IV

ФИЛОСОФИЯ РЕЛИГИИ И КАЛАМ
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PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND KALAM

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THE RELEVANCE OF THE IBN SINA AND GHAZALI DEBATE: AN EVALUATION AND A REASSESSMENT

Islamic philosophy has a history that manifests a peculiar process of emergence and developmental stages[1]. First, we can identify a date for the beginning of this process, 610 A. C., which is the beginning of Revelation. If this stage is referred to as "the Prophetic Period," then we can say that at this stage a fundamental Islamic worldview suitable for the cultivation of philosophic and scientific activities was established. If analyzed logically it would be possible to identify within this worldview a sophisticated 'knowledge structure' that acted as a framework for all scientific activities[2]. Secondly, we are also able to ascertain a formative stage (650—750) after the Prophetic Period in which the main characteristics of Islamic thought took a definite shape and the main cluster of scientific terminology was established. In this way a conceptual scheme that was to become scientific was thus established. Thirdly, in the next stage of its development Islamic intellectual tradition gave birth to the specifically named sciences, such as law, linguistics, history, Qurʾanic exegesis and philosophy, by a specific name 'kalâm' (750—950).

In early stages of many intellectual traditions that lead to the emergence of a scientific tradition we usually observe a characteristic; the members of this intellectual tradition begin to develop an interest in other past or present intellectual traditions. In its earlier stages Islamic thought exhibited this characteristic as well and because of this some members of the learning community, i.e., the *'ulamâ'*, showed

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[1] History of Islamic philosophy has been presented with various frameworks. I defend a framework that shows the way this history unfolded through stages in an article entitled: The Framework for a History of Islamic Philosophy // Al-Shajarah, 1: 1—2 (1996).

[2] For a detailed discussion of worldview and its structures acting as the framework for scientific activities see the present author's: Scientific Thought and its Burdens. Istanbul: Fatih University Publications, 2000.

an interest in the earlier learning of the neighboring civilizations. Moreover, some of the members of these communities also showed interest in Islamic learning and some of them converted to Islam and thus they themselves brought their learning tradition into Islam. Gibb expresses this fact as a 'Law': "cultural influences (by which I mean, of course, not purely superficial adjuncts, but genuinely assimilated elements) are always preceded by an already existing activity in the related fields which creates the factor of attraction without which no creative assimilation can take place"[3].

The same Law is valid for the Islamic civilization: there was an already existing creative intellectual activity in early Islam, which led to such an interest in earlier scientific and philosophical activities. In this process the most important event that took place was translation of certain scientific works of earlier civilizations, and thus began a translation movement. Among the works translated the Aristotelian corpus stand out as the most problematic one. It is these translations and the Neoplatonic commentaries on these works that cause disturbance in Islamic thought. There are reasons for this and it is one of the main purposes of this paper to examine these in relation to what we call "Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate". We shall argue that it is this mutual but unbalanced intellectual and scientific exchange of ideas that led to a severe critique of Greek philosophy, which eventually culminated with Ghazali's *philosophical* attack on Aristotelian as well as Neoplatonic philosophy. This philosophical critique of an earlier tradition opened a new tradition in Islamic intellectualism, which we can call '*Tahâfut* Tradition'[4]. Although there was no real debate taking place between Ibn Sina and Ghazali, it is on the basis of this tradition that I find a justification for calling Ghazali's critique a "debate". For it is this critique that started the debate, and later many others, including Ibn Rushd, participated in this discussion between the *falâsifah* and *mutakallimûn*. Although it may be argued that Ibn Sina's philosophical system as such is not the primary target of Ghazali's criticism of the *falâsifah* in the *Tahâfut*[5], we can still

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[3] *Sir Hamilton Gibb*. The Influence of Islamic Culture on Medieval Europe // Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 38 (1955—6). P. 85.

[4] This is because Ghazali opened a philosophical debate on the problems which he criticized in his *Tahâfut*, and thus followed a series of similar works with the same name. Among them the most important ones are the following; Ibn Rushd, *Tahâfut al-Tahâfut* (ed. Maurice Bouyges, Beyrût: Dâr al-Mashriq 1927; English translation by Simon Van Den Bergh as *Averroes, Tahâfut Al-Tahâfut* (London: Luzac 1978)); Mustafâ Muslihiddîn Bursavî Khojazâde (d. 1488), *Tahâfut al-Falâsifah* (Cairo, 1321, printed on the margins of Ghazali's and Ibn Rushd's *Tahâfut*) (for a detailed analysis of these three *Tahâfuts* (together with Ghazali's) see Mubahat Turker, *Uc Tahâfut Bakimindan Felsefe ve Din Munasebeti* (Ankara: Ankara Universitesi Dil ve Tarih-Cografya Fakultesi Yayinlari 1956)); 'Alâ al-Dîn al-Tûsî, *Tahâfut al-Falâsifah*, (ed. Ridâ Sa'âdah, Beyrût: Al-Dâr al-'Âlamiyyah 1981); Muhy al-Dîn Muhammad Qarabâghî (d. 1535), *Ta'liqât 'alâ Sharh Tahâfut al-Falâsifah li-Khojazâde* (Istanbul, Suleymaniye Library, Husnu Pasha Collection, MS no. 787).

