Al-Ghazali's Theory of Education

Al-Ghazali (1058-1111) was one of the most influential Muslim thinkers. A jurist, logician, theologian, and philosopher, he was honoured in the history of Islam with title of Hujjatul-Islam (the Proof of Islam)." Among his numerous contributions to the renewal of the intellectual life of the 5th Islamic century, he developed a theory of education rooted in his philosophy and aiming at improving the objectives and principles of education. Based on a reflexion on the methods and knowledge of teaching, and detailing the relationships between scholars, teachers and pupils, his education concept had a notable influence inside and outside the Muslim world.

1. Introduction

Until recently, Islamic thought as propounded by al-Ghazali constituted the predominant school with regard to the theory and practice of Islam (and, in particular, Sunnite Islam). With his immense intellectual stature and his encyclopaedic knowledge, al-Ghazali has influenced Islamic thought and defined its practice for nearly nine centuries. He was a representative of 'conciliatory Islam'.

Over the past three decades, a new current of 'combative Islam' has appeared and grown rapidly, and is attempting to gain control of the Islamic world. Some observers see this trend as a new revival movement, while others perceive in it a threat not only to the Islamic countries, but to the entire world, and a source of destabilization, taking Islam and Muslims back fourteen centuries.

This new movement derives its intellectual foundations from the teachings of Abu-l-A'là al-Mawdudi, Sayyid Qutb and Ruhollah Khomeini, as well as their hard-line followers active in any number of countries. It advocates the proclamation of society as impious, the forcible elimination of existing regimes, the seizure of power and a radical change in social life-styles; it is aggressive in its rejection of modern civilization. The adepts of this trend hold that Islam, as professed and practised over many centuries, provides the solution to all the political, economic, social, cultural and educational problems facing the Arab and Islamic world, and indeed the whole planet.

The struggle between the thought of al-Ghazali and that of al-Mawdudi is still under way and may turn out to be one of the most important factors in shaping the future of the Arab and Islamic world.

Whatever the outcome of this struggle, al-Ghazali remains one of the most influential philosophers (although he objected to being described as such) and thinkers on education in Islamic history. His biography —as a student in search of knowledge, as a teacher propagating knowledge and as a scholar exploring knowledge— provides a good illustration of the way of life of students, teachers and scholars in the Islamic world in the Middle Ages.

2. The life of Al-Ghazali

Al-Ghazali [2] was born in 1058 CE (A.H. 450) in or near the city of Tus in Khurasan to a Persian family of modest means, whose members had a reputation for learning and an inclination towards Sufism. His father died when he was young, having entrusted one of his Sufi friends with the education of his two sons. The friend undertook that task until the money bequeathed by the father ran out, whereupon the friend advised the two brothers to enter a *madrasa* [2], where they would be afforded board and instruction. Al-Ghazali appears to have begun his elementary education at approximately age 7, studying Arabic, Persian, the Koran and the

principles of religion. He went on to intermediate and higher education at a *madrasa*, where he studied *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *tafsir* (Koranic exegesis) and *hadith* (Prophetic tradition) (see Glossary).

Towards the age of fifteen, al-Ghazali moved to Jurjan (a flourishing centre of learning at that time, some 160 kilometres distant from Tus) to study *fiqh* under Imam al-Isma'ili. Such 'travel in search of learning' to study under famous masters was traditional in Islamic education. The following year, he returned to Tus, where he remained for three years, memorizing and endeavouring to understand what he had taken down from the masters, and continuing the study of *fiqh*. He then moved to Nishapur, where he studied *fiqh, kalam* (scholastic theology), logic and, possibly, some philosophy under Imam al-Juwaini, the most illustrious Shafi'ite (one of the four Sunnite Schools of Law) *faqih* (jurist, scholar of Islamic religious law) of the day. At that time, al-Ghazali was twenty-three years of age. He continued to study for five years under Imam al-Juwayni and to assist him with teaching. He also began to write and to study Sufism under another *shaikh*, al-Farmadhi.

Al-Ghazali's period of apprenticeship ended with the death of al-Juwaini 1085 CE (478 H); he was now about 28 years old, becoming involved in politics and mingling with the ruling circles. He travelled to meet Nizam ul-Mulk, the Seljuq minister, and remained with him in his 'camp' for six years, during which time he lived the life of a 'court jurist'. He took part in political and learned disputes and wrote books until he was appointed as a professor to the Nizamiya *madrasa* at Baghdad, the most celebrated and important centre of science and teaching in the *Mashriq* (Islamic East) at that time. He worked there for four years, and composed a number of works on *fiqh*, which he also taught, together with logic and *kalam*; the most important of those works were the *Al-Mustazhiri* [The Exotericist] and *Al-Iqtisad fi-l-I'tiqad* [The Golden Mean in Belief], both works of a political nature on *fiqh*.

Al-Ghazali was a protagonist in three vehement political and intellectual controversies which were raging in the Islamic world at that time: the struggle between philosophy and religion (between Islamic and Greek culture), in which he took the side of religion against philosophy; the struggle between the Sunnites and the Shi'ites, in which he defended the 'Abbasid Caliphate against the Batinites; and the struggle between revelation and reason… and between *fiqh* and Sufi mysticism.

While resident as a professor at the Nizamaya *madrasa* in Baghdad, al-Ghazali made a thorough study of philosophy (Greek philosophy, in particular that of Aristotle, Plato and Plotinus, as well as Islamic philosophy, in particular that of Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and al-Farabi) in order better to refute it. The basic problem facing al-Ghazali was that of reconciling philosophy with religion.

He resolved this conflict by maintaining that philosophy was correct in as far as it agreed with the principles of (Islamic) religion, and was flawed wherever it was at variance with it. As a prelude to his attacks on philosophy, he wrote a book in which he summarized the fundamentals of philosophical thought as known in his time, *Maqasid al-Falasifa* [The Aims of the Philosophers].

That was followed by his famous work, *Tahafut al-Falasifa* [The Incoherence of the Philosophers]. He summed up his opposition to the philosophers in twenty major points, dealing with God, the universe and man. For al-Ghazali, the world is a recent creation, bodies are resurrected into the hereafter along with their souls, and God knows both particulars and universals. The *Tahafut al-Falasifa* caused a great stir and had a profound effect in the Islamic world. Indeed, its influence was felt as far afield as Christian Europe. Al-Ghazali and his *Tahafut* contributed to the weakening of Greek philosophical thought in the Islamic world, despite several attempts to defend philosophy by Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and others [3]. As military and intellectual confrontation flared up between the Sunnites and the Shi'ites, and between the 'Abbasid Caliphate and the Fatimid State and its partisans and adherents in the Mashriq, al-Ghazali joined the fray. He wrote a series of works on the subject, the most important of which was *Fada'ih al-Batiniya wa-Fada'il al-Mustazhiriya* [The Infamies of the Esotericists and the Virtues of the Exotericists].

