



SPIRITUAL-MENTAL RESEARCHES OF ABU HAMID GHAZALI

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Received:	26 th January 2021	The article analyzes that the path of life, mental experiences and spiritual pursuits of the thinker and philosopher Abu Hamid al-Ghazali came about as a result of historical processes and psychological changes. The complexity of Ghazali's time, the socio-political situation, reforms in the enlightenment and education of the Caliphate, the competition and struggle between different theological ideological movements and different views caused by socio-economic instability affects the thinking of the great scholar and thinker.
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Ismailis (al-Hashshashun) assassinated Nizamul-Mulk, a minister of the Seljuk sultans and a political scientist, as a result of a conspiracy in 1092. The assassination of the patron of the philosopher Abu Hamid al-Ghazali had a profound effect on him. Consequently, he also criticized the Ismailis in his speeches and pamphlets.

Annemarie Shimmel writes: "After the assassination of the minister in 1095, Ghazali left his post to embark on a spiritual path, which left his colleagues astonished."

Moreover, it is not surprising that the conspiracies in power, the games for the throne, also changed the thinker's outlook on life. At that time, the Seljuk sultan BarqiYaruq assassinated his uncle Tutush and seized power. It is believed that the Tutu was supported by the caliph al-Mustazhir, as well as by Ghazali. This is evidenced by the return of Ghazali to teaching after the death of BarqiYaruq in 1105.

Due to all this, in 1095, Ghazali faced a deep spiritual and mental crisis, under the influence of skepticism. In order to find his spiritual identity, he encounters asceticism, introspection and zikr (meditation). A few months later, he handed over the Mudarris to his brother Ahmad, left for Mecca, and left Baghdad under the pretext of a pilgrimage. Ghazali left Baghdad in the fall of 1096 and headed for Damascus (present-day Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria). He lived in Damascus and Baytul-Maqdis (Jerusalem). In Jerusalem, Ghazali visited the tomb of Sufi RabiAdawiyah, had lived in Damascus for two years in the western minaret of the Umayyad Mosque, and swept the mosque by visiting the room of Sheikh Muqaddas. The historian and sheikh ul-Islam As-Subki says that the name of the khanaqah was Simsatiya, which is now called khanaqah al-Ghazali. During this time he began to write Ihya.

2. MAIN PART

Arab orientalist Ahmad Shamsuddin and Abdurrahman Badawi liken Ghazali's skepticism to Rene Descartes' skepticism. The period in which the thinker fell into these doubts and crisis was not a spiritual crisis (al-azmaaruhanitya) but an enlightenment crisis (al-azmaaruhanitya).

"It has become clear to me that ilm al-yaqin (true science) is such a science that what is known finds itself, discovers, and there will be no room for doubt. It is not associated itself with the possibility of error and delusion (illusion, mirage), and the mind is weak in assessing its correctness (the soul does not expand)".

It is clear from this that Ghazali sought answers to the philosophical questions that tormented him, he was against the aristotelianism of Farabi, IbnSina, and Beruni, the representatives of Muslim peripateticism, the ontology of the Mu'tazilites, the views of the innerists on tawil, and the tendency of the mutakallimsto absolute fatalism, the separation of God from being. He wanted to prove irrationality through rationalist observation. At the same time, he wanted to find and reconcile the "golden gap" between religion and philosophy, that is, the middle ground.

Orientalists and research scholars have different interpretations of this change in Ghazali. The scientific debate about his mental crisis has not stopped yet. Some attribute this sharp turn in the life of the thinker to political reasons or a threat to his life. While some say that he came to the conclusion that it is necessary to understand God through an irrational approach and personal spiritual maturity, experience, rather than a rational approach to faith, others interpret it as a mystical peculiar literary style.

Abdul Hussein Zarrinkub points out that Ghazali, who was sensitive, diligent, and aspired to the depths of science, could not be satisfied with the traditional sciences of the time, nor did he enjoy a luxurious life and attractive positions.

Al-Ghazali says of himself: "Reaching the truth of things has been my characteristic and my daily desire, a desire that has existed since I took my first steps independently and from the first days of my youth. It was given to me by my instinct and nature, independent of my will and without any effort on my part".

The scholar explains the reason of this with esoteric thinking: "Due to divine discovery, Ghazali left Baghdad and went with a group of Sufis to Damascus and Jerusalem".

Carra de Waw, a Western orientalist, explains: "Ghazali did not need to organize this spectacle ... he already had a desire to be enlightened, to join the Sufi leech, so he saw no other main reason for leaving Baghdad. Because Ghazali was essentially a Sufi, and his father was a Sufi too. This desire had pervaded his body since childhood and adolescence, and he had been brought up by pious people".

