaam*.[47] This claim was appealing to many people. Very few tested its reliability, while the great majority blindly accepted its call. After his long research in **Fada'ihul al-Batiniyya**, which is considered to be the most sophisticated study on the *Ta'limites (*Fatimid shiites*)*, Ghazali concluded that they "have no substance to their views and no force in their argument...."[48]   "The substance of their doctrine comes down

to deceiving the common folk and the dim-witted by showing the need for the authoritative teacher" who was, they claimed, hidden and infallible.[49] However, Ghazali pointed out, this infallible hidden *Imaam* was no cure to save the common folk from the *Ta'limite* scholars' conflicting opinions in interpreting the Scripture.

Lastly, with the Sufis a new factor was introduced. Their way was implemented through knowledge and activity, through theory and practice. The difference between them and the above three groups, wrote Ghazali, was like the difference "there is between your knowing the definitions and causes of health and satiety, and your being healthy and sated."[50] That difference was clearly radical in these examples given by Ghazali himself, the "healthy that are sated" being the Sufis. However, a scholar like Ghazali would find an equal, if not a higher, level of satisfaction in knowing the causes of things, and thus having control over them. On the other hand, the common public, lacking the skills and consequently the control the scholars had, would find it more satisfying to enjoy the outcome, the end results of things. To put it differently, Ghazali, in writing the **Munqidh**, was adressing himself to the common public. His main message to them was that, by avoiding the intricacies of the religious sciences originally meant to be practiced by *khawaas*, the common public could still reach the same joy through the Sufi way of life consisting of seclusion, simplicity and prayer.

Ghazali, by chosing these four groups, considered himself in search of a universal truth which could be either natural or revealed. As rational, he would argue, it was either natural (philosophy) or divine (*Kalaam*); as revealed, it was either through a life of prayer and simplicity (Sufism), or through an infallible *Imaam* (*Batiniyya*) which he proved to be misleading. Those were the choices that the general public was faced with.

That the four groups were of an Islamic affiliation did not necessarily compromise the universal scope of Ghazali's quest. Under no circumstances can a person have a total neutrality or objectivity in his search for truth. One can never escape culture, at least his own. We humans are totally alien to total objectivity. Being human is, by nature, being relational and cultural. Accordingly, in Ghazali's case, the subjectivity of his search expressed in his choice of the four groups, was educationally motivated, and culturally revealing. This was the best means to communicate with his public: using terminology and concepts to which his Muslim public could relate.

REDEMPTION OF REASON
This independent and personal inquiry into certainty, explained Ghazali, would be more authentic if preceded by a personal doubt about inherited religious values. Ghazali stressed that only through doubt could certainty be reached; whoever would not doubt, he argued, would not think properly, and consequently would not even face reality.[51]

To follow Ghazali's treatment of reason is no easy task.[52] Ghazali did not discuss this matter systematically. He dealt with it in different contexts, motivated in each by various factors, depending on the nature of the main discussion he was undertaking. Accordingly, reason for Ghazali was never an issue treated by and for itself. It was always studied in relation to or for the sake of an issue which was mostly of a religious nature. Thus, reason

was considered not only "the source of certainty" (`ayn al-yaqeen`), but also the real guide toward faith in God (*nour al- eemaan*).[53] The individual level of religious faith in humans, argued Ghazali, depended on the level of their rational maturity;[54] whence he considered one hour of thinking to be worth more than one year of devotion.[55]

In following Ghazali's treatment of reason, a number of scholars argued that he could not avoid inconsistencies. To prove Ghazali's inconsistencies, Jadaane sought help from Arab philosophers in Spain, philosophers whose enmity toward Ghazali was well known. He wrote:

> Les occidentaux andalous, Ibn Tufayl et Ibn Rushd en particulier, ont fait remarquer, … l'examen de textes de Ghazali... qu'il ,tait contradictoire dans ses propos et que ses affirmations changeaient selon les cas.[56]

Moreover, Jadaane questioned Ghazali's intellectual integrity in **Tahafut**, by claiming that Ghazali aimed at destroying philosophy, not because falsafa did not pass his rational tribunal, but to please the political leaders and their conservative masses. He wrote:

> Il apparaït que Ghazali … l'époque ou il a redigé son fameux <u>Tahafut</u>, cherchait moins la vérité pure que le désir de s'élever aux yeux du pouvoir et des masses sociales majoritaires et conservatrices, qui appelaient de leurs voeux la destruction de falsafa.[57]