Batinite esotericism is based on two fundamental principles: the infallibility of the *imam* (see Glossary), the obligatory source of knowledge, and an esoteric interpretation of *shari'a* (the revealed law of Islam) by the *imam* and his representatives. Al-Ghazali aimed his attacks more against the principle of the infallibility of the *imam* than against the esoteric interpretation of *shari'a*. He also endeavoured to defend and justify the existence of the 'Abbasid Caliphate—even if only as a symbolic entity, since the Caliphate was then in an extremely weak state—to ease the conditions of admission to the imamate and to confer legitimacy on the Seljuq sultans, the real military and political force at the time, a juridical and political problem which had been tackled by other Muslim *fuqaha'*, in particular al-Mawardi. However, al-Ghazali's attack against esotericism was not as successful as his attack against the philosophers.

In 1095 CE (488 H), at the age of 38, al-Ghazali suddenly underwent a six-month-long spiritual crisis, which may be briefly described as a violent internal conflict between rational intelligence and the spirit, between this world and the hereafter. He began by doubting the validity of existing doctrines and schools (knowledge as such), and eventually came to question the efficacy of the tools of knowledge. This crisis brought on a physical illness which prevented him from speaking or teaching, and, having attained the truth by means of the light with which God had illuminated his heart, finally caused him to leave his post and renounce wealth, fame and influence.

Al-Ghazali classified the prevailing doctrines of his day into four main groups: scholastic theology, based on logic and reason; Batinism or esotericism, based on initiation; philosophy, based on logic and proof; and Sufism, based on unveiling and receptiveness thereto. He also held that the means whereby knowledge could be attained were: the senses, reason and revelation. In the end, he came to prefer Sufism and revelation (inspiration), and since it was difficult or impossible to reconcile the imperatives of this world with those of the hereafter, he left Baghdad under the pretence of making a pilgrimage to Mecca, and went to Damascus [4].

Sufi influences were many and powerful in the life of al-Ghazali, and a number of factors caused him to lean in the direction of Sufism. It was a period in which Sufism had become prevalent; his father had been favourably disposed towards Sufism; his tutor had been a Sufi; his brother had turned to Sufism at an early age; his professors had been inclined towards Sufism; the minister, Nizam al-Mulk was close to Sufism; and finally, al-Ghazali himself had studied Sufism.

However, Sufism is not a theoretical science that can simply be studied from books or learnt from a master; it is also an activity, a practice and a mode of conduct, with its own rules, including withdrawal from the world, seclusion and itinerancy. This is what al-Ghazali did, spending nearly two years in seclusion and wandering between Damascus, Jerusalem and Mecca. It was during this period that he began work on his most important book; *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din* [The Revival of the Religious Sciences], which he may have completed later. This work is divided into four parts, dealing with devotional practice, social customs, the causes of perdition and the means of salvation, and while al-Ghazali hardly says anything new in it, its four volumes totalling some 1,500 pages constitute a compendium of Islamic religious thought in the Middle Ages. With its comprehensiveness, clarity and simplicity, it occupies a unique position in the history of Islamic thought.

Al-Ghazali returned to Baghdad in 1097 CE (490 H) and continued to live the life of a Sufi in the *ribat* of Abu Sa'id of Nishapur opposite the Nizamiya *madrasa*. He took up teaching again for a short time, expounding his *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*. He then went to his birthplace, Tus, where he continued to live as a Sufi and to write. It is apparently during this period that he completed the *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din* and several other works of a clearly Sufi nature [5].

After ten years of absence, al-Ghazali went back to teaching at the Nizamiya *madrasa* at Nishapur in 1104 CE (498H), at the request of the Seljuq minister Fakhr ul-Mulk. However, he continued to live as a Sufi and to write until 1109 CE (503 H) [6], when he left Nishapur to return to his birthplace, Tus, to devote himself to the

life of an ascetic Sufi and to teaching. Near his house he built a *khangah* or Sufi hermitage, and it was in this period that he wrote *Minhaj al-'Abidin* [The Path of the Worshippers] [7], which appears to be a description of his way of life and that of his pupils: renunciation of this world, seclusion and cultivation of the innermost self. And so he continued until his death in 1111 CE (505 H).

3. The philosophy of Al-Ghazali

theme of al-Ghazali's philosophy, and indeed of Islamic philosophy in general, is the concept of God and His relationship with His creation (the world and mankind). Although al-Ghazali initially followed the mainstream of Islamic *fiqh*, and in particular of Ash'ari (traditional Sunnite) *kalam*, in describing the essence and attributes of God, and Sufi undercurrents in defining the relationship between God and mankind, he then proposes his own conception of the essence, attributes and actions of God [8].

Like many legal experts and philosophers, al-Ghazali divides the universe into the transient world and the eternal hereafter. This world, or temporary existence, is subject to the will of God; it is not governed by a set of scientific laws, but is maintained, governed and driven by the direct and continual intervention of God (rejection of causality). God is not only the creator of the universe and of its attributes and laws (or the cause of existence); He is also the cause of every event in the world, great and small, past, present and future [9].

In this universe lives man, a creature with an immortal soul and a mortal body. Man is neither good nor evil by nature, although his natural disposition is closer to good than to evil. Furthermore, he operates within a constrained framework, within which there is more compulsion than freedom of choice. He is not so much meant for this world, in which he toils, as for the hereafter, which he must aspire to and strive to achieve [10].

Society is composed of human beings, and in al-Ghazali's view cannot be virtuous. His is a society in which evil outweighs good, to such an extent that man may acquire greater merit by shunning society than by living in it. Society can only change for the worse, and individuals have rights and duties with respect to society. However, the existence of the individual is insignificant compared with the existence and strength of the group. It is a class society divided into a thinking and ruling élite, and the masses, whose affairs are entirely in the hands of the élite. Religious and doctrinal questions are left to the scholars, and worldly things and matters of State come under the authority of the rulers. The common people have no choice but to obey. Lastly, it is a society that is completely subject to the authority and guidance of God; it has no other goal than that of upholding the religion of God and of affording people the opportunity of adoring Him [11].

Awareness and knowledge are the most important characteristics of man, who derives knowledge from two sources: the human attributes of the senses and reason, which are deficient, allow man to know the material world in which he lives; while the divine properties of revelation and inspiration enable him to discover the invisible world. These two types of knowledge must not be equated, whether with respect to their source, method or reliability. True knowledge can only be unveiled once the self has been cultivated through learning and exercise for what is engraved on the Well-Guarded Tablet (the contents of the Holy Koran) to be imprinted on it. The more the self comprehends such knowledge, the better it knows God, the closer it comes to Him, and the greater is the happiness of man [12].

The man of virtue, in al-Ghazali's view, is he who renounces this world, turns towards the hereafter and prefers seclusion to the company of his fellow-men. Poverty is preferable to wealth, and hunger to a full belly. The comportment of the man of virtue is governed by reliance on God rather than an urge to achieve supremacy, and his habits are more those of patience than of struggle [13]. It is remarkable that at the same time as the ideal of the man of virtue was beginning to change in Europe, where the 'warrior monk' was taking over from the monk in the cloister, the attire of the man of virtue was also changing in the Arab East. While Peter the Hermit was rallying the European masses to join in the crusades, al-Ghazali was urging the Arabs to submit to their rulers or to turn away from society. Thus the thinker and philosopher helped to mould society and change the course of history.