Al-Ghazali himself says that he felt fear before Allah, that the scholars of the time were given to arrogance, pride and hypocrisy, and that it was possible to be a righteous slave and live a pious life only by leaving their circle.

Ghazali has admitted that he plans to leave Baghdad several times, severing ties with the people around him. Every time he tried to do it, he would go out in the evening and change his mind because of his temptations and worries: "Then the devil appeared and said to me, 'This is a temporary situation, do not give in to it. It will surely pass quickly, and if you fall under its influence, you will lose your orderly and rhythmic life, your life without enmity and grief, and your position, which even your enemies cannot take away from you. Maybe your ego (nafs) will aspire to this life again, but you will not be able to return to it".

For almost six months, I had been constantly hesitating between the desires of the world (lust) and the calls of the Hereafter. It began in the month of Rajab 488 (July, 1095). That month, things went beyond the bounds of voluntariness and into the realm of necessity. God tied my tongue and I didn't even conduct the lesson. On one of those wonderful days, when I was about to teach a lesson to different souls who were learning, not a word came out of my mouth and no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't utter a word. As a result, this connection of the tongue aroused sadness in my heart. At the same time, I lost my digestive power, food and drink did not taste good, bread did not pass through my throat, and I could not digest a single bite. Then my strength weakened and the doctors lost hope of my recovery, saying, "This thing has hurt the soul and then spread to the body and the temperament. He will not be cured until the secret of what worries him is revealed". Then, feeling weak and completely deprived of my will, I turned to Allah out of necessity and like people who were unable to find a solution. And then the Lord who answers the prayers of the needy answered me. It was easy for my soul to give up a prestigious career, wealth, my wife, children and friends."

It was not easy for Ghazali to give up his peaceful life, he was suffering spiritually-mentally. An inner voice said to him: Go on a journey, get on the road! (ar-rahil, ar-rahil) He said that life is not eternal, it is near. The scholar realizes that in order to find one's identity, to purify one's ego(nafs), and to perfect one's morals, one must work hard and do good deeds. He concludes that the only way to do this is to follow in the footsteps of the Sufis.

"Then the worries and the invitation of the children called me back to my homeland. I went back there even though I was so far from the idea of going back. But (even after returning to my homeland) I preferred hermitage (uzlat) and purified my soul with zikr in solitude.

Modern events, my wife, family worries, and the necessities of life would turn me away from my purpose and ruin my solitude. Except for some time, my condition was not clean. Still, I did not despair of being in situation. Each time an obstacle appeared in front of me, I would cross it and strive for my goal. So this situation had lasted for ten years. During this solitude, I discovered things that I could neither count nor study ... "

Ghazali retreated from his family and people to a state of solitude, and achieves to a situation as the Sufis say. Then he will discover the secret of things that have no number or quantity in existence and are impossible to study with the mind. The thinker understands their essence emotionally through the Sufi method of meditation.

The thinker returned to Nishapur after eleven years of spiritual journey and reunion, and in 1106 again began to teach at the madrasa. According to A.J.Arberry, his life is "marked by relentless practice and the creation of many works."

Ignats Goldtsier praised him as follows: "If one had been a prophet after Muhammad (pbuh), it would certainly have been Ghazali".

In 1105, Ghazali was summoned by Fakhr ul-mulk, the minister of the Seljuk Sultan Sanjar and son of Nizam ul-mulk. According to the hadith, in every century the innovator of religion - the mujaddid comes. Since this mujaddid was awarded to Ghazali, he began teaching at the Nizami Madrasa in Nishapur in 1106. The treatise Al-munqiz min az-zalol was also written at this time. In 1111, during the winter until his death, he returned to Tus, formed a khanaqah, and began to teach mysticism. The scientist was buried on December 19 near Tabaran.

3.CONCLUSION

In short, the complexity of Ghazali's time, the socio-political situation, the reforms of Minister Nizam ul-Mulk in the field of enlightenment and education, the various theological ideological movements that arose in the Caliphate due to socio-economic instability, and the struggle between their views contributed to the development of the great scholar. His main task in such a complex period was to strengthen and protect the Sunni sect. In addition to this task, al-Ghazali was skeptical of the views of the Sophists, scholars, botanists, and mutakallims, and approached the views of the Sufis from a rational and logical-philosophical point of view, justifying the superiority of mystical

teachings. According to the thinker, mysticism is inextricably linked with the divine essence in the spiritual development of man, in the formation and upbringing of his morals.

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