Inconsistencies were frequent, argued `Azqoul, in Ghazali's writings. At one place Ghazali claimed,[58] according to `Azqoul, that it was due only to a light from God that his rational doubt was overcome; while at another, continued 'Azqoul, Ghazali considered the first principles of reason to be the necessary elements in overcoming doubt and in reaching certainty.[59] Surprisingly, however, `Azqoul considered these inconsistencies to be minor and of marginal importance, especially since they all belonged, as he claimed, to a single work of Ghazali, **Qistaas**.[60] In studying **Tahafut**, Azkoul sided with the majority of the critics who claimed that Ghazali destroyed causality in the eighteenth disputation. However, Azkoul rejected their claim that Ghazali's main aim was to destroy philosophy alltogether. Nonetheless, after destroying causality in **Tahafut**, as Azqoul claimed, he found it difficult to understand how Ghazali relied on this same principle in his later works in order to formulate a number of proofs in support of the existence of God and of other rational certainties.[61]

Agreeing with `Azqoul and other critics on Ghazali's "disharmony and even contradiction in his statements on causality," Shelhot added that as long as Ghazali's works were considered strictly philosophical, any effort at harmonization would fail, and the contradictions would remain.[62] To understand Ghazali best, concluded Shelhot, would require a consideration of the factors which heavily influenced his intellectual orientation, such as his tenure at Baghdad's Nizamiyya.[63]

Jabre also maintained that Ghazali was inconsistent. Having assumed that Ghazali rejected "la possibilité d'une certitude [rationelle] absolue" in **Munqidh**, Jabre could not help but express his surprise at seeing Ghazali accept it in **Qistaas**.[64]

The criticism addressed against Ghazali would appear to cover a variety of issues. However, all the criticisms are, in one way or another, related to Ghazali's supposed

repudiation of causation which, if sustained, could cause serious damage to the consistency of his thought.

After having thoroughly read Ghazali, the author of this study found that the preceding claims of inconsistencies could be defended only if these instances of Ghazali's discussions to which the critics referred were taken out of their respective contexts, a practice that is neither reliable nor legitimate. However, the overall athmosphere of Ghazali's authentic works, as shown below, may put the concerns about inconsistency to rest..

Ghazali's society confronted him with too many challenging fronts: *Mu'tazilites* who believed in the created Qur'an; *Batinites* who claimed allegiance to the teachings of an infallible hidden *Imaam*; *Mutakallimoun* who attempted to promote Islamic faith through the force of their arguments; and philosophers some of whom were led to atheism, while others considered themselves "above the general level of common men," and as such "above the duties decreed by [Islamic] religion" consequently least bound, so they claimed, to Islamic teachings.[65]

In his introduction to **Tahafut**, Ghazali made it repeatedly clear that his major concern was the philosophers' abusive applications of reason. He intended to "expose the incoherence of their beliefs, and the inconsistency of their metaphysical theories."[66] Ghazali also wanted, as he put it,

> [to] set forth the doctrines of the ancient philosophers as those doctrines really are. ...The conflict between faith and knowledge is related only to the details superadded to these two fundamental principles. [67]

Ghazali's major source of complaint was the inconclusive metaphysical arguments of the philosophers, as will be discussed later in this chapter. Discursive reasoning, he argued, could lead to a scientific truth. However, with the philosophers' misuse of this faculty, Ghazali could find nothing but unfounded judgments, approximations, and consequently uncertainties. He wrote:

> If their metaphysical theories had been as cogent and definite as their arithmetical knowledge is, they would not have differed among themselves on metaphysical questions as they do not differ on the arithmetical. [68]

It is important to note that Ghazali was not promoting the impossibility of metaphysical science. For those who were capable of using it, this science could be a reliable source of certainty. Those who were not, and they were the great majority, were led, among other things, to atheism, whence the public's association of philosophy with atheism,[69] certainly an unfair association according to Ghazali who believed that metaphysics is one of the six sciences that make up philosophy.[70] Accordingly, a feeling of hostility against philosophy was built, explained Ghazali, in the mind of the Islamic society of Baghdad and of the whole Abbasi empire. In his **Tahafut**, Ghazali intended not only to attack the short-comings of these philosophers, but also to start the way of appropriately and effectively using discursive reasoning. The first argument in the Fourth Disputation represented an illustration of this new application. Ghazali wrote:

> All men [scholars] can be divided into two classes: (i) the class of the people of the truth. They hold that the world began in time; and they know by

rational necessity that nothing which originates in time originates by itself, and that, therefore [sic], it needs a creator. Therefore, their belief in the Creator is understandable. (ii) The Materialists. They believe that the world, as it is, has always been. Therefore, they do not ascribe it to a creator. Their belief, too, is intelligible--although rational arguments may be advanced to refute it.[71]

This passage--besides its presentation of Ghazali's act of faith concerning the world's creation in time--reveals Ghazali's objectivity, his tolerence of arguments opposed to Islamic faith as long as they were rationally sound, and it certainly expresses his acceptance of metaphysical discourse. Ghazali's objectivity was already established in **Makased al-Falasifah**, written in preparation for **Tahafut**, and in **Fada'ihul-Batiniyya** considered by scholars and historians alike to be the best document on the Ta'limites. However, the importance of Ghazali's tolerance of the views that oppose his own could override that of the two previously mentioned works, namely **Makasid** and **Fada'ihul-Batiniyya**. Even though Ghazali had a prominent religious role in the empire, he showed a very impressive intellectual and religious tolerance by presenting as "intelligible" a point of view of a group of philosophers whose religious beliefs did not coincide with his own, especially since these philosophers wanted to banish the belief not only in the creation of the world through a divine will, but also to repudiate the existence of God. Those passages expressing his tolerance are unfortunitely the most ignored and overlooked documents in Ghazali's works. Despite the fact that he considered the materialists to be atheists, "the godless in the full sense of the term," [72] Ghazali, motivated by his philosophical integrity, revealed himself to be a tolerant scholar, and not a chauvinist Muslim as he was pictured by historians, Muslims and others alike. [73]

This intellectual integrity, a common practice of Ghazali, was almost unparallelled until Aquinas (d. 1274) in the thirteenth century.[74]

To help understanding **Tahafut** was Ghazali's specific goal in writing **Mi'yar**, while his major goal was to emphasize the importance and the usefulness of rational discourse to the religion of Islam. He assured his intelocutor that jurisprudence (*fik'h*) was not different from doing philosophy (`*akliyyaat̄*) in procedure, condition or quality. The only difference, he explained, resided in the premises.[75] Ghazali even complained that Muslim scholars focused their interests almost exclusively on jurisprudence. Consequently, he found it necessary though unfortunate to use examples taken from *fik'h* which were of a *zanniyya* (uncertain) nature, to explain to inquirers matters pertaining to rational certainty.[76] Confirming the accessibility of certainty through discursive reasoning, Ghazali warned that it was no easy task, nor was it to be sought by everyone. Its difficulty made it accessible to only very few who also were people of faith. [77] The public majority, complained Ghazali, after they realized the immense difficulty of rational pursuit, believed that it was absolutely impossible that such a pursuit could lead to certainty. The issue of rational certainty, emphasized Ghazali, was not something about which public opinion could decide, because this issue was beyond the reach of the common public. Rational certainty was left only to the elite who were not even required to change the public opinion in favor of its possibility. Ghazali further explained that rational certainty was not something the common public could hope to achieve. Unable to

have a grasp of all the necessary factors that could lead to the desired certainty, the common public could be led astray by holding on to its conclusions alone.

Ghazali elaborated on **Mi'yar's** theme in **Mihakk al Nazar**, but with more important details. Reaffirming his unshaken confidence in the possibility of rational certainty, he re-emphasized the harsh and demanding character of its pursuit. Ghazali wrote:

> Know that the truth is dear and the path to it is hard. Most visions are blinded, and the illusory factors are many. This is why you see people (*'awaam*) blinded and confused , and split into two groups: one quickly grasped the beliefs first and hastily took them for an established truth; another, alert to the nature of certainty, realized the futile practice of the first group. The members of the latter group of *awaam*, because they were incapable of acquiring the truth on their own, believed that all people were blind, and that it was impossible for a human to discover the truth and to follow its path by his own means. Neither position was accurate. In fact, there is one truth and there is a path to it accessible by humans, aided by a knowlegeable (human) guide (*murshidan baseeran*). The path is long, the obstacles are many, and the guide is rare. For these reasons the path is neglected by many, and thus ignored... the greater the dangers, the more frightened is the crowd. How can they not be frightened, and for most of the required sciences intended to uncover the secrets of the attributes of God Most High and His acts, are founded on proofs the establishment of which requires the composition of introductory notes that may excede a thousand or two in number?[78]

The above passage represents one of the rare occasions on which Ghazali sketched in one place a comprehensive description of his thoughts on the problem of access to an unshakable rational (as opposed to revealed) certainty, reached through human means alone. That there exist such capable individuals, according to Ghazali, was rare but not impossible encounter. Rational certainty, explained Ghazali, is unshakable even if and when it is opposed by the miracles of the prophets.[79]

Ghazali's own understanding of reason is sketched in **Ihya'** . There, he gave reason four distinctive and yet complementary definitions. In the first, reason

> may mean the quality by which man is distinguished from the rest of all animals... and it is unjust to overlook this first meaning by understanding reason to be exclusively the sum of the necessary notions.