Al-Ghazali's philosophy of education represents the high point of Islamic thinking on education, in which al-Ghazali's inclination towards reconciliation and the integration of various intellectual schools is apparent. Here he achieves a synthesis of legal, philosophical and mystical educational thinking.

Al-Ghazali was not a 'philosopher of education' (even though he did work as a teacher at the beginning of his career); he was a philosopher of religion and ethics. When he had completed the outlines of this great philosophical edifice, and begun to put it into practice, al-Ghazali found himself turning to education and teaching, in the same way as the great philosophers before him had done. Al-Ghazali's philosophy was more an expression of the spirit of the age in which he lived than a response to its challenges; his thinking on education, as indeed his philosophy, favoured continuity and stability over change and innovation.

For Al-Ghazali, the purpose of society is to apply *shari'a*, and the goal of man is to achieve happiness close to God. Therefore, the aim of education is to cultivate man so that he abides by the teachings of religion, and is hence assured of salvation and happiness in the eternal life hereafter. Other worldly goals, such as the pursuit of wealth, social standing or power, and even the love of knowledge, are illusory, since they relate to the transient world [14].

Man is born as a *tabula rasa*, and children acquire personality, characteristics and behaviour through living in society and interacting with the environment. The family teaches the children its language, customs and religious traditions, whose influence they cannot escape. Therefore, the main responsibility for children's education falls on the parents, who take credit for their probity and bear the burden of their errors; they are partners in everything the children do, and this responsibility is subsequently shared by the teachers [15]. Al-Ghazali stresses the importance of childhood in character formation. A good upbringing will give children a good character and help them to live a righteous life; whereas, a bad upbringing will spoil their character and it will be difficult to bring them back to the straight and narrow path. It is therefore necessary to understand the special characteristics of this period in order to deal with the child in an effective and sound manner [16].

It is important that boys should begin to attend *maktab* (elementary school) at an early age, for what is learnt then is as engraved in stone. Those entrusted with the education of the boy at school should be aware of how his motivations develop and interests change from one period to another: a fascination with movement, games and amusement, followed by a love of finery and appearances (in infancy and childhood), then an interest in women and sex (adolescence), a yearning for leadership and domination (after the age of 20), and finally delight in the knowledge of God (around the age of 40). These changing interests can be used by educators to attract the boy to school, by offering first the lure of ball games, then ornaments and fine clothes, then responsibilities, and finally by awakening a longing for the hereafter [17].

In the elementary stage, children learn the Koran and the sayings of the Prophet's companions; they should be preserved from love poetry and the company of men of letters, both of which sow the seeds of corruption in boys' souls. They must be trained to obey their parents, teachers and elders, and to behave well towards their classmates. They should be prevented from boasting to their peers about their parents' wealth or the food they eat, their clothes and accessories. Rather, they should be taught modesty, generosity and civility. Attention is drawn to the potentially pernicious influence of the children's comrades on their character. They must therefore be advised that their friends should possess the following five qualities: intelligence, good morals, good character, abstemiousness and truthfulness [18].

Education is not limited to training the mind and filling it with information, but involves all aspects—intellectual, religious, moral and physical—of the personality of the learner. It is not enough to impart theoretical learning; that learning must be put into practice. True learning is that which affects behaviour and whereby the learner makes practical use of his knowledge [19].

The children's tutors must devote attention to religious education. First, the principles and foundations of religion are instilled into them such that by the age of about 7 they can be expected to perform the ritual ablutions and prayers, and to undertake several days of fasting during Ramadan until they become accustomed to it and are able to fast for the whole month. They should not be allowed to wear silk or gold, which are proscribed by the Faith. They must also be taught everything they need to know about the precepts of religious law, and must learn not to steal, eat forbidden food, act disloyally, lie, utter obscenities or do anything which children are prone to do.

Naturally, at this early age they will not be able to understand the intricacies of what they are taught or expected to practice, and there is no harm in that. As they grow older, they will come to understand what they have been taught and what they are practising. At times, al-Ghazali the Sufi overshadows al-Ghazali the educator: for instance, he advocates cutting the boy off from the world and its temptations in order for him to renounce it, and accustoming him to a simple, rough life in poverty and modesty [20].

And yet the educator quickly reappears, for he feels that once the boy has left the school premises, he should be allowed to play suitable games in order to recover from the fatigue of study, and be freed from the constraints imposed upon him. However, he must not tire or overtax himself at play. Preventing the boy from playing and burdening him constantly with learning can only weary his heart and blunt his mind, spoiling his life and making him so despise study that he resorts to all manner of tricks to escape it [21].

If the boy obeys his tutors, has good morals, shows excellence and makes progress in his studies, he should be honoured and praised in public so as to be encouraged and to incite others to imitate him. If he makes a mistake, but appears to be aware of it, the tutor should not mind, for the boy may have understood his mistake and be determined not to repeat it. If, however, he commits the same error again, his tutor should give him a small reprimand in private. The teacher may sometimes need to punish his pupils with a light beating, the purpose of which should be chastisement rather than physical injury [22].

The teachers should take into account the differences in character and ability between pupils, and deal with each one of them appropriately. The teachers should not push the pupils beyond their capacity, nor attempt to bring them to a level of knowledge that they cannot absorb, since that is counter-productive. By the same token, they should not keep a bright pupil back at the level of his/her schoolmates, for then the teacher would be in the position of someone who would feed an infant on flesh which they cannot eat, digest or benefit from, or someone who would give a strong man human milk, which he has long outgrown. To feed someone with the right food is to give life; to burden someone with what is not right can only cause ruin [23].

Obscured by his borrowings from philosophers (Ibn Miskawayh in particular) or by their influence, al-Ghazali the *faqih* and Sufi returns to the fore when, in addressing the arts and artistic education, he deals with the general principles of education. He begins well by defining beauty and goodness as the perception of a thing in its entirety, but his Sufism quickly gets the better of him and he condemns listening to music and singing because they are associated with gatherings where wine is drunk. The only kind of singing to be allowed, in his view, is that of religious and heroic songs, or those sung at official festivities (religious festivals, celebrations, banquets, etc.). Such songs revive one's spirits, rejoice the heart and help one to carry on the work of this world and the next. However, an excess of music and singing should be avoided: as with medicine, they should be taken only in prescribed doses. The same is true of dancing, which may be practised or watched in the appropriate places, as long as it does not arouse desire or encourage sinful acts.

Al-Ghazali attacks drawing and painting vehemently, in conformity with the aversion of the *fuqaha'*, particularly in the early days of Islam, to the depiction of man or animals, which was associated with the veneration of idols or icons. He therefore rules that pictures should be removed or defaced, and he recommends not working as an engraver, goldsmith or decorator. With regard to poetry, al-Ghazali advises men not to waste their time with it, even if the composition or recitation of verses is not forbidden.

