

THE SCIENTIFIC HERITAGE OF IMAM GHAZALI AND ITS SPIRITUAL BASIS

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Abstract. In this article, the contents of the works of Muhammad Abu Hamid Ghazali, one of the great sages of the Eastern Renaissance, the possessor of religious and worldly knowledge, who served the development of the science of kalam, tafsir, and hadith, and the classification of his scientific heritage, his contribution to the development of Sufism, and the issue of Sharia and Tariqat in his teachings are expressed.

Keywords: “Hujjat al-Islam”, “Ihya Ulum al-Din”, “Tahafut al-Falasifah”, “Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal”, spirituality, enlightenment, morality, value, high moral virtue, Sufism, Sharia, sect, faith, Sunnah.

Introduction. In new Uzbekistan, large-scale work is being carried out to restore, study and widely promote the scientific-practical, cultural-educational heritage of great scholars. These efforts are also aimed at highlighting their invaluable contributions to world civilization, which is a clear evidence of the growing interest in Islamic science and knowledge. In particular, great Islamic scholars and thinkers played an important role in the spiritual and moral development of society in the IX-XII centuries. Among them, the famous philosopher Abu Hamid Imam Ghazali occupies a special place. His teachings about human perfection remain very relevant today, especially in the fields of education and training.

Methods and Materials**1) Research Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative, historical-analytical approach, using both primary and secondary sources:

Historical Analysis: Investigates the historical context of Imam Ghazali’s life (1058–1111 CE) and intellectual development.

Textual Analysis: Examines Ghazali’s main works, especially “*Ihya Ulum al-Din*”, “*Tahafut al-Falasifah*”, and “*Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal*” to understand his scientific and spiritual thought.

2) Primary Sources:

- *Ihya Ulum al-Din* (Revival of Religious Sciences)
- *Tahafut al-Falasifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers)
- *Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal* (Deliverance from Error)

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali was a prominent Muslim scholar, educationist, philosopher, and jurist, has significantly shaped Islamic thought, particularly in ethics, Islamic knowledge, and education. Known as "Hujjat al-Islam" (authority on Islam), Ghazali's works have profoundly impacted Islamic scholarship and continue to be studied extensively. Among his many contributions, his ideas on education and teaching values stand out for their depth and relevance to historical and contemporary contexts. In a period marked by political instability and intellectual debates, Ghazali's vision of education sought to cultivate intellectual understanding, moral character and spiritual awareness, aiming to create balanced individuals who embody Islamic virtues. For this reason, Ghazali paid special attention to the issues of knowledge and education in his works along with the philosophical foundation of Islamic theology. Ghazali emphasizes that it is necessary to understand the world with the mind, and Islamic education should be understood through spiritual and physical exercises - obedience.

Ghazali lived in the intellectual and spiritual world of the Kur'an and Sunnah. He enriched the community of religious scholars with his contributions. Ghazali's ability to combine different fields of science is not only the result of his personal craft, but also the influence of the intellectual and spiritual climate that allowed him to grow as a philosopher and scientist. Ghazali considered knowledge to be the highest virtue. Those who have that knowledge grew up in a cultural environment where they were highly respected. Undoubtedly, this situation is caused by the importance given to science by the Kur'an. Based on Ghazali's works, the interpretation of the Kur'an was described.

Result. From an Islamic perspective, as articulated by Imam Al-Ghazali, the primary aim of education was to cultivate moral and spiritual consciousness. Al-Ghazali emphasized that education should focus on transmitting knowledge. Al-Ghazali highlighted education's moral and ethical dimensions, encouraging the development of virtues like sincerity, patience and gratitude. These virtues, he argued, were fundamental to a life that pleased Allah. He emphasized that, education should provide intellectual knowledge and an ethical framework for distinguishing right from wrong.

Imam Ghazali faced various difficulties during his life. These challenges not only tested his endurance, but also shaped his academic and spiritual journey. One of the main challenges was his skepticism towards other scholars who were entrenched in different schools of thought. His critical views on some aspects of philosophy and integration strategies were sometimes met with opposition. Yet his commitment to intellectual honesty and moral integrity was unwavering.

