



A STUDY OF AL-GHAZĀLĪ'S SPIRITUAL ETHICS
WITH REFERENCE TO *KHULĀṢAT AL-TAṢĀNĪF FĪ
'ILM AL-TAṢAWWUF*

BY

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requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Islamic
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ABSTRACT

Al-Ghazālī's *Khulāṣat al-Taṣānīf fī 'Ilm al-Taṣawwuf*, though concise is a significant work in the form of an epistle to his disciple, comprising thirty three principles on spiritual ethics, the way of *ṣūfism*, methods of *da'wah* and adult education. This text should be highlighted by Muslim scholars on Ghazālīan corpus given the significance of its contribution to spiritual ethics. However, almost all Western scholars on Islam have doubts about the authenticity of the text whereas Muslim scholars think lightly of this contribution due to several reasons: it being a minor Persian work, being a summary of the famous *Ihyā'*, and being a duplication of another Persian epistle, *Ayyuhā' l-Walad*. Muḥammad Amīn al-Kurdī (d. 1332/1914) asserts that the Arabic version of *Khulāṣat al-Taṣānīf* is from an original Persian manuscript, whereas *Ayyuhā' l-Walad* has been popularly translated into various languages without evidence being shown that it is from the Persian text, and it is being celebrated in many printed versions. Surprisingly, these two texts, the *Ayyuhā' l-Walad* and the *Khulāṣat al-Taṣānīf* have similar contents, even though some words and examples may vary slightly and not being so systematically arranged. Why did al-Ghazālī write a similar text under two different titles? This question justifies the need for an intensive comparative contextual analysis of these two texts. This research will contribute the first English translation of *Khulāṣat al-Taṣānīf* from the Arabic version of al-Kurdī.

ملخص البحث

على الرغم من كون "خلاصة التصانيف في علم التصوّف" موجزًا، إلا أنه يعتبر عملاً كبيراً في شكل رسالة إلى تلميذ الغزالي، محتوية على 33 مبدءاً متعلقة بالأخلاقيات الروحية، وطريقة التصوّف وأساليب الدعوة وتعليم الكبار. وكان من اللازم قيام العلماء المسلمون بإبراز الأهمية الكبرى لهذا النص كمساهمة جلييلة من قبل الغزالي، نظراً لمحتوياته الكبيرة في ميدان الأخلاق الروحية. ومع ذلك، تقريباً يُبدي جميع الباحثين الغربيين عن الإسلام شكوكاً حول صحة النص في حين يعتقد علماء المسلمين كون هذه المساهمة طفيفة عديمة الجدوى نتيجة لأسباب عدّة: كونها عملاً طفيفاً بالفارسية، وكونها خلاصة لإحياء علوم الدين المشهور، وكونها نسخة أخرى مزدوجة بالفارسية بعنوان الرسالة إلى تلميذ الغزالي "أيها الولد"، تأليف محمد أمين الكردي (ت 1914/1332)، العالم الذي أكّد أن النسخة العربية من خلاصة التصانيف مخطوطة أصلها بالفارسية، في حين تُرجم "أيها الولد" إلى لغات مختلفة ولها شهرة وشعبية كبرى دون وجود أدلة تبين أن النسخة أصلياً من النص الفارسي. هذا، وما زالت شهرته تتزايد ويُحتفل بها في العديد من الإصدارات المطبوعة. والمثير للدهشة، أنّ هذين النصين، "أيها الولد"، و"خلاصة التصانيف" لهما محتويات متشابهة، على الرغم من كون بعض الكلمات والأمثلة قد تختلف قليلاً، وعدم وجود ترتيب فائق التنظيم. لماذا قام الغزالي بكتابة نص مماثل تحت عنوانين مختلفين؟ وبالتالي، يُبرّر هذا السؤال الحاجة إلى إجراء تحليل مقارن سياقيّ مكثّف لهذين النصين. وسوف يساهم هذا البحث بحسابه أول إصدار "الخلاصة التصانيف" باللغة الإنجليزية من النسخة العربية للكردي.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Arts in Islamic Spirituality and Contemporary Society.

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Supervisor

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Arts in Islamic Spirituality and Contemporary Society.

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Amin
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Saira Arai

Signature.....

Date.....

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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**A STUDY OF AL-GHAZĀLĪ'S SPIRITUAL ETHICS WITH REFERENCE TO
*KHULĀṢAT AL-TAṢĀNĪF FĪ 'ILM AL-TAṢĀWWUF***

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Dedicated in humble gratitude to

My beloved parents,

Ahsan Arai and Sumeya Arai

And Muslim adults and their children, the human capital of society.