Thus, al-Ghazali adopts a strict position that is in agreement with that of the most rigorous legal experts. He divides the arts into the categories of licit, reprehensible and forbidden. The licit arts are those dealing with religion or which inspire fervor. Arts intended for pleasure or entertainment al-Ghazali tends to declare either reprehensible or forbidden. In any case, he pays scant attention to the arts or artistic education. However, we should no doubt do al-Ghazali an injustice if we were to disregard the criteria and ideas of his day and age and judge him solely by the standards and concepts of our time [24].

Al-Ghazali advises marriage as soon as the sexual urge appears and maturity is reached. But he also stresses that marriage and the founding of a family is a great responsibility, which one should be properly prepared to assume. Al-Ghazali advises that those unable to marry should endeavour to cultivate and discipline themselves and curb their impulses through fasting and spiritual exercises [25].

5. The concept of methods and knowledge of teaching

With the emergence of the new religion (Islam) and the civilization that arose with it, a set of religious and linguistic disciplines came into being, among which were those dealing with the Koran, *hadith, fiqh*, linguistics, the biographies of the Prophet and his companions, and the military campaigns of the Prophet, which were designated the 'Arab sciences'. With the growth of Arab and Islamic culture, and through contact and interaction with and borrowing from foreign cultures, another set of disciplines arose, such as medicine, astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, philosophy and logic, which were called the 'non-Arab' sciences. From these native and borrowed sciences a flourishing scientific movement grew rapidly, although a conflict soon arose between the religious sciences and the disciplines of philosophy and the natural sciences, or between the *fuqaha'* and the philosophers. Al-Ghazali and his *Tahafut al-Falasifa* was one of the elements in this struggle, which ended with the victory of the *fuqaha'* (and Sufis) over the philosophers and scientists. And yet the religious sciences emerged from this battle weakened and lacking in vigour, especially after the gate of independent inquiry was closed and the method of relying on earlier authorities gained supremacy: Arab civilization and science thus went from an age of original production, creativity and innovation to one of derivation, imitation and compilation.

As a scholar and teacher, al-Ghazali was interested in the problem of knowledge: its concepts, methods, categories and aims [26]. True knowledge, in al-Ghazali's view, is knowledge of God, His books, His prophets, the kingdoms of earth and heaven, as well as knowledge of *shari'a* as revealed by His Prophet. Such knowledge is thus a religious science, even if it includes the study of certain worldly phenomena. Disciplines relating to this world, such as medicine, arithmetic, etc., are classed as techniques [27].

The purpose of knowledge is to help man to achieve plenitude and to attain true happiness—the happiness of the hereafter—by drawing close to God and gazing upon His countenance [28]. The value of learning lies in its usefulness and veracity. Hence, the religious sciences are superior to the secular sciences because they concern salvation in the eternal hereafter rather than this transient world, and because they contain greater truth than the secular sciences. This is not to say that the secular sciences should be completely ignored; they have their uses, and are needed by society. Examples of such disciplines are medicine and linguistics [29].

The Muslim philosophers and scholars (al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn an-Nadim, Ibn Sina and others) had a passion for classifying the sciences, and were influenced in this respect by the Greek philosophers, in particular

Aristotle. Al-Ghazali has several classifications of the sciences: he first classifies them according to their 'nature' into theoretical (theological and religious sciences) and practical (ethics, home economics and politics) [30], and then according to their 'origin' into revealed sciences, taken from the prophets (unity of God, exegesis, rites, customs, morality) and rational sciences, produced by human reason and thinking (mathematics, natural sciences, theology, etc.) [31]

There is no contradiction, in al-Ghazali's opinion, between the revealed sciences and the rational sciences. Any apparent conflict between the prescriptions of revelation and the requirements of reason stems from the incapacity of the seeker to attain the truth and from his faulty understanding of the reality of revealed law or the judgement of reason. In fact, the revealed and the rational sciences complement—and indeed are indispensable to—one another. The problem is that it is difficult, if not impossible, to study and understand them together. They constitute two separate paths, and whoever takes an interest in the one will be deficient in the other [32].

Finally, al-Ghazali classifies the sciences according to their purpose or aim, dividing them into the science of transaction (governing the behaviour and actions of human beings—the sciences of rites and customs) and the science of unveiling (pertaining to the apprehension of the reality and essence of things), an abstract science which can only be attained through unveiling a light which illuminates the heart when the heart is purified, a light which is ineffable and cannot be contained in books. It is the supreme science and the truest form of knowledge [33].

The 11th century (5th century H) witnessed the triumph of the religious sciences over philosophy and the natural sciences. al-Ghazali's violent attack on philosophy was one of the factors that contributed to its weakening in the Islamic East. Al-Ghazali divides the philosophical sciences into six categories: mathematics, logic, natural sciences, metaphysics, politics and ethics. Mathematics, logic and the natural sciences do not contradict religion, and may be studied. The problem is that whoever studies them may go on to metaphysics and other disciplines which should be avoided. Metaphysics is the science which is most dangerous and at variance with religion. Politics and ethics are not incompatible with the sciences and principles of religion, but here again, whoever studies them may slide into the study of other, reprehensible sciences [34].

Curiously, although al-Ghazali attacked philosophy and the natural sciences, and was influential in persecuting and weakening them, he also helped to restore them to the curriculum at al-Azhar at the end of the 19th century, where the head of that university, Muhammad al-Anbabi 1878 CE (1305 H) adduced al-Ghazali's writings on the natural sciences in order to demonstrate that they were not contradictory to religion and to authorize their teaching [35].

The Islamic educational system was divided into two distinct levels: elementary schooling was dispensed in the *kuttab* for the common people, and by men of letters in private houses for the children of the élite; higher education took place in various Islamic educational institutions such as mosques, *madrasas*, 'houses of science and wisdom', Sufi hermitages, brotherhoods, hospices, etc. The elementary curriculum had a pronounced religious character, and consisted mainly of learning the Koran and the fundamentals of religion, reading and writing, and occasionally the rudiments of poetry, grammar, narration and arithmetic, with some attention being devoted to moral instruction.

At the beginning of Islam, the higher curriculum was purely religious and included the sciences of *tafsir, hadith, fiqh* and *kalam*, and disciplines designed to aid in their study, such as linguistics, literature and poetry, as well as branches of knowledge which had developed in the margins of the religious sciences, such as narratives, the military campaigns of the Prophet and history. As Islamic civilization developed and assimilated Greek science, there arose alongside the Islamic curriculum a new curriculum, in which philosophy and science (mathematics, logic, medicine, astronomy, natural sciences, etc.) were studied. It was not easy to combine these two types of knowledge; only a small number of students and scholars succeeded in doing so. Owing to the weak position of philosophy and science, and the strength of the attack against them, they

gradually began to disappear from the curriculum in the 11th century (5th century H), to be taken up again only in the early 19th century, albeit primarily in independent scientific institutes.