In a second definition, reason for Ghazali was "the sum of innate notions which unfold and help the child in distinguishing the possible from the impossible..."

In a third definition, "it is the knowledge acquired through random experiences." Finally, reason

> signifies the `reason-instinct' developed in man to a point where it enables him to foresee the consequences of his acts, to conquer concupiscence which seeks immediate pleasure... a creature endowed with this power is characterized as `rational'.[80]

The first two types of reason, clarified Ghazali, were innate; while the last two were acquired only by some of those who are already endowed with the first two types.[81] In the first definition, Ghazali emphasized the distinguishing role of reason. Reason distinguished man from the rest of the animals. This distinguishing factor it represented was meant to establish a difference in kind between man and the rest of the animal species. In this context, reason was considered as a fundamental human characteristics, a distinction by nature (*bi-`l-taba'*).[82] The second definition was seen by Ghazali to be a natural consequence of the first, whereby reason was to acknowledge that "two is more than one," and that "the same person cannot simultaneously be in two places."[83]. Reason at these two levels was considered by Ghazali to be a naturally endowed faculty, an "apriori" (*bi-`l-taba'*), a faculty that did not depend on experience in order to perform its original function. These two levels of reason, claimed Ghazali, were manifested in every human being, whether from *khawaas* or from '*awaam*.

The last two definitions in this progressive order, the third and fourth, referred to the higher maturity levels of this human faculty. Ghazali would make it appear that experience and not age was a decisive factor in determining each of the last two stages. According to Ghazali, only the scholars, or what he called the "elite" (*khawaas*) could reach the fourth stage. Those of the fourth stage had the responsibility not to disclose their knowledge--consisting mainly of philosophy and/or theology--to those of the third stage, i.e. '*awaam*. Ghazali wrote **Iljaam** to help guide *khawaas* and Muslim religious leaders on how to deal with '*awaam* in religious matters. His focus was on religious matters because religion in Islam covers all aspects of life.

Moreover, along with experience, Ghazali appeared to have claimed that members of the fourth stage were endowed with innate talents lacking in others; consequently, the two stages in human reason's progress were more suggestive of two main social categories, where it was very hard--if not impossible--for the those in the lower to improve and move to the higher one. "Men, he wrote in **Iljaam**, " were created unequal like gold and silver.…"[84] Nowhere in his works did Ghazali suggest anything to the contrary. **Iljaam** was the main work where Ghazali elaborately discussed the '*awaam* issue. There, Ghazali argued that whenever a member of the '*awaam* would enquire about religious matters, he should be "shunned, barred and beaten."[85] Members of the '*awaam*, according to Ghazali, ought to accept the direction and guidance given to them by the members of the *khawaas*.[86] '*Awaam* individuals were not educated, nor were they capable of being so; rational inquiry, he thought, was beyond their natural capacities .[87] For them to deal with religious issues, maintained Ghazali, would be more dangerous and more serious than if they were to commit a sin. Ghazali explained that the former practice would lead to heresy, while the latter only to sinfulness; and he added that God was forgiving to sinful persons but never to heretics.[88]

However, those who were in the fourth stage (or category) of reason, were not necessarily in agreement with each other. At the fourth stage, rational autonomy was itself one of two objectives to be reached, namely the practice of creativity (not to be confused with *bid'aa* or innovation which is forbidden by the **Qur'an**) and that of independent opinion. Ghazali's disagreement with the members of the fourth stage earned him his survival as a

great Muslim scholar, and as a philosopher. From his early life as a scholar, and since his writing debut with **Tahafut**, Ghazali expressed with emphasis his unhappiness with the way reason was applied by the philosophers. In their use of reason, Ghazali suggested a radical re-evaluation. From **Tahafut** onward to **Mishkaat**, Ghazali stood consistently in favor of an independent domain of reason, where knowledge and certainty could be acquired solely by human means.