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TABLE OF TRANSLITERATION

Table of the system of transliteration of Arabic words and names used by the
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CONSONANT

أ = A	ر = r	ف = F
ء = ' (silent)	ز = z	ق = Q
ب = B	س = s	ك = K
ت = T	ش = Sh	ل = L
ث = Th	ص = ṣ	م = M
ج = J	ض = ḍ	ن = N
ح = ḥ	ط = ṭ	ه = H
خ = kh	ظ = ḏ	و = W
د = D	ع = ' (silent)	ي = Y
ذ = dh	غ = Gh	

VOWELS

Short Vowels: a = اَ ; i = اِ ; u = اُ

Long Vowels: ā = آ ; ī = يِ ; ū = وِ

Diphthongs: ay = أَيِ ; aw = أَوْ

Doubled: uww (final: ū) = وُّ ; iy (final ī) = يِّ

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>EI</i>	<i>The Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , New Edition.
<i>EI2</i>	<i>The Encyclopaedia of Islam</i> , 2nd Edition.
<i>E. Iran</i>	<i>The Encyclopædia Iranica</i> , New Edition.
<i>Al-Munqidh</i>	Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, <i>Al-Munqidh min al-Dalāl</i> , translated from Arabic by Muhammad Abūlaylah & ed. George F. McLean (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2001).
<i>Ihyā'</i>	Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, <i>Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn</i> (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2002).
<i>Ihya</i>	Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, <i>Imam Ghazzali's ihya ulum-din</i> , translated from Arabic by Maulana Fazlul Karim (Dehli: Islamic Book Service, 2006)
<i>MR</i>	Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, <i>Majmū‘ah rasā’l al-imām al-Ghazālī</i> (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1986), Vol. 2
<i>AW</i>	Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, <i>Al-Ghazālī's Letter to a Disciple Ayyuhā' l-Walad</i> , translated from Arabic by Tobias Mayer (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 2005)
<i>KT</i>	<i>Khulāṣat al-Taṣānīf</i>
<i>Cf.</i>	Compare

n.p.	No place or no publisher
n.d.	no date
op.cit.	to be substituted with 'above'
infra.	to be substituted with 'below'
i.e.	that is
etc.	and so forth
d.	died
ibid.	(ibidem): in the same place
no.	number

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 BACKGROUND OF AL-GHAZĀLĪ'S¹ QUEST FOR THE TRUTH

As this research is on one of Ghazālī's works, it will be appropriate to begin with a bird's eye-view on his life and thought. Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) was highly educated and well schooled in the Islamic traditional sciences; he was originally a theologian and later took to the path of Islamic mysticism (*taṣawwuf*) after a certain crisis in his intellectual life.² He was a man with objectivity in his approach to knowledge and was always penetrating in his views and solving elements of obscurity in the fields of theology (*'ilm al-kalām*), the school of the ta'limites (*ta'lim*)³ and philosophy (*falsafah*), which enabled him to adopt the path and method of Islamic mysticism as the way to real and ultimate knowledge. It is very interesting and important for us to

¹ Here after, spelled as Ghazālī.

² *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, "Ghazālī." [W. Montgomery Watt]. Retaining his life background from his autobiography, *al-Munqidh min al-Dalāl* (2001) throughout this chapter. See also *The Encyclopaedia Iranica*, New Edition, "Ghazālī."; Margaret Smith, *Al-Ghazālī the Mystic: A Study of the Life and Personality of Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad al-Ṭūsī al-Ghazālī, Together with An Account of His Mystical Teaching and Estimate of His Place in the History of Islamic Mysticism*, (Lahore: Hijra International Pub, 1983); W. Montgomery Watt, *Muslim Intellectual: A Study of al-Ghazālī*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1963); D.B. Macdonald, "Life of al-Ghazzālī, with Special Reference to His Religious Experiences and Opinions," *The Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 20, no.1 (1899): 71-132; Muhammad Abdul Quasem, *Ethics of al-Ghazālī a composite ethics in Islam*, (Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia: Central Printing Sendirian Berhad); Muhammad Umaruddin, *The ethical philosophy of al-Ghazālī*, (Lahor: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf); Samuel M. Zwemer, *A Moslem Seeker After God: Showing Islam at its Best in Life and Teaching of Al-Ghazali Mystic and Theologian of the 11th Century*, (New York, Chicago, London & Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1920). For a discussion of the spelling of his *nisbah*, Macdonald advocates the spelling al-Ghazzālī. See D.B. Macdonald, "Emotional Religion in Islam," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, (1902): 18-22.