It should be noted that in Arab and Islamic civilization, curricula were not rigidly defined, but were flexible and allowed students the freedom of choosing the subjects they wished to study and the masters they wished to study under. Al-Ghazali distinguishes clearly between two types of curriculum: (a) obligatory sciences, which must be studied by everyone, including the religious sciences and related or ancillary disciplines such as linguistics and literature; (b) optional sciences, which are studied according to the wishes and capacities of the student. These are in turn divided into: (i) revealed sciences, of which there are four: the fundamentals (the Book, *sunna, ijma'* and the teachings of the companions of the Prophet); the branches (*fiqh* and ethics); means (linguistics and grammar); and the accessories (reading, *tafsir*, the sources of *fiqh*, annals and geneology); and (ii) non-revealed sciences (medicine, mathematics, poetry and history) [36].

The criterion governing the choice of subjects is their usefulness for the student and for society. Hence religious subjects are preferred, since they are conducive to the godliness of the eternal hereafter rather than the mediocrity of this transient world. Al-Ghazali clarifies his conception of the contents and methods of teaching by classifying the subjects students may choose into three categories:

– Knowledge which is praiseworthy whether in small or large amounts (knowledge of God, His attributes, His actions, the Law which He established in His creation, and His wisdom in giving pre-eminence to the hereafter over this world).

– Knowledge, which is reprehensible whether in small or large amounts (witchcraft, magic, astrology).

– Knowledge which is praiseworthy to a certain extent (*tafsir, hadith, fiqh, kalam*, linguistics, grammar, etc.) [37].

He recommends beginning with the fundamental sciences: the Koran, followed by *sunna*, then *tafsir* and the Koranic sciences. These are to be followed by applied ethics—*fiqh*, then the sources of *fiqh*, etc. [38]

Al-Ghazali then divides each branch of knowledge into three levels: elementary, intermediate and advanced (primary, secondary and higher), and he lists the books which may be studied at each level of the various sciences and subjects of study. In Al-Ghazali's eyes, education is not merely a process whereby the teacher imparts knowledge that the pupil may or may not absorb, after which teacher and pupil each go their separate ways. Rather, it is an 'interaction' affecting and benefiting teacher and pupil equally, the former gaining merit for giving instruction and the latter cultivating himself through the acquisition of knowledge.

Al-Ghazali attaches great importance to the climate in which teaching takes place, and to the kind of relations that are desirable; in doing so, he continues and reaffirms the Islamic traditions of education. For him, the teacher should be a model and an example, not merely a purveyor or medium of knowledge. His work is not limited to the teaching of a particular subject; rather, it should encompass all aspects of the personality and life of the pupil. The pupil, in turn, has a duty to consider the teacher as a father, to whom he owes obedience and respect [39].

Among the principles governing the art of teaching, al-Ghazali stresses that teaching should be linked to concrete situations and emphasizes the need for various types of knowledge and skills. Whenever a particular knowledge or skill is needed, it should be taught in such a way as to meet that need and be functional [40]. He also stresses that learning is only effective when it is put into practice, and is aimed at inculcating the right habits rather than simply memorizing information [41].

Al-Ghazali comes close to the idea of 'proficiency learning' when he recommends that the teacher should not move on from one subject matter to another without first ensuring that the pupil has mastered the first subject

matter, and to the concept of the 'complementarity of sciences' when he advises that the teacher should pay attention to the interconnectedness of knowledge and the relations between its various branches. Finally, he counsels a gradual and patient approach in teaching[42].

With respect to religious education, al-Ghazali recommends an early introduction to the fundamentals of religion through inculcation, memorization and repetition, there being no need for understanding at first. A subsequent stage involves explanation, understanding and conscious pratice [43]. Here too, al-Ghazali continues the Islamic traditions of education, in which the Koran was first to be memorized without being explained, the fundamentals of religion inculcated without clarification and practice was enjoined before the emergence of commitment rooted in conviction.

6. Scholars, teachers and pupils

As Islamic society evolved, numerous changes took place in the nature of the educated élite and its role in society. At first, this élite was essentially made up of religious scholars; there then appeared 'writers' and 'philosophers', followed by Sufis. Each group represented a specific category of social leaders, who at times co-existed peacefully, but at other times had violent and bloody clashes over the principles or interests of their respective groups. These clashes, in turn, helped to shape Islamic society and civilization, and ended in the 11th century CE with the victory of the alliance of the *fuqaha'* and Sufis over the philosophers and scholars. Things remained thus until the end of the 18th century, when a new intellectual leadership appeared, that of the modern, secular, western-educated scholars, who imposed themselves in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Al-Ghazali is greatly concerned by the problem of the scholarly élite. In his criticism of the scholars of his time there may be an element of self-criticism since, before undergoing a spiritual crisis, he first immersed himself in politics and academic disputes seeking fame and social advancement, subsequently foresaking the wealth and influence he had enjoyed, and retreating into seclusion and asceticism.

Al-Ghazali represents the traditional Islamic approach in his insistence on the importance of scholars (the inheritors of the prophets) in society. He defines the role of the scholar in society as: (a) seeking to attain the truth; (b) cultivating his innermost self and acting in accordance with the knowledge which he has attained; (c) disseminating the truth and teaching others without desire or fear [44]. 'Whoever learns, acts and teaches shall be mighty in the kingdom of heaven, for he is as the sun, whose resplendence illuminates other bodies, or as musk, whose fragrance perfumes other objects; in undertaking to teach, he accomplishes a great and momentous task, and must therefore be mindful of his rules of conduct and functions.' [45] The scholar who does not use his knowledge, but who withholds it and does not disseminate it shall be punished [46]. The standing of scholars is determined by the standing of the sciences they work in. Since the religious sciences are more important than the temporal sciences, *fiqh* more significant than medicine, medicine more noble than witchcraft, the sciences of unveiling more important than those of transaction.

Al-Ghazali is critical of the scholars of his age (and of himself), particularly in view of their avidity for wealth and influence, their proximity to the rulers, their failure to abide by their own teachings, their interest in the traditional sciences, which help them to gain high office (e.g. *fiqh*), and their neglect of useful sciences (such as medicine) [47]. Although al-Ghazali places the Sufis above the *'ulama'* (*fuqaha'* and philosophers), he does not spare them from his criticism or attacks. In his view, most Sufis have strayed far from the essence of Sufism and only aspire to the social position that Sufism confers on them [48].

Al-Ghazali is faced with two important questions: the relationship of the scholars to the common people and to the rulers. The function of the scholar is to seek the truth and disseminate it; teaching is a duty for the scholar. Al-Ghazali is very close to the idea of the 'society of teachers and learners'. In his opinion, teaching is not the duty of scholars and teachers alone; anyone who learns something has a duty to teach it [49].

However, that does not mean that the scholar or teacher must teach everybody everything. The scholar must take into account the differences between the common people and the élite, and between licit knowledge and 'that which is to be withheld from those unworthy of it'. He must even keep secret truths that cannot be divulged for fear that they may have a harmful effect on people or cause them to doubt their own faith or reason. Al-Ghazali practised this himself and recommends it in many of his books, in particular *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*. This position was the result of the persecution and intellectual terrorism prevailing at that time, which led to the assassination of a number of thinkers and the burning of their books [50].