[5] See, for example: *Jules Janssens*. Al-Ghazzali's *Tahâfut*: Is It Really A Rejection of Ibn Sina's Philosophy // Journal of Islamic Studies, 12 (2001). P. 7.

defend our thesis that this critique is a debate between Ibn Sina and Ghazali. For the main source for the issues criticized in the *Tahâfut* is still Ibn Sina's system. The *Tahâfut* formulates most of the problems, it attempts to refute, on the basis of Ibn Sina's works. Therefore, we are justified in formulating the project of the *Tahâfut* as the "Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate". We shall then try to examine this Debate through a series of questions.

In the whole process of the emergence of philosophical thought in Islam we may ask; in the first place, why was there a reaction to Greek Philosophy? In the second place, what was the nature of this reaction? Finally, why did Ghazali come to represent this reaction? The main purpose of our questioning is to understand the fundamental reasons for Ghazali to launch his critique of the Greek tradition of philosophy. It is clear from the way we approach this issue that we shall not dwell upon the arguments of both sides developed in order to refute each other; our main purpose shall remain as an evaluation or even a re-evaluation of the situation and the aftermath of the Debate[6]. It is possible, then, to discuss our assessment and re-evaluation of this Debate under three headings: the reaction, which represents our explanation of how Muslim intellectuals and thinkers reacted to Hellenized philosophy; the *faylasûf* (or *falsafah*), which represents the Muslim conception of philosophy at that time; and finally the aftermath, which shall represent our analysis of the situation after Ghazali's attack on philosophy.

I. The Reaction

We need a thorough analysis of the phenomenon, which can be referred to as 'reaction to the Hellenized thought under Islam'. This reaction must be analyzed from all perspectives so that we can provide a compelling assessment of Ghazali's critique and grasp the spirit of the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate. The purpose of this analysis is to discover the nature of this reaction because, as we shall see, it is the nature of this reaction that determines Ghazali's motives to launch his attack against the Hellenic philosophical thinking.

First of all, it is possible to argue that this reaction is merely a religious fanaticism against all scientific activities coming from foreign sources to Islam. Considering the Law, concerning the factor of attraction, mentioned above, we can say that any approach of fanaticism of whatever kind it may be, especially at the beginning stage of a scientific tradition, cannot lead to a creative response and therefore fail at that stage to produce any meaningful scientific and philosophical activity within that civilization. This does not mean, however, that there were absolutely no fanatic reactions at that time. As we would conclude, exceptions cannot

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[6] For some of the earlier evaluations of this Debate the following works may be cited: *Leaman O*. An Introduction to Medieval Islamic Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985; *Marmura M. E*. Ghazali and Demonstrative Science // Journal of the History of Philosophy, 3 (1965); Idem. Ghazali's Attitude to the Secular Sciences // Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science / G. F. Hourani (ed.). Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975; *Jules Janssens*. Al-Ghazzali's *Tahafut*. Op. cit.

change a universal law. Therefore, the fanatic reactions should not determine the real nature of this phenomenon. If the reaction did not have a fanatic religious intent, then what kind could it have been? In answering this question we will attempt to demonstrate that this reaction was expressed in a religious framework giving the impression that it is simply a religious phenomenon. Only now it seems to us to be a fanatical or a radical movement to eradicate philosophy. For example, if we look at Ghazali's *Tahâfut* we find some accusations on his part that calls the holders of certain theories 'infidels' (*kâfir*). This is only a religious designation to disclose the status of a person. It is not done in the name of fanaticism, although the so-called fanatics may also have used it. If it were not so then Ghazali would not have been able to study Greek philosophy at all and would not have developed philosophical arguments against them; he would have simply called them *kâfir* and would not have found them worth refuting.

Secondly, we can further examine the religious framework that is used by the reactionaries, or rather, more accurately, by the scholars who launched a scientific attack against the Greek metaphysicians. This framework is definitely found within the Islamic worldview as it emerged out of Revelation during the time period of the early Muslim community. This emergence exhibits a process and within this process we find certain terms acquiring definite technical meaning within the Islamic worldview. Among these terms the ones that specifically concern us here are *'ilm*, *fiqh*, *kalām* and *ḥikmah*. We shall try to evaluate the nature of this reaction through a semantic analysis of these terms within the historical process of early Islamic learning. This process gradually led to the emergence of an Islamic scientific tradition.