³ *ta'lim*: teaching, instruction; *ta'limism* is the last form of Shi'ites Isma'ilism. All things have an apparent (*ẓāhir*) and inward (*bātin*) aspect, which can be perceived only under the authoritative instruction of the infallible Imām. Ghazālī refers to it also as *bātinism*. See Abū Ḥamid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Al-Ghazālī: Deliverance from Error and Mystical Union with the Almighty: Al-Munqidh min al-Dalāl*, translated from Arabic by Muhammad Abūlaylah & ed. George F. McLean (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2001), 113, 83-89, 122, note. 97.

understand his reason in concluding *ṣūfism* as the only Way towards realizing the presence of Allāh.⁴ This chapter will explore his quest for the Truth (*al-Ḥaqq*) throughout his life, psychology and character presented in his writings.

Ghazālī was born at Ṭūs in Khurāsān in Persia.⁵ He grew up as an orphan, with his younger brother Aḥmad Ghazālī (d. 520/1126).⁶ He began his studies on Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) in the school of Rādkāna in Jurjān and later continued under the leading Ash‘arite theologian and Shāfi‘ite jurist al-Juwaynī,⁷ Imām al-Ḥaramayn (d. 478/1085-56) in Nīshāpūr.⁸ This was his first stage in following tradition-qualified (*taqlīd*) scholarship just before he attained adolescence: notwithstanding the influence of his earlier philosophical studies including dialectics and logic, his inherited thought was entirely within the traditional parameters of mainstream discourse.⁹ In a parallel direction with his studies in traditional intellectual disciplines, he practiced *ṣūfī* spiritual exercises under the guidance of Abū ‘Alī Fārmadhī (d. 447/1084-85),¹⁰ a disciple of Abū Sa‘īd b. Abī ‘l-Khayr (d. 440/1049),¹¹ Abū ‘l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072)¹² and Abū ‘l-Qāsim

⁴ *Al-Munqidh*, op.cit., 61. Martin Ling says, “Ghazālī...the great Shāfi‘ī canonist and theologian who devoted his later years to mystic path and who wrote an autobiographical treatise, *Deliverance from Error (al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl)*, in praise of *ṣūfism* as the only sure antidote to skepticism and as the highest way to life.” *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁶ *E. Iran*, op.cit., 358. [Gerhard Böwering]; Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Imām Al-Ghazālī’s Deliverance from Error and the Beginning of Guidance*, translated from Arabic by W. Montgomery Watt, (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2005), ix.

⁷ Here after spelled as Juwaynī.

⁸ *Al-Munqidh*, 31; *E. Iran*, 358.

⁹ *Al-Munqidh*, 31, 62.

¹⁰ The researcher could not find his information.

¹¹ Abū Sa‘īd Faḍl Allāh b. Abī ‘l-Khayr (357/967=440/1049) was Persian mystic. He received his first instruction in mystical devotion from Abū ‘l-Qāsim Bishr-i Yāsīn (d. 380/990), who had a poetic streak in him. Abū Sa‘īd studied Shāfi‘ite law in Marw under Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḥuṣrī and Abū Bakr al-Qaffāl (d. 417). Among his fellow-students was Abū Muḥammad al-Juwaynī (d. 438), the father of Imām Ḥaramayn. Then he studied exegesis of the Qur’ān, dogmatics and *Ḥadīth* in Sarakhs under Abū ‘Alī Ḍāhir (d. 389). In Sarakhs the saint Luqmān al-Sarakhsī introduced him to the *ṣūfī* Abū ‘l-Faḍl Muḥ. b. Ḥasan al-Sarakhsī, who induced Abū Sa‘īd to abandon the study of learned subjects and to devote himself entirely to *ṣūfism*. Upon his return to Mayhana, his extreme zeal to severe ascetic and mystic exercises had lasted up to the fortieth year of his life. At the period of his one year’s stay residence in Nīshāpūr, he stayed in the monastery of Abū ‘Alī Ṭarsūsī in the quarter of ‘Adanīkūbān. He gave

al-Kurrahānī (d. 469/1076).¹³ He might have joined the circle of the most eminent exponent of *ṣūfism* in Tūs under Yūsuf al-Nassāj.¹⁴