CORRELATION BETWEEN REVELATION AND REASON
Revelation, however, unlike reason, was consistently considered by Ghazali to be the unquestionable source of certainty. Furthermore, reason, itself considerd by many as a questionable source of certainty, seems to be confirmed by the higher judgment of revelation. Here is how Ghazali described this stage:

> "When these thoughts occurred to me they penetrated my soul, and so I tried to deal with the objection. However, my effort was unsuccessful, since the objection could be refuted only by proof. But the only way to put together a proof was to combine primary cognitions.[89] So if, as in my case, these were inadmissible, it was impossible to construct the proof. This malady was mysterious and it lasted for nearly two months. During that time, I was a skeptic in fact, but not in utterance and doctrine. At length God Most High cured me of that sickness. My soul regained its health and equilibrium and once again I accepted the self evident data of reason and relied on them with safety and certainty. But that was not achieved by constructing a proof or putting together an argument. On the contrary, it was the effect of a light which God Most High cast into my breast; and that light is the key to most knowledge.[90]

Ghazali, in this text, made clear two of his major positions. First there was his re-acceptance of rational certainty. Second, rational certainty was accepted and approved not by rational arguments, but by a "higher level of judgment," by a Divine Light regarding the essence of which he was never skeptical.[91] Ghazali, by using the "Divine Light" as a criterion in his rational quest for certainty, did not attempt to discredit rational certainty as suggested by George McLean, among many other scholars[92]. On the contrary, and followed by Descartes a few centuries later,[93]by invoking the Divine Light, Ghazali legitimized rational certainty--which is to say philosophy--before the educated public minority (*khawaas*), within a Qur'anic context. One could legitimately conclude that Ghazali was saying that philosophy, which was granted a Divine Light in its ultimate search, should be welcome in essence and not feared by the qualified Muslim individuals, the *khawaas*. Ghazali seemed to be arguing that philosophy more than religion could provide help to the qualified individual in their struggle to overcome the spirit of "servile conformism" he always warned against.

Ghazali's certainty, therefore, was reached not "by constructing a proof or putting together an argument", but "it was the effect of a light which God Most High cast into [the] breast." Ghazali was faced with a fundamentalist religious society which held deep antagonism against philosophy, and could only perceive it as an *innovation*. By invoking the divine light which led to the acceptance of the reasoning faculty as a source of certainty, Ghazali was seeking a legitimate status for rational certainty. With Descartes,

however, this "light" was reached by "constructing a proof;" it was more of a "natural light." Descartes' main objective was not to seek a legitimate status for rational certainty before religion, a status which was already granted, but to prove that a rational defense of the Catholic faith was possible independently from the Greek wisdom. [94]

However, the main and radical difference between the two approaches lies in the nature of their religious faith as perceived through their writings, Ghazali's faith being considered by him as a spiritual gift, while for Descartes it was of an intellectual nature. Ghazali's faith in God was never in question; and even if it were in question, it could have never been answered on a rational level, nor would it have been expected to. With Descartes' proofs of the existence of God, however, there is a clear invitation if not an impatient exhortation to the others (in his case the authorities of the Sorbonne) to accept his own approach to the defense of the Christian (Catholic) faith.[95]

Reason and Revelation were, according to Ghazali, two different an complementary sources of a same certainty. The apparent conflict between philosophy and some statements of the Scripture is practically resolved, according to him, by allegorical interpretation (*ta'weel*) of the apparent meaning of the scriptural text. Ghazali's main goal was to bring the inner meaning of the scripture into agreement with demonstrable truth. Ghazali set rules for an elaborate system of *ta'weel* in <u>Faysal</u>.[96] He thus effectively dismissed any legitimate ground for the "double truth" controversy in his thought;

It is not hard to recognize reason's high status, emphasized Ghazali; the biggest and strongest animals behave cautiously at the sight of a man, instinctively overwhelmed before the mind's specific nature.[97]

Moreover, speaking of religious sciences, Ghazali cautioned that if these sciences were ever to be properly learned, they would have to be approached objectively and critically, and not apologetically and through blind conformism. It was blind conformism, Ghazali charged, that led people to encounter contradictions between religious and philosophical sciences. Only open-mindedness, he affirmed, could do away with this unfounded and misleading conflict.

Ghazali encouraged each individual who was in search of religious truth to find the true religious path through objective, rational and active personal inquiry. This was, according to Ghazali, the only true approach to religious faith.