As a reaction against his previous habits and experience, al-Ghazali stresses the need for scholars to practise asceticism, to shun authority and rulers, and to counterbalance the power of the rulers, in order to prevent the corruption of society. If it were not for the existence of unscrupulous judges and scholars, sovereigns would be less corrupt, for fear of rejection [51]. In order to preserve their independent judgement, it is best for the scholars to remain aloof from the rulers and to refrain from visiting them or undertaking any work for them, such as teaching them or their children, and to refuse any salary or material compensation from them, because most of their wealth is ill-gotten. However, social necessities may force scholars to work and they are consequently compelled to accept State remuneration. It is therefore licit for them to receive payment from public funds [52].

In the early days of Islam, there was a category of *mu'allimin*, who taught the younger generation reading and writing in *makatib*. Similarly, the elder companions of the Prophet, reciters of the Koran, transmitters of *hadith*, narrators of epics and *fuqaha'* gave instruction to adults in the mosques. In the Umayyad period, there arose a new category of *mu'addibin* (educators, tutors), who tutored the children of the élite at home; they grew in numbers and influence in the 'Abbasid period. There also appeared a further category of *mudarrisin* of higher education, who engaged in research and university teaching; this coincided with the growth of specialized educational institutions (*madaris*, etc.).

In Islamic civilization, school-teachers and professors had a certain prestige springing from the religious nature of teaching and the eagerness of students to seek knowledge directly from the master. And yet, the social standing of Koranic school-masters was rather low, unlike that of venerable religious authorities and scholars. There thus emerged a clear concern in Islamic society to draw up rules governing the work of school-teachers [53].

Al-Ghazali considers the seeking of knowledge as a form of worship, and teaching as a duty and an obligation, and indeed a most excellent profession. Teachers are indispensable to society [54]. Sufi influence is clearly in evidence in his writings, particularly with regard to the need for schoolteachers and the qualities they should possess, which include erudition, renunciation of the world, spiritual accomplishment, devotion, frugality, morality, etc. [55] Al-Ghazali proposes a 'professional code of ethics' for teachers, who, he says, should practice what they preach, and be an example to their pupils and to people in general [56].

O Disciple! How many sleepless nights have you passed reading science and poring over books—but I do not know its purpose. If it was for worldly ends, to gain its baubles, win its honours and to boast over your contemporaries and equals, woe to you, and again woe! But if your purpose was to vitalize the Sacred Law of the Prophet, to develop your character and break 'the soul commanding evil', then blessing on you and again blessings [57].

In such eloquent terms does al-Ghazali define the aim of study and learning. He then proceeds to advise students (especially those in higher education) to divide their days in the following manner, spending from

dawn to sunrise in invocation of God and private worship; from sunrise to midmorning seeking knowledge from one's professors; from mid-morning to mid-afternoon in writing notes and making fair copies; from mid-afternoon to sunset in attending learned gatherings or in performing rites of invocation, begging forgiveness or glorification of God. The first third of the night should be spent in reading, the second third in prayer, and the final third in sleep [58].

Finally, he proposes a 'code of ethics' whereby students should:

- 1. Ensure that they are spiritually pure before they undertake the quest for knowledge;
- 2. Divest themselves of their worldly possessions, detach themselves from hearth and home, and devote themselves to the search for knowledge and the pursuit of the hereafter;
- 3. Respect the rights of their teachers and behave in a civil manner towards them;
- 4. Beware, especially at the beginning of their studies, of paying too much attention to doctrinal controversies;
- 5. Master the fundamentals of the praiseworthy sciences (linguistics, *tafsir, hadith, fiqh* and *kalam*), and then specialize by studying one or more of those sciences in greater depth;
- 6. Choose useful subjects in which to specialize, especially those that are conducive to salvation in the hereafter;
- 7. Study each subject thoroughly before going on to another, bearing in mind the logical sequence and interconnectedness of the various disciplines;
- 8. Have as their main goal in their search for knowledge the cultivation and perfection of the innermost self in this world, and proximity to God in the hereafter, rather than the attainment of high office or the acquisition of wealth or fame [59].

These recommendations bear the stamp of Sufism, and represent al-Ghazali's later thinking. The above applies to the education of boys; girls are treated differently by al-Ghazali, and indeed by other Islamic philosophers of education. Despite the fact that Islam is concerned with improving the social status of women and devoting attention to their education, the later *hadith* and the social and educational principles derived therefrom accorded women an inferior position.

Al-Ghazali exemplifies this negative tendency regarding the methods in which women are to be considered, dealt with and educated. In his view, women are for the most part of dubious morality and limited intelligence; a virtuous woman is a rare phenomenon. He places women at a lower rank than men, and he enjoins them to obey men and to remain inside the home [60].

Although he holds that girls may claim from their parents, and wives from their husbands, the right to be educated, such education is very limited. It is enough for a young girl to learn the fundamentals of religion. She should not endeavour to acquire any loftier forms of knowledge, nor should she, except with the permission of her husband, go outside the home to seek knowledge, as long as he performs his duty to educate her. If, however, he does not educate her, she may go outside the home to seek education, and the man who would prevent her from so doing is at fault [61].

In his treatment of education, al-Ghazali draws on numerous and varied sources: He borrows from Ibn Miskawayh and the Ikhwan a-afa' [Brethren of Purity], as well as from the *fuqaha'*. As was his custom, he brings together various disparate and contradictory lements, and his writing is a combination of *fiqh*, philosophy and Sufi mysticism, in which the Sufi element is nevertheless dominant.

7. The impact of Al-Ghazali

Al-Ghazali died at the age of fifty five (according to the Hegira calendar), after a life that was not as long as it was productive, wide-ranging and influential. He is rightly considered to be one of the most important and profound Islamic thinkers, who was aptly called the 'renovator of the 5th century H'. Al-Ghazali's influence may be witnessed by a number of factors, such as:

-The profundity, power and comprehensiveness of his thought, contained in some fifty different works, the most important of which are *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din, Tahafut al-Falasifa* and *al-Munqidh min a-alal*, which are still studied today.

-The fact that his views were well-suited to his age and milieu, and were more a reflection of that age than a response to its needs and requirements—they constituted more an element of continuity and conservatism than a factor of renewal and change.

– After al-Ghazali, Islamic society and thought entered into a long period of stagnation and decline, and produced few other great minds. Al-Ghazali has thus remained alive and influential.

The influence of al-Ghazali on Islamic thought may be summed up as follows:

– He reinstated the 'principle of fear' in religious thinking and emphasized the role of the Creator as the centre around which human life revolves, and an agent intervening directly and continuously in the course of human affairs (once the 'principle of love' had gained supremacy among the Sufis).

– He introduced several principles of logic and philosophy (despite his attacks on those subjects) into the disciplines of *fiqh* and *kalam*.

– He reconciled *shari'a* and Sufi mysticism (the *fuqaha'* and the Sufis) and contributed to the spread of Sufi brotherhoods.

– He defended Sunnite Islam against the tenets of philosophy and Shi'ism.