When he completed his education at the death of Juwaynī in 478/1099, he joined the assembly of Niẓām al-Mulk,¹⁵ the vizier (*wazīr*) of the Turkish sulṭān who ruled the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate at Baghdād.¹⁶ He was appointed as a professor of Shāfi‘ite jurisprudence at Niẓāmiyyah and lectured to over three hundred students while he was at the age of thirty-three.¹⁷ He politely accepted the position and performed his duties with great distinction for four years (484-488/1091-1095).¹⁸ However, his search for the Truth centered upon the shadow of glory and the spread of his popularity that made him to treat others with indifference.¹⁹ His character and

spiritual guide to audiences and converted many of them. He liked to arrange lavish, even extravagant entertainments for his followers, while he did not hesitate to incur debts and later he lived hardly as an ascetic but later as a sulṭān. However, the sacred spiritual audition (*samā’*) and luxurious occasions and other *ṣūfi* unusual practices of Abū Sa‘īd were reproached by al-Qushayrī, Ibn Bākūya (d. 442/1050) and Ibn Ḥazm at that time. At the end of his stay in Nīshāpūr, he wished to accompany his son Abū Ṭāhir (d. 480), who continued the “service of poor” and thereby involved himself in debts which were paid by Niẓām al-Mulk, but Abū Sa‘īd was restrained from this in Kharāqān by Abū ‘l-Ḥasan Kharāqānī. See *EI*, “Abū Sa‘īd Abi Khayr.” [H. Ritter].

¹² Al-Qushayrī was a famous Sunnī scholar and mystic (*ṣūfi*) from Khurasān in Iran. He was the student of *Shaykh* Abū ‘Alī al-Daqqāq, and he was also a *muḥḥadith* who transmitted ḥadīth to pupils by the thousands in Nīshāpūr, in which he forgot the Mu‘tazila until he fled to Makkah to protect his life. His major work is *Al-risālat al-Qushayriyyah fī ‘ilm al-taṣawwuf* (“Al-Qushayrī’s epistle on Ṣūfism”), which was written in 437/1045 and has served as a primary textbook for many generations of *ṣūfi* voices down to the present. He was also a *mufasssir* who wrote a complete commentary of the Qur’ān entitled *Lata‘if al-ishārāt bi tafsīr al-Qur’ān* (“The Subtleties and allusions in the commentary of the Qur’ān”), which is one of the early complete manuals of the science of *taṣawwuf*. See Al-Qushayrī’s Epistle on Ṣūfism: *Al-risālat al-Qushayriyyah fī ‘ilm al-taṣawwuf*, <<http://www.kitaabun.com/info1.kitaabun.com/GARNET/qushays.htm>> viewed on 12 July 2010.

¹³ *E. Iran*, 358. The researcher could not find his information.

¹⁴ Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Al-Ghazālī Letter to A Disciple Ayyuhā’ l-Walad*, translated from Arabic by Tobias Mayer (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 2005), xi. The researcher could not find his information.

¹⁵ Niẓām al-Mulk, Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥasan bin ‘Alī bin Ishāq al-Ṭūsī, the celebrated minister of the Seljūq sulṭān Alp Arslān and Mālik Shāh. According to most authorities, he was born on Friday 21 Dhū ‘l-Qa‘dah 408/10 April 1018, though the 6th/12th century Ta‘rīkh al-Bayhāqī of Ibn Fundūq al-Bayhāqī, which alone supplies us with detailed information about his family, places his birth in 410/1019-20. His birth place was Rādkān, a village in the neighbourhood of Ṭūs, of which his father was revenue agent on behalf of the Ghaznawīd government. See *EI*, op.cit., “Niẓām Mulk,” (sic).[H. Bowen-(C.E. Bosworth)].

¹⁶ *Al-Munqidh*, 1, 32; Watt, op.cit., ix; *E. Iran*, 358.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 1, 32; ix; 328. George F. McLean mentions Ghazālī’s professorship at his age of thirty-four. See *Al-Munqidh*, 32.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 40.

actions did not reflect fully the knowledge that he possessed. Indeed, his realization of the Truth had not yet taken place as a young scholar.