It is clear that the Islamic worldview emerged out of the Revelation, viz., the Qur'an, and the way it was taught to the early Muslim community by the Prophet himself. In this worldview, there are three fundamental elements that are emphasized in such a way that they became the fundamental structure of the worldview of Islam. These fundamental elements are *tawḥîd*, the idea of the oneness of God and His relationship to us in the first place and to the world in the second; *nubuwwah*, i. e. the fundamental notion of religion as reflected through the chain of prophets, namely the all-embracing teachers of humanity; and finally *ḥashr*, namely the idea of a final judgment, which is intimately connected with the idea of justice and human deeds. As soon as these fundamental elements were clarified, it was also made clear that no one but God is the Authority on these subjects; for when these are in question, then "the true knowledge is with God alone" (46/*al-Ahkâf*: 23). This meant that the fundamental element cannot be known unless one has 'knowledge', namely *al-'ilm*. But this knowledge is not just *any* knowledge, which may be true or false, even when one cannot decide whether it is true or false; it is rather the absolute knowledge that cannot be doubted. Many references can be given for this but the following may suffice in this context:

We have given them a book (i. e., Revelation) and explained it with knowledge as a guidance and mercy for people who believe. (7/ *al-A'râf* : 52; also see 4/ *al-*

Nisâ': 157; 6/ *al-An'âm*: 119; 27/ *al-Naml*: 15—6; 31/ *Luqmân*: 20); also: "above all those who possess knowledge is an All-knowing." (12/ *Yûsuf* : 76)

In this way the concept of *'ilm* was so emphasized in the Islamic worldview that it became a doctrinal concept forming a major component of the worldview of the early Muslims. *'Ilm* meant for them 'absolute knowledge' that was based on Revelation. But what about our understanding of the Revelation? Is it not also *'ilm*? If it were *'ilm* then it would be absolute, so the question is: How can human knowledge be absolute? In order to distinguish this sensitive variation in meaning, the word *fiqh* was utilized by both the Revelation and the Teacher of the Revelation. In this usage, *fiqh* meant 'human knowledge' which is a break from the literal meaning of the term. When there is such a break, it means that the term has already been picked up for a technical meaning. Indeed this is what happened with regard to the term '*fiqh*': "If God wants to do good to a person, He makes him a *faqîh* in religion," said the Prophet[7]. Moreover, he also remarked "A *faqîh* is more vehement to the Satan than one thousand devout persons *('âbid)*"[8]. We can speculate about this remark and interpret it in the following way. Since *fiqh* is not absolute knowledge, someone within an environment in which absolute knowledge is emphasized may be greatly discouraged from using his personal ability to acquire *fiqh*. Because, he will consider himself utterly insignificant in the face of absolute knowledge and ask why he should pursue an element of knowledge that only has the possibility to be correct in contrast to a kind of knowledge that is absolutely correct. This difference between *'ilm* and *fiqh* is clear in the following report by Hishâm ibn Muslim:

Do not say that *'ilm* will disappear, for it will not disappear as long as the Qur'an is recited; instead you should say that *fiqh* will disappear[9].

If we consider this early technical meaning of *fiqh* we can easily contrast it with the technical meaning of the term 'science' today. In this contrast we can ascertain the close meaning between the two terms. For it is obvious that as soon as the term *fiqh* has acquired the meaning of scientific knowledge it was immediately picked up by scholars to be utilized for that purpose; such as Abû Ḥanîfa's usage of *fiqh akbar* (the greater science) and al-Tha'âlibî's usage in the title of his book, *Fiqh al-Lughah* (The Science of Lexicography). In contrast to the term *fiqh*, the term *'ilm* meant only 'revelational knowledge'; as such both terms should not have been mixed. In other words, one cannot use *fiqh*, for example, to interpret the *'ilm*, as the Prophet warns:

If one interprets the Qur'an on the basis of his theory, he has committed an error even if he is correct in his interpretation" *(man qāla fī 'l-Qur'ān bi ra'yihi fa 'aṣaba, fa qad akhṭā')*[10] (note that *fiqh*, just like science, is based on personal judgment which we interpret here to be 'theory').

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[7] *Al-Bukhârî*, Ṣaḥîḥ, 'Ilm 14.

[8] *Al-Tirmidhî*, Sunan, 'Ilm 13; also *Ibn Mâjah*, Sunan. Muqaddimah 222.

[9] *Ibn Sa'd*, Tabaqât al-Kubrâ, ed. Ihsan 'Abbas, Beyrût: n. p., n. d. 5: 51.