After emphasizing in **<u>Mizaan</u>** the importance of an independent search for certainty, Ghazali tried to establish in **<u>Iqtisaad</u>** how reason should be applied in a Muslim's life hand in hand with religious faith. Even though certainty could be accessible apart from revelation through the application of rational sciences, Ghazali warned that a Muslim should never pursue one and neglect the other. To pursue reason exclusively, he explained, would be atheism; taking the Qur'an exclusively would be blind faith.[98]

Ghazali praised reason and considered it to be the most honored human faculty. He not only saw in it the faculty that leads to knowledge with certainty, but also the one through

which a person can become religious and consequently have access to heaven. Humans are not rational because they are religious, argued Ghazali, but they are religious because they are endowed with a rational faculty. The depth of Divine Revelation, as far as humans are concerned, depends on the level of maturity and of awareness reached by human reason. Ghazali wrote:

> The rational proof of the honor of reason is that no true happiness in this world nor in the hereafter can be accessible without reason. How can such a faculty not be endowed with the highest honor that a creature can have? It is by reason that man became successor of God, close to God, and finally the worshipper of God. This is why God Most High said: "creatures without reason can have no religion."[99]

Once each of the two paths, of reason and of faith, is properly pursued, the one leads to the other: the true rational pursuit would necessarily lead to the Highest and Most Perfect *Being*, that is God; and the practice of a genuine faith would place the believer before the Ultimate Reason which is the source of all Creation.

---

[1] This may bring to mind the Middle Ages famous struggle between theology and philosophy: whether *philosophia ancilla theologiae or theologia ancilla philosophiae.*

[2] Freedom and Fulfillment, (Translated by R. McCarthy. Boston: Twayne Pblrs., 1980), p. 97. In describing the functional maturity of the knower, Ghazali perceived the maturation process to advance by stages of creation of the sense faculties, starting with the sense of touch, then that of sight, hearing, taste and discernment. "Then man ascends to another stage, and intellect is created for him, so that he perceives the necessary, the possible, the impossible, and things not found in the previous stages. Beyond the stage of intellect there is another stage. In this another eye is opened, by which man sees the hidden, and what will take place in the future, and other things, from which the intellect is as far removed as the power of discernment is from the perception of intelligibles and the power of sensation is from things perceived by discernment. And just as one who is able only to discern, if presented with the things perceptible to the intellect, would reject them and consider them outlandish, so some men endowed with intellect have rejected the things perceptible to the prophetic power and considered them wildly improbable. That is the very essence of ignorance! For such a man has no supporting reason..." The original Arabic text can be found in Jabre's edition of Munqidh, pp. 41-42.

[3] Mi'yar al-'ilm, (edited by Sulayman Dunya, Cairo: Dar el-Ma'arif, 1960), pp. 343-348

[4] Ibid., pp. 59-60. (present author's translation).

[5] Ibid., p. 65. (author's translation).

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid., pp. 343-345. (present author's translation).

[8] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 74.41

[9] Mi'yar, p. 59

[10] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 64.

[11] Ibid., p. 65

[12] Ibid., p. 90. The Arabic word is al-haal (Al-Munqidh, ed. Jabre, p. 35).

[13] Ibid., pp. 65-66.

[14] Ibid. p. 90: "Then it became clear to me that their most distinctive characteristic is something that can be attained, not by study, but rather by fruitional experience and the state of ecstasy and the exchange of qualities."

[15] Ibid., pp. 72-80

[16] Ghazali, in his introduction to Mi'yar (pp. 59-60), mentions two main incentives (*Baa'ith*) in writing this work: the first, to explain the rational sciences (Turuk al-Fikri wa al-nazhar); the second, to explain the content of Tahafut al- Falasifa: edited by Maurice Bouyges. Beirut: Catholic Press, 1962.

[17] Mi'yar, pp. 62-65.

[18] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 63

[19] On this see Ghazali's first, third and fourth introduction to his Tahafut.

[20] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 61; Al-Munqidh, ed. Jabre, p. 9.

[21] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 63

[22] . E. S. Haldaine and G. G. T. Ross, eds. The Philosophical Works of Descartes, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 1:149

[23] Descartes, Philosophical Works, p. 144

[24] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 67

[25] Descartes, Philosophical Works, p. 145

[26] Ibid., p. 147; Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 65

[27] Descartes, Philosophical Works, p. 159.