Years of stay and teaching in Baghdād was a shift from the stage of following tradition-qualified scholarship to the second stage of acquiring knowledge (*‘ilm*) with more profound understanding of the sciences thus acquired: at this stage he states that he was able to distinguish truth from error in the different sects, namely the interiorist (*bāṭini*), literalist (*zāhiri*), philosopher (*faylasuf*), theologian (*mutakallim*), mystic (*ṣūfī*) and the nihilist disbelieving materialist (*zindīq*).²⁰ Ghazālī engrossed himself in reading works on those beliefs and examined them from the doctrinal point of view. He came to a certain conviction that “*fiqh* does not justify fundamental beliefs for certitude,” namely as to the existence of God, the last judgment and prophecy.²¹ To him, theology was only a defense of Sunnite tradition against deviations of the heretics. His aim, therefore, in seeking knowledge was to attain the Truth as he states in his autobiography:

My present goal is to reveal the state of my soul, not in order to blame those who have sought a remedy in scholasticism.²²

This statement indicates his position now on the real purpose of acquiring knowledge, which was previously hidden, and gradually he began to know himself and his inner self; in this statement he is more concerned about his own sincerity rather than comparing his objective with that of others. Ghazālī fell into a sort of skepticism (*safṣaṭah*) for two months.²³ This uncertainty of his positive beliefs forced him to fully excel in reasoning and argumentation without the help of a

²⁰ Ibid., 62.

²¹ Ibid., 31.

²² Ibid., 72.

²³ Ibid., 67.

teacher.²⁴ He struggled not only against the various belief systems with false assumptions but also against an evil thinking that springs from sciences of the hypocrite (*‘ulūm al-munāfiq*).²⁵ His works show how carefully and fairly he refuted certain positions of the philosophers that were under the influence of Greek philosophy and their doctrines.²⁶

After examining philosophy in less than two years, Ghazālī realized two things: (1) “true knowledge is derived from divine inspiration (from faith, rather than from the dictates of dry logic),”²⁷ and (2) the purpose of acquiring knowledge is to refine one’s character by breaking one’s evil self. Indeed, he came to the point that the essence of knowledge is a link between knowledge (*‘ilm*) and faith (*īmān*): a confidence (*tawakkul*) in being safe from errors can be achieved not with knowledge through sense perceptions or the use of reason alone but only with sound knowledge (*‘ilm al-ṣāhiḥ*).²⁸

²⁴ Ibid., 73.

²⁵ Ghazālī criticized the moralists of the philosophy of ethics for their doctrine, which was taken from the mystics (*ṣūfīs*) and incorporated into their own teaching in order to spread their errors under the bright lustre of the mystics, and he wisely suggested that the authentic source should be a criteria to know what is right, not the other way round by quoting the saying of ‘Alī Ibn Abū Ṭālib: “do not recognize the truth in the mouth of certain men, but first recognize the truth and then you will recognize [those] who are truthful.” He also said [that] some [of the] writings of the ancient philosophers are in accord with the Qur’ān and the tradition, yet the danger of accepting philosophy---as essential precaution---is that they are full of tasty bits taken from the sayings of the prophets and maxims of the mystics. Ibid., 79-82.

²⁶ Firstly, he wrote a work entitled *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah*, which is an exposition of philosophies by Al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā without any criticism as a background of *Tahāfut*. Secondly, he cited *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* (Incoherence of the Philosophers), which composes twenty points on which the philosophers’ views that is objectionable to Sunnīs or inconsistent with their own doing. See Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Muqaddimah Tahāfut al-Falāsifah, al-Musammāh Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah*, ed. Sulaymān Dīn (Miṣr: Dār al-Ma‘arif, 1961); Al-Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, ed. Ṣalāh al-Dīn al-Hawārī (Bayrūt: Al-Maktabah al-‘Aṣriyah, 2001); Al-Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah = (The Incoherence of the Philosophers)*, translated from Arabic by Sabih Aḥmad Kamalī & ed. Ehsan Ashraf (New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, 2007).

²⁷ *Al-Munqidh*, 17.

²⁸ Ghazālī does not mean here being a conformist in the domain of legal judgments from the different schools of *fiqh*---he supports being faithful to personal judgment, choosing among the best qualified and most knowledgeable interpretations---but he rejects the conformist and *ta’limist*, who perceives only under the authoritative instruction of the infallible Imām and weaken common people’s minds to admit the need to go to the teacher, on the very basis of the faith, which is inevitably supposed to be found in the Qur’ān and the tradition. Ibid., 85-89.