– He contributed to the weakening of philosophy and the natural sciences.

Al-Ghazali's influence was not limited to the Islamic world, for he also had an impact on Christian European thought. In the late 11th century CE, and especially in the 12th century, a large number of works in Arabic on mathematics, astronomy, the natural sciences, chemistry, medicine, philosophy and religion were translated into Latin. Several books by al-Ghazali, and in particular *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din, Maqasid al-Falasifa* (which some scholars mistakenly took to represent al-Ghazali's thought rather than a compendium of the philosophical principles current in his age), *Tahafut al-Falasifa* and *Mizan al-'Amal*. A number of European scholars knew Arabic and thus became acquainted with al-Ghazali's views in the original. The influence of al-Ghazali is clearly perceptible in the works of numerous philosophers and scholars of the Middle Ages and the early modern period, especially St. Thomas Aquinas, Dante and David Hume. In his *Summa Theologiae*, St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) draws heavily on al-Ghazali's ideas contained in *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din, Kimiya-yi Sa'adat and Ar-Risala al-Laduniya.* The works of Dante (1265-1321) show clear Islamic influences from al-Ghazali and from *Risalat al-Ghufran* [The Epistle of Forgiveness] by al-Ma'arri. The influence of al-Ghazali is also apparent in the writings of Pascal (1623-62), especially in the primacy he gives to intuition over reason and the senses, and Hume (1711-1776) in his rejection of causality.

Al-Ghazali had an even deeper influence on Jewish than on Christian theology. Many Jewish scholars in the Middle Ages knew Arabic well, and some of al-Ghazali's books were translated into Hebrew. *Mizan al-'Amal*, in particular, was widely read by Jews in the Middle Ages; several translations of it were made into Hebrew, and it was recast for Jewish readers by replacing verses of the Koran with passages from the Torah. One of the greatest Jewish thinkers to be influenced by al-Ghazali was Maimonides (In Arabic: Musà Ibn Maimun; in Hebrew: Moshe ben Maimon) (1135-1204 CE), whose *Dalalat al-Ha'irin* [Guide for the Perplexed] (originally composed in Arabic) is one of the most important books of medieval Jewish theology [62].

Al-Ghazali's writings on education constitute the high point of thinking on the subject in the Islamic world. The theory of education which he elaborated is the most complete edifice relating to the field; it clearly defines the aims of education, lays out the path to be followed, and the means whereby the objectives can be achieved. From the 12th to 19th centuries CE (6th to the 13th centuries H), Islamic thinking on education was heavily influenced by al-Ghazali.

Indeed, theoretical and practical educators, with few exceptions, hardly did anything other than borrow from al-Ghazali and summarize his ideas and books. In support of this claim, it is sufficient to note some of the writings on education that have come down to us:

– The work by Az-Zarnuji (died 1175 CE; 571) entitled *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim Tariq at-Ta'allum* [Teaching the Student the Method of Study] is basically a compilation of passages from al-Ghazali's *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din and Mizan al-'Amal* reproduced literally, with a few minor additions: This work, which is noted for its conciseness, simplicity of style and liveliness, was one of the most widely circulated books on education.

– The indirect influence of al-Ghazali is found in the writings of At-Tusi (died vol 1273; AH. 672), one of the foremost scholars of the Middle Ages, the author of a vast and varied output of over 100 books on philosophy, logic, ethics, mathematics and astronomy. His most important works on education were *Akhlaq-i Nasiri* [Nasirean Ethics] (in Persian) and *Adab al-Muta'allimin* [Rules of Conduct for Students]. In the former, he was influenced by Ibn Miskawayh's *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq wa-Tathir al-A'raq* [The Refinement of Character and the Purification of Races] and Greek philosophy. The latter is merely a resumé of Az-Zarnuji's *Ta'lim*, which in turn was influenced by al-Ghazali.

– Similarly, Ibn Jama'a (died 1332; 733 H), the author of *Tadhkirat as-Sami' wa-l-Mutakallim fi Adab al-'Alim wa-l-Muta'allim* [Memorandum for the Pupil and Master on the Rules of Conduct of the Scholar and Student] was directly influenced by al-Ghazali, as well as by Az-Zarnuji and At-Tusi, both of whom borrowed from al-Ghazali. He lived in Egypt, Palestine and Syria and worked variously as a teacher, preacher and judge. His book is noted for its simplicity and orderliness, and contains an abundance of *hadith*, and Prophetic sayings and stories. He deals in a traditional manner with themes that had become familiar in Islamic education, such as the merit of knowledge and the rules of conduct for scholars, teachers and pupils. A chapter is devoted to the rules of conduct for boarders at *madaris* (which had become widespread at that time), and a further chapter deals with the art of using books.

– The work by Ibn al-Hajj al-'Abdari (died 1336 CE; 737 H), *Madkhal ash-Shar' ash-Sharif* [Introduction to the Sublime Revelation] is practically in the same mould as *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, but reflects the great difference between the Islamic civilization of the 5th century H and that of the 8th century H. The author mentions al-Ghazali frequently, and appears to be well acquainted with his ideas and writings on both general topics and on education.

– In the 16th century CE (8th century H) we find Ibn Hajar al-Haitami, the author of *Tahrir al-Maqal fi Adab wa-Ahkam wa-Fawa'id Yahtaju ilaiha Mu'addibu-l-Atfal* [The Liberation of Discourse on the Rules of Conduct and Moral Advantages Required by the Educators of Children], an Egyptian who studied and taught at al-Azhar before moving to the vicinity of Mecca. His writings are typical of the thought and literature of the

Ottoman era. He concentrates on teaching in *katatib* and the situation and statutes of school-teachers. He quotes al-Ghazali and refers to him frequently.

Islamic (particularly Sunnite) educational thought followed the course mapped out by al-Ghazali and this influence has remained valid even after the influx of Western civilization and the emergence of a modern, contemporary Arab civilization [63].

Footnotes

See the References section below for bibliographic details and a translation of Arabic titles.

[1] *Nabil Nofal (Egypt).* Co-ordinator of the Regional Unit of the Educational Innovation Programme for Development in the Arab States (EIPDAS/UNESCO). He has taught as a professor of education in several Arab universities before being appointed.

[2] On the life of al-Ghazali, see 'Abdulkarim al-'Uthman, *Sirat al-Ghazali wa-Aqwal al-Mutaqaddimin fihi.*

[3] *Madrasa*, pl. *madaris:* educational institution comparable to a modern college or university. See Glossary.

[4] See Ibn Rushd, *Tahafut at-Tahafut*, and *Fasl al-Maqal wa-Taqrib ma bain ash-Shari'a wa-l-Hikma min al-Ittisal.*

[5] Details of this spiritual and intellectual crisis may be found in al-Ghazali's famous work *Al-Munqidh min ad-Dhalal.* Furthermore, there is some doubt as to whether this crisis was purely spiritual or whether there were political causes stemming, among other things, from infighting between the Seljuq sultans and the growing threat of Batinism (esotericism).