[28] Ibid. p. 8

[29] Ibid., pp. 81-130

[30] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 67

[31] Ibid., pp. 80-81.59

[32] Ibid., p. 74. The first evil was the "precision" of the mathematical sciences and the clarity of their proofs (ibid, p. 73.). This may cause, according to Ghazali, in an unskilled mind, a high opinion of the philosophers (he considered mathematics as a part of philosophical sciences) and may lead the unskilled mind to assume that all their sciences have the same lucidity and apodictic solidity. Accordingly, the unskilled mind will try to imitate the philosophers' unbelief, their negative attitude toward religion and their disdain for *Shari'a* (the Islamic law).The second evil likely to follow from the study of mathematical sciences, derives from the case of an ignorant friend of Islam who supposes that our religion must be championed by the rejection of every science ascribed to the philosophers....Great indeed is the crime against religion committed by anyone who supposes that Islam is championed by the denial of these mathematical sciences

[33] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 68

[34] Ibid. p. 68.

[35] Ibid. p. 69.

[36] Al-Munqidh Min al-Dhalal, (ed. by F. Jabre. Beirut: Commission Libanese pour la traduction des chef-d'oeuvres, 1969), p. 11. McCarthy did not translate the word *fitra*. See Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 63. Elsewhere (Freedom and Fulfillment, appendix 5, p. 373.2) McCarthy translated it as "original disposition."

[37] Ihyaa' 'Uloum el-Deen, 3 volumes. Cairo: Halabi Press, 1931), I:35-36; Freedom and Fulfillment , p. 72

[38] Ibid., p. 76.

[39] Ibid., p. 76

[40] The issues that, according to Ghazali, lead to heresy are: their rejection of the resurrection of bodies (twentieth Disputation), their claim that God has only universal knowledge (eleventh Disputation), and their maintaining the eternity of the world (first Disputation). See Freedom and Fulfillment, pp. 76-77

[41] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 74.41

[42] Ibid., pp. 74-75.43.

[43] Majid Fakhry, A History of Islamic Philosophy (New York & London: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 353

[44] Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 76.45. Ghazali, here, is setting the stage to give his own interpretation of the issue of causality. Given its importance and relevance to this study, causality will be discussed in a later chapter

[45] Ibid., p. 79

[46] Ibid., p. 81

[47] Ibid., p. 82

[48] Ibid., pp. 83, 88

[49] Ibid., p. 89

[50] Ibid., p. 90

[51] Mizaan al-'Amal (Cairo: Sabeeh & Sons Pres, 1963), p.126.

[52] The word used by Ghazali is generally `aql. At occasions he would use qalb (literally it means heart) to express "knowledge of the true nature of things...[or] to mean that which perceives [grasps] cognitions (al-`uloum), thus being the qalb, viz. that subtle thing." Quoted from Freedom and Fulfillment, appendix 5, p. 367.14. Also In Fadaaih al-Baatiniyya, (Freedom and Fulfillment Appendix 1, p. 154), Ghazali uses other words to mean `aql.

[53] Ghazali, *Ihya' Uloum al-deen* [Revival of Religious Sciences], 3 vols., n.e. (Cairo: Halabi Press, 1967), 1:122. In a Sufi context, *'Ayn al-yaqeen* is the middle stage (*maqaam awsat*) in the ecstatic vision of Sufis. It is reached after the stage of `ilm al-yaqeen (literally, knowledge of certitude), and before *haqq al-yaqeen* (literally, truth of certainty). For further details see Annemarie Schimmel, Mystical dimensions of Islam (Cape Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975), pp. 141-142. On the subject of *Yaqeen* in Ghazali in general, see Farid Jabre, La notion de certitude selon Ghazali (Paris: Librairie Philosophique, J. Vrin, 1958), and Schimmel, A. Mystical Dimensions of Islam. Cape Hill: The University of N. Carolina Press, 1975.

[54] ibid., p. 116.

[55] ibid., pp. 525, 530

[56] Jadaane, "Les conditions socioculturelles de la philosophie islamique," Revue des etudes islamiques # 38 (l973): 30-31.

[57] Ibid., p. 30

[58] `Azqoul is referring to Munqidh, in Freedom and Fulfillment, p. 66

[59] Kareem `Azqoul, Al-`Aqlu Fi al-Islam (Beirut: Sader Rihani Press, 1946), p.98. Azqoul, in this second part of his argument, is referring to Ghazali's Qistaas (note 62) as he makes it clear in the following pages of his study.

[60] Ibid., p. 102

[61] Ghazali, Iqtisaad, pp.34, 210; Mizaan al-`Amal [The Criterion of Action] (Cairo: Matba'at M. A. Sabeeh & Sons, 1963), pp. 82, 83; Mi'yaar al-`Ilm [The Criterion of

Knowledge] (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'aarif, 1960), p. 65. More references on this issue may be found.