The assassination of Niẓām al-Mulk (d. 485/1092), the patron of Ghazālī by a young Bātinīte,²⁹ entirely directed his mind to the Way of *ṣūfism* in 486/1093 and caused him abandon his teaching in favor of his brother Aḥmad in 488/1095.³⁰ The reason for his early retirement might not only be due to political dangers but also because of his fear of Allāh (*taqwā*). Ghazālī feared the corruption of the religious leaders (‘*ulamā’* and *imām*) of his time who afflicted him with trials, acts of hypocrisy and unhealthy differences among sects.³¹ Indeed, he was aware of how to eliminate these negative qualities emanating from oneself and to eradicate the defects and vices that colors one’s own character.³²

To Ghazālī, the acquisition of knowledge of *ṣūfism* was easier than deeds (‘*amal*) at the beginning.³³ Thus, he engrossed in reading mystical works like *Qūt al-Qulūb* (“The Provisions of the Hearts”) of Abū Ṭālīb al-Makkī,³⁴ the works of al-Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī,³⁵ and the quotations from al-Junaid,³⁶ al-Shiblī³⁷ and Abū

²⁹ *Al-Munqidh*, 32; *E. Iran*, 359.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 32-33; 358-359. Macdonald suggests what weight the political facts of his days may have made Ghazālī apprehensive; shortly before he left Baghdād the Seljūq *sultān* Barkiyārūq executed his uncle Tutush, who had been supported by the caliph and presumably Ghazālī; and it was soon after the death of Barkiyārūq in 498/1105 that Ghazālī returned to teaching. *EI*, “Ghazālī,” 1039.

³¹ *Al-Munqidh*, 2.

³² *Ibid.*, 91.

³³ *Ibid.*, 91.

³⁴ Abū Ṭālīb Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥārithī al-Makkī died in Baghdād in 386/998, *muḥaddith* and *ṣūfī*, head of the dogmatic *madhhab* of the Sālīmiyyah in Baṣra. His chief work is the *Qūt al-Qulūb*, Cairo 1310, the pages of which were incorporated by Ghazālī in his *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*. See *EI*, “Abū Ṭālīb.” [L. Massignon]; Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥārithī Abū Ṭālīb al-Makkī, *Qūt al-Qulūb fī Mu‘āmalat al-Maḥbūb wa waṣf tariq al-Murīd ilā Maqām al-Tawḥīd*, ed. Asul ‘Uyūn al-Sauda (Bayrūt: Al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1997); Samia Ali Musa Nor al-Dien, “Abū Ṭālīb al-Makkī Conception of Knowledge: A Translation of the Relevant Chapter of the Author’s Qūt al-Qulūb (The Nourishment of the Heart),” (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1998).

³⁵ Al-Muḥāsibī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Al-Ḥārith (d. 243/857), Muslim mystic, born in Baṣra. He spent the greater part of his life and teaching in Baghdād where he died. Amongst Muslim mystics, his contemplation is the most psychological; it is marked by attachment to moral values, and not by a more or less extreme theological system. The cognomen of al-Muḥāsibī signifies “he who calculates his actions” or practices examination of conscience; some *ṣūfīs*---due the lack of understanding of the full implication of his position---considered this practice dangerous, in that it tends to make the man the judge of his actions, a role of which belongs to God. Ghazālī willingly acknowledged the authority of al-Muḥāsibī, among his numerous works are “The book of observance of the rights of God” (*Kitāb al-Ri‘āyah li-ḥuqūq Allāh* ed. Margaret Smith (London: n.p., 1941)), which is in the form of counsels, given to a disciple in reply to his questions, to enable believers to find the way of life in which they could render to God the service which is his due; what the soul of believer should be, to confirm with

Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī³⁸ and the sayings. What were his findings in the *ṣūfī* literature that charged his course of orientation from philosophy inclined to spiritual obsession? According to him it was through *ṣūfism* that he acquired proper learning, that based on experience (*dhawq*) by which he attained various states of the soul (*aḥwāl*), which exerted positive and virtuous change in his moral qualities.³⁹ If so, what are the inevitable elements that guarantee eternal happiness? Ghazālī answered thus: (1) fear of Allāh, (2) detachment from the world, (3) pursuit of the science of the hereafter⁴⁰ and (4) purity of intention that overcomes satanic passions.⁴¹

He succeeded in bringing Islamic mysticism into mainstream intellectual and

what God wills it to do, particularly pious fear (*taqwā*) and repentance (*tawbah*). The *Kitāb al-Tawahhum* (trans. Andrè Roman) presents as a “vision of the last things.” As-Sarī al-Saqatī, the maternal uncle of al-Junayd, was his pupil. See *EI*, “Al-Muḥāsibī.” [R. Arnaldez].