In addition to this, Al-Ghazali also faced personal challenges, including a crisis of faith that led him to temporary seclusion. During this period, he reflected deeply on his beliefs, which led to a profound transformation in his approach to seeking knowledge and spirituality. This period was resulted in some of his most influential works.

Imam Al-Ghazali's ability to overcome these challenges and emerge with a revitalized vision for Islamic scholarship makes his contributions all the more significant. His legacy continues to influence contemporary Islamic thought and remains a cornerstone in the study of Islamic philosophy and spirituality.

Analysis. The Revival of the Religious Sciences (Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn) is widely regarded as the greatest work of Muslim spirituality, and is perhaps the most read work in the Muslim world, after the Kur'an.

"Ihya Ulum al-Din" (The Revival of the Religious Sciences) is divided into four parts, each containing ten chapters. Part one deals with knowledge and the requirements of faith—ritual purity, prayer, charity, fasting, pilgrimage, recitation of the Kur'an, and so forth; part two concentrates on people and society—the manners related to eating, marriage, earning a living, and friendship; parts three and four are dedicated to the inner life of the soul and discuss first the vices that people must overcome in themselves and then the virtues that they must strive to achieve.

One of Al-Ghazali's most famous works, "The Incoherence of the Philosophers" (Tahafut al-Falasifah), critically examines the philosophies of his time. He argued that certain philosophical concepts were in contradiction with Islamic teachings. This book was pivotal in the debate between philosophy and faith in the Islamic world.

Moreover, Imam Al-Ghazali's contributions to Islamic philosophy are profound and enduring. He skillfully bridged the gap between religious teachings and philosophical inquiry, challenging the prevailing perspectives of his time. His critique of philosophers, particularly through works like "The Incoherence of the Philosophers," aimed to resolve the conflicts he saw between reason and faith. This critique laid the groundwork for the reconciliation of traditional Islamic theology with philosophical thought.

"Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal" (Deliverance from Error) is the spiritual autobiography of Imam Ghazali, and The Beginning of Guidance, his other work included in this volume, complements his spiritual autobiography and sets out his ideal of how the religious man should order his life from hour to hour and day to day.

Discussion. Al-Ghazali's philosophy asserted that, education should primarily serve as a path to bring individuals closer to Allah and promote spiritual growth. Education, in his view, should nurture the intellect, character, and spirit of students, creating individuals who not only possess knowledge, but also uphold moral integrity and spiritual awareness. He considered that, spiritual education as an essential component for achieving true success, not defined by worldly accomplishments, but by attaining closeness to Allah and fulfilling one's divine purpose.

Ghazali, like other Sufis, believes that the soul is the closest and most correct path to the Truth. According to him, the heart is the highest manifestation of the spiritual world, feelings and desires are subordinate to it, and the mind is a part of it. The heart can never be opposed to the mind.

Ghazali makes the heart like a mirror. After this mirror is cleansed of rust-causing qualities such as arrogance, greed, anger, hatred, and avarice, it is washed with the water of morality, and the divine truth appears in the polished soul. This metaphor of the mirror illustrates one of Ghazali's central philosophical and spiritual principles: that knowledge is intimately tied to the moral and spiritual condition of the knower. A corrupt heart distorts reality, while a purified heart reflects it with clarity. Thus, the journey to knowledge, in Ghazali's thought, is inseparable from the journey toward inner purification and ethical living.

Conclusion. In conclusion, I would like to say that, the works of Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, who was awarded the title of "Document of Islam" for his unique works, are

characterized by deep thinking, insight and understanding, taking into account all the subtle aspects of the Islamic religion. In the works of Abu Hamid Ghazali, a special attitude was expressed to the issues of faith and belief, and the characteristics of love undoubtedly play an important role in the formation and development of human qualities in students, and become a source for the realization of great goals and tasks.

Imam Al-Ghazali's influence extends well into contemporary Islamic thought, where his works continue to be held in high regard. His teachings are frequently referenced in discussions on ethics, spirituality, and the philosophy of religion, making him a key figure in modern scholarly discourse.

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