[62] Ghazali, <u>Al-Qistaas al-Mustaqeem</u> [The Just Balance], ed. Victor Shelhot (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1959), pp. 23, 29.

[63] Shelhot, <u>Al-Qistaas</u>, p. 32.

[64] F. Jabre, <u>La notion de certitude chez Ghazali</u>. (Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 1958), p. 109

[65] <u>Tahafut</u> [Incoherence of the Philosophers], trans. Sabih A. Kamali (Pakistan Philosophical Congress, 1963), p. 2.

[66] Ghazali, <u>Tahafut,</u> trans. Kamali, p. 3; the Arabic text is edited by Majid Fakhry (Beirut: Catholic Press, 1962), p. 38. This is a republication of M. Bouyges' 1927 edition.

[67] Ibid., trans. Kamali, p. 3; ed. Fakhry, p. 39.

[68] Ibid., trans., Kamali, p. 4; ed. Fakhry, pp. 39-40.

[69] A book by Nasir E. Khasraw--published around 1064--revealed that philosophers were already labeled as "kuffaar," ennemies of Islam, a fact he lamented as desastrous to science and philosophy. For more on this see Ibn Rushd, On the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy [<u>Kitaab Fasl el-Maqaal</u>] trans. and ed. G. F. Hourani (London: Messrs. Luzac & Co., 1961), p. 4.

[70] Ghazali, <u>Freedom and Fulfillment,</u> p. 72.

[71] <u>Tahafut</u>, trans. Kamali, p. 89; ed. Fakhry, p. 110.

[72] <u>Freedom and Fulfillment</u>, p. 71

[73] The present author suggests two studies: W. M. Watt, <u>Muslim Intellectual</u> (Edinburgh: the University Press, 1963); M. Fakhry, <u>Islamic Occasionalism</u> (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958).

[74] Objectivity and tolerance go hand in hand when it comes to philosophical or religious discourse. If we compare Ghazali and Thomas Aquinas on these issues, we find that Ghazali has more tolerance toward Christians than Aquinas has toward Muhammad and the Muslims. There is no passage in Ghazali's writings about Christians that parallels what Aquinas reserved for Muhammad and the Muslims in his <u>Summa Contra Gentiles</u>.

[75] <u>Mi'yaar</u>, p. 60

[76] Ibid., p. 61

[77] Ibid., p. 65

[78] <u>Mihakk al-Nazar</u> [Challenge of Reasoning] (n. p., n. d.), pp. 93-94. (author's translation).

[79] Ibid., p. 55

[80] ibid., pp. 75-77, 118-120. For a French translation, see F. Jabre <u>La notion de certitude chez Ghazali</u>, p. 449.

[81] Ghazali, <u>Ihya'</u>, 1:120.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., p. 119

[84] Ibid., p. 31. This reference to the higher class through an appeal to gold may well be an echo to a platonic interpretation of the various levels of individual talents in society (Republic 3, 415e).

[85] <u>Iljaam al-Awaam `an `ilm al-Kalaam</u> [The Restraining of the Common Public from Rational Theology], n.e. (Cairo: Muniriyya Press, 1931), p. 12

[86] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[87] Ibid., p. 32.

[88] Ibid., p. 29.

[89] The Arabic text (Al-Munqidh, ed. Jabre, p. 13.) reads "*wa lam yumkin nasbu dhalik illa min tarkeebi `l'uloumi l'-awwaliyyati'* (primary cognitions)."

[90] Freedom and Fulfillment., p. 66. The underlining is done by the author of this study.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Deliverance From Error…, in Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change Series IIA, Islam, Volume2, George McLean, General Editor, Washington D.C., 2001, p. 48

[93] The underlining is done by the author of this study. In the Meditations, Descartes founded his rational certainty on God. See Philosophical Works, p. 159.

[94] Descartes, Philosophical Letters, translated and edited by Anthony Kenny (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1p70), pp. 82, 87-89, 93-94, 98.

[95] Ibid., pp. 98-99

[96] Freedom and Fulfillment, apendix 1, pp. 150-153; Al-Iqtisaad Fi al-`I'tiqaad [The Concisiveness in Religious Belief], (n. p., n. d.), pp. 211-212.

[97] Ibid., p. 83.

[98] This was Ghazali's essential blame addressed to both the philosophers and the Muslim scholars (ˉ*Mutakallimeen*) who were opposed to philosophical science.

99 Mizaan, p. 82. (present author's translation).