³⁶ Al-Junayd, Abū ʿI-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad (d.298=910/11) was born in Baghdād, a nephew and disciple of Sarī al-Saqatī. In law, he followed the school of Abū Thawr, while he associated with Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī and with him became an exponent of the *ṣūfism* of ‘sobriety’ (*ṣaḥw*). He was among the first *ṣūfīs* to discuss the doctrine of ‘passing away’ (*fanāʾ*), and famous for having been one of the *ṣūfīs* to have signed the document calling for the execution of Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj. Among his numerous works are ‘Lord of the Sect’ (*sayyid al-ṭāʾifah*), ‘Peacock of the Mendicants’ (*taʾūs al-fuqarāʾ*), and ‘Director of the Spiritual Directors’ (*shaykh al-mashāyikh*). See *EI2*, Vol. 2, 600, “Al-Junayd.” [A.J. Arberry]; A.H. Abdel-Kader, “The life, personality and writings of al-Junayd,” *GMS*, NS XXII, (1962). Here after spelled as Junaid.

³⁷ Al-Shiblī, ibn Jaḥdar (d. 334 [945/6]) is Mālikī *ṣūfī* born in Baghdād into a Transoxianan family. After working as a government official till the age of forty, he became an ascetic and member of the *ṣūfī* circles of the capital. He occupies an intermediary position between al-Ḥallāj and al-Junayd. He dined al-Ḥallāj, who has been his friend, before the vizier, even supposedly accusing him from beneath the scaffold. Later, however, he affected insanity and spent time in a Baghdād asylum. His theopathic utterances (*shaṭaḥāt*) and strange acts figure in classical *ṣūfī* literature. See *EI*, IV, 360, “Al-Shiblī.” [L. Massignon]; Qushayrī, *Risālah*, Vol. I, 159-160.

³⁸ Abū Yazīd (Bāyazīd) Ṭayfūr b. ʿĪsā b. Surūshān Al-Biṣṭāmī (d. 261/874 or 264/877-8) was Muslim mystic in Biṣṭām in the province of Qūmis. He wrote nothing, but some five hundred of his sayings have been handed down, which imply a state of himself as of one merged with the deity and turned into God (*ʿayn al-Jamʿ*). Among collectors, al-Junayd al-Baghdādī received sayings of this nature in Persian and translated them into Arabic. The most circumstantial source on Abū Yazīd’s life and sayings is the *Kitāb al-Nūr fī Kalimāt Abī Yazīd Ṭayfūr*, by Abū ʿI-Faḍl Muḥ. b. ʿAlī b. Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Sahl al-Sahlaḡī al-Biṣṭāmī (389=998/9-476=984). Abū Yazīd’s teacher in *ṣūfism* was a mystic who was ignorant of Arabic, by name Abū ʿAlī al-Sindī. It is not impossible that Indian influences may have affected Abū Yazīd through him. Abū Yazīd did not exercise a social activity (*khidmat al-fuqarāʾ*), yet his famous utterances under the influence of spiritual states (*shaṭaḥāt*) scandalized and shocked his contemporaries. However, in such utterances he appears to have reached the ultimate problem of all mysticism. A later legend makes him solve with ease conundrums put to him in a Christian monastery, thus effecting the wholesale conversion of the monastery to Islam. See *EI*, “Abū Yazīd, Biṣṭāmī.” [H. Ritter].

³⁹ *Al-Munqidh*, 91.

⁴⁰ *Fiqh* is included unlike theology (*ʿilm al-kalām*). *Ibid.*, 125, note. 138.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 92-93.

spiritual discourse of Islamic thought. Thus, a shift of his writings from philosophy, logic and a refutation of Isma‘ilism and a defense of *ṣūfism* are also apparent in his work, *Mi‘yār al-‘Ilm fī Fann al-Mantiq*⁴² of 488/1095.⁴³ This constitutes the third phase of his work on philosophy followed by the aforementioned two works,⁴⁴ containing the criteria of sound knowledge in the concept of happiness in this world and the next. At the end of *Mi‘yār*, Ghazālī wrote a significant work on ethics, entitled *Mīzān al-‘Amal* (“The Balance of Action”)⁴⁵ in his final year in Baghdād.⁴⁶ It is a tract on philosophical ethics by expounding *ṣūfī* doctrine in parts. Goldziher states that during this time, Ghazālī was “still before his complete conversion to *ṣūfism* yet already standing at its gate.”⁴⁷ Similarly, his work on theology, entitled *Al-Iqtisād fī al-I‘tiqād*⁴⁸ is a constructive work on dogma yet it is meant for the gnosis (*ma‘rifah*) of the *ṣūfī* and is mentioned in his later work of *Kitāb al-Arba‘īn*.⁴⁹

The development of Ghazālī’s thought did not remain constant throughout his life. He realized that in the ultimate sense “knowledge and deeds are nothing but mere outward appearance and illusion (*takhyīl*)”⁵⁰ Then, he directed his new

⁴² Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Mi‘yār al-‘Ilm fī Fann al-Mantiq*, (Bayrūt: Dār al-Andalūs, 1964).