[6] These works include: *Bidayat al-Hidaya, Ayyuha-l-Walad, Al-Kashf wa-t-Tabyin fi Ghurur al-Khalq Ajma'in, Al-Maqsid al-Asnà fi Sharh* Ma'anì Asma' Allah al-Husnà, Jawahir ai-Qur'an, Ar-Risala al-Laduniya and Al-Madnun bihi 'alà ghair Ahlihi.* (See Works by al-Ghazali.)

[7] Works from this period include *Al-Mustasfà fi 'Ilm al-Usil* and his famous book, *Al-Munqidh min ad Dalal.*

[8] Among his last works, one should also mention *Ad-Durra al-Fakhira fi Kashf 'Ulum al-Akhira* and *Iljam al-'Awamm 'an 'Ilm al-Kalam.*

[9] A religious character predominates in al-Ghazali's works in general; the most important of his works which show the theological aspect of his thinking are: *Ar-Risala al-Qudsiya fi Qawa'id al-'Aqa'id* (which forms part of *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din), Al-Iqtisad fi-l-I'tiqad, Mishkat al-Anwar, Ma'arij al-Quds fi Madarij Ma'rifat an-Nafs, Al-Maqsid al-Asnà fi Sharh Ma'ani Asma' Allah al-Husnà, Tahafut al-Falasifa, Al-Ma'arif al-'Aqliya* and *Kitab al-Arba'in fi Usul ad-Din.*

[10] See in particular *Tahafut al-Falasifa*, p. 237 and seq.

[11] See *Ma'arij al-Quds fi Madarij Ma'rifat an-Nafs* and *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3.

[12] Al-Ghazali stresses in his writings the importance of preserving the status quo, and tends to take the side of society (the *umma*, or community of the faithful) against the individual, the élite against the masses, and the ruler against the people. He even goes so far as to refuse to recognize the right of a subject to rebel against an unjust leader (a question which greatly exercised the minds of Muslim *fuqaha'*) and to leave the victims of

social oppression no other escape than that of emigration. Cf. *Al-Mustasfà fi 'Ilm al-Usul*, vol. 1, p. 111 et. seq.; *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 50 et seq.; *Al-Iqtisad fi-l-I'tiqad*, p. 118 et seq.

[13] Al-Ghazali anticipated Descartes and Hume in making 'doubt' a means of attaining knowledge. On the problem of doubt and the means of attaining knowledge, cf., in particular, *Al-Munqidh min ad-Dalal, Mi'yar al-'Ilm and Al-Ma'arif al-'Aqliya.*

[14] On al-Ghazali's view of ethics, see *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, in particular, vols. 3 and 4.

[15] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 46 and vol. 4, p. 83; *Al-Iqtisad fi-l-I'tiqad*, p. 118-19; *Mizan al-'Amal*, p. 98. In dealing with education, al-Ghazali was clearly influenced by Ibn Miskawayh, see his *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq wa-Tathir al-A'raq.*

[16] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 61-62; *Mizan al-'Amal*, p. 124.

[17] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 62-63, 243.

[18] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 52; vol. 4, p. 256-57.

[19] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 61-62; here the considerable influence of Ibn Miskawayh, in his *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq wa-Tahir al-A'raq*, is also apparent on al-Ghazali.

[20] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 49-50.

[21] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 63.

[22] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 62-63; this too al-Ghazali borrowed from Ibn Miskawayh.

[23] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 62.

[24] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 52, 61; *Bidayat al-Hidaya*, p. 277-78; *Al-Qistas al-Mustaqim*, p. 6-7.

[25] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 2, p. 213-14, 270-71; vol. 4, p. 243-47.

[26] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 2, p. 19-27.

[27] On this subject, cf. *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, ch. 1.

[28] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 28-29, 43.

[29] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 8, 10, 51.

[30] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 45-46; *Ar-Risala al-Laduniya*, p. 99-100.

[31] *Mizan al-'Amal*, p. 32-3.

[32] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 13-16.

[33] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 16-18; *Mizan al-'Amal*, p. 86.

[34] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 16-18; *Fatihat al-'Ulum*, p. 39-42.

[35] *Al-Munqidh min ad-Dalal*, p. 140-1; *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 9; *Maqasid al-Falasifa*, p. 138-40; *Tahafut al-Falasifa*, passim.

[36] See 'Abbas Mahmud al-'Aqqad, *Muhammad 'Abduh*, Cairo, Maktabat Misr, 1926.

[37] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 13-14, 46-8; *Fatihat al-'Ulum*, p. 35-9; *Ar-Risala al-Laduniya*, pp. 99-100, 108-9.

[38] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 33-34.

[39] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 34.

[40] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 42-51.

[41] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 12.

[42] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 3, p. 49-51; *Mizan al-'Amal*, p. 42-43.

[43] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 45.

[44] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 80-81.

[45] *Al-Munqidh min ad-Dalaal*, p. 124 et seq; *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 41.

[46] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 48.

[47] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 2, 8.

[48] *Al-Munqidh min ad-Dalal*, passim; *Faisal at-Tafriqa*, pp. 127-29; *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 51 et seq., 313 et seq.; *Al-Kashf wa-t-Tabyin fi Ghurur al-Khalq Ajma'in*, p. 3 et seq.

[49] *Al-Kashf wa-t-Tabyan fi Ghurur al-Khalq Ajma'in*, p. 27-33.

[50] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 2, p. 273.

[51] Al-Ghazali often reiterates this position and states that he holds certain opinions which cannot be divulged or committed to paper; cf. *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, pp. 50-51, 104-5; vol. 3, p. 18, 23, 26.

[52] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 2, p. 120.

[53] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 2, p. 107-19.

[54] Schoolteachers are thus subject to supervision by inspectors. See Ash-Shaizari, *Nihayat ar-Rutba fi Talab al-Hisba*, pp. 103-5; on the attention paid by *fuqaha'* and educators in their writings to defining the duties and rights of schoolteachers, see for instance al-Qabisi, *Ar-Risala al-Mufassala li-Ahwal al-Mu'allimin wa-Ahkam al-Mu'alliman wa-l-Muta'allimin*.

[55] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 11.

[56] *Ayyuha-l-Walad*, p. 134.

[57] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 48-51; *Mizan al-'Amal*, 98-104; *Fatihat al-'Ulum*, p. 60-63.

[58] *Ayyuha-l-Walad*, p. 127 (O Disciple, p. 7). English translation: George H. Scherer, *Al-Ghazali: O Disciple.* Beirut, Catholic Press, 1951.

[59] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 277-78.

[60] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 1, p. 42-47, *Mizan al-'Amal*, pp. 87-98, *Fatihat al-'Ulum*, p. 56-60.

[61] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 2, p. 32-36, 42-44; *At-Tibr al-Masbuk fi Nasiat al-Muluk*, p. 163-64.

[62] *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din*, vol. 2, p. 36-43.

[63] On the influence of Arab and Islamic thought on Christian and Jewish European civilization in general (including the influence of al-Ghazali), see E. Myers, *Arabic Thought and the Western World in the Golden Age of Islam.*