⁴³ See Hourani, George F., “The Chronology of Ghazālī’s Writings,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 104 (1984): 293.

⁴⁴ See footnote 26.

⁴⁵ Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Mīzān al-‘Amal*, (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1989); Al-Ghazālī, *Ghazali: Critere de l’action*, translated by H. Hachem (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1945).

⁴⁶ Hourani, op.cit., 294.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 294. See also I. Goldzoher, *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung*, (Leiden, n.p., 1920, 1952), 205; Maurice Bouyges, *Essai De Chronologie Des Œuvres De Al-Ghazali*, ed. Michel Allard, (Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1959), 28-29; ‘Abd al-Rahmān Badawī, *Mu‘allafāt al-Ghazālī*, (Kuwayt: Wakālat al-Maṭbū‘āt, 1977), 79-81; Mohamed Ahmed Sherif, *Ghazālī’s Theory of Virtue*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), 6, 171; Lazarus, 211, 259, 300; Muhammad Abul Quasem, *Ethics of al-Ghazālī A Composite Ethics in Islam*, (Petaling Jaya, Selangor: Central Printing Sendirian Berhad, 1975), 37, n. 25.

⁴⁸ Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Al-Iqtisād fī al-I‘tiqād*, ed. Anas Muḥammad ‘Adnān al-Sharqāwī, (Jiddah: Dār al-Minhāj, 2008).

⁴⁹ *EI*, “Ghazālī,” 1040; *Al-Munqidh*, 40. See Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Kitāb al-Arba‘īn*, translated from Arabic by Burhān al-Dīn Ḥamdī (Tihran: Ittilā‘at, 1989).

⁵⁰ *Al-Munqidh*, 92. *Takhyīl* means fake, play acting, make-believe or fantasy. Ibid., 125, note. 139.

attention to spiritual journey with the aim to mould his entire life thereafter; this is the period of his withdrawal of ten years from the public and family life (488/1095-499/1105).⁵¹ The thought of detachment from worldly life over its attachment progressively influenced him to such an extent that he failed that he could neither speak nor eat.⁵² Finally, Ghazālī left Baghdād and visited many countries.⁵³ He had given up all for the sake of Allāh; he lived as a poor *ṣūfī*, in solitude, spending much of his time in prayers, meditation and other spiritual exercises, while cultivating his manners and morals and purifying his character.⁵⁴ These spiritual strivings led to his real intellectual and spiritual conversion: he is no longer a scholar following tradition-qualified scholar in acquiring knowledge rather he began experiencing knowledge, direct spiritual realization which granted legitimacy and nature of prophecy through spiritual practices and virtuous acts by in accordance with the Way of *ṣūfism*.⁵⁵

It was during this time, he taught *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* (“The Revival of the Religious Sciences”)⁵⁶ in the period (488-499=1095-1105) of his self imposed seclusion with the aim to guide devout Muslim in Islamic piety in all aspects of their life through rigorous *ṣūfī* spiritual practices based on religious knowledge and

⁵¹ Ibid., 94, 126, note. 148.

⁵² Ibid., 93.

⁵³ Ghazālī left Baghdād on Dhūl al-Qa‘da in November in 488/1095. He wandered as a hermit in Damascus nearly two years. In Jerusalem, he visited the tomb of Abraham at Hebron, where he made the vow never again to take money from the government, to serve a ruler and to enter into scholastic disputations. He performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and visited Medina, Iran and spent again at Damascus. Then he came back to Baghdād. See *Al-Munqidh*, 93-95; *E. Iran*, 359.

⁵⁴ *Al-Munqidh*, 94.

⁵⁵ These are three degrees: (1) science is verification by proof; (2) experience or savoring is the intimate knowledge of ecstasy; (3) faith, founded on conjecture, is the acceptance of [traditionally taught knowledge based on authority], oral testimony and the evidence of those who have experienced [religious truths]. And God will raise through this hierarchy those among you who believe and receive the knowledge. Ibid., 96.

⁵⁶ Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2002); Al-Ghazālī, *Imam Ghazzali’s Ihya’ Ulum al-Din*, translated from Arabic by Maulana Fazlul Karim (Dehli: Islamic Book Service, 2006). Here after spelled as *Iḥyā’*.