[10] *Abû Dâwud*, Sunan / Trans. Ahmad Hasan. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1984. 1036.

The early Islamic epistemology which is latent in the style of the Qur'an assigns a specific truth function for the twin words of *'ilm* and *fiqh*. In this epistemology we can ask: how is the truth of *'ilm* known? Moreover, how is the truth of the ***fiqh***-knowledge known? We raise these questions because both types of knowledge belong to different ontological realms. *'Ilm* belongs to the realm identified in the Qur'an as *ghayb*, whereas *fiqh* pertains to the realm identified as *shahâdah*. The knowledge of the *ghayb* is acquired and its truth is thus known through the guidance of Revelation. The faculties utilized in this knowledge-acquisition process are mental faculties (such as intellect, imagination, memory, will and intuition) via the experiential faculties represented by the heart (*qalb*). Now since *fiqh* can mean rational understanding of any subject including the *'ilm* as such, it recognizes its limits and does not speculate on *'ilm*; and thus limits itself to the *shahâdah* aspects only. Therefore, faculties utilized in the *fiqh*-acquisition process are mental faculties as well as sense perception. Although Muslim thinkers never systematically formulated this epistemology it was the main perspective from which they were evaluating philosophical ideas. This means that in a vague sense they had a similar epistemology in mind.

Just as the words, *'ilm-fiqh*, the term *kalâm* also acquired a technical meaning in the early Islamic learning. This term already contains in its literal sense 'logical and reasoned discourse'. Because of this discursive aspect of its meaning, it became an excellent candidate to be used for expressing speculative thought. Among many early usages Ḥasan al-Basrî's (d. 728) usage is a striking example: "we initiated the speculative study of *qadar*; just as people initiated the denial of it" *(aḥdathnâ al-kalâm fîhi)*[11]. Besides this, all the usages in the *kalâm* books, such as "*kalâm fî...*" (speculative study in …) indicates the philosophical character of the term. More examples for similar usage can be given: "*Wa 'l-nâs yatakallamûn fî 'l-qadar*"[12]. The usage of the word "*yatakallam*" in relation to a speculative issue expresses the speculative intention of the word. When one considers all such technical meanings one is obliged to translate *fiqh* as 'science', *kalâm* as philosophy, and *'ilm* as 'revelational knowledge. The term *ḥikmah* is also clarified in this context by al-Tabarî's report that *ḥikmah* was defined by his predecessors as the Qur'an and its (rational) understanding *(al-ḥikmah hiya al-Qur'an wa 'l-fiqh bihi)*[13].

This enlightened process also had its community of scholars all the way from the beginning. As an educational process we find early Muslims forming schools and communities of learned men and women until it gives birth to the rise of spe-

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[11] *Obermann J.* Political Theology in Early Islam // Journal of the American Oriental Society, 55 (1935). P. 145; Arabic text in: *Helmut Ritter*. Studien zur Islamischen Fromigkeit I: Hasan al-Basri // Der Islam, 21 (1933). P. 68, lines 10—11.

[12] *Ibn Ḥanbal*. Musnad. 2: 178. Also «balaghano annaka tatakallam fo shay'in min al-qadar». (*Ibn Ḥanbal*. Musnad. 2: 90).

[13] *Al-Ṭabarî*, Jâmi' al-Bayân fî Tafsîr al-Qur'ân, Beyrût: Dâr al-Ma'rifah 1980, 3: 60.

cial sciences in Islamic civilization[14]. However, at one moment of this process the community of the learned almost suddenly came across books loaded with primary translations of Greek philosophical terminology in which terms, such as *'ilm*, *fiqh*, *kalâm* and *ḥikmah* are used wrongly. For instance, the term *'ilm* is used to mean 'science' and the term *fiqh* is isolated from its original usage; the term *kalâm* is no longer utilized for speculative thought and so on[15]. Now let us consider ourselves among the members of the early community of scholars active in scientific research at that time; would we react to this wrong usage or not? Moreover, these words are not terms that may be negligible in wrong usages. On the contrary, they belong to the fundamental structure of Islamic worldview. Therefore, any inaccurate usages would damage their outlook on the universe and on the scientific activities of understanding the universe and existence in its entirety. We can say with confidence, on the other hand, that all these kinds of inaccurate usages are found in the Arabic translations of the Greek philosophical literature. For the translators were not Muslims and naturally they were not trained in the Islamic scientific terminology. Thus they were unaware of the terms' scientific meaning. They were nevertheless Arabs and knew only the literal meanings of these terms. Hence they translated Aristotle's *episteme* as *'ilm*, i. e. scientific knowledge, instead of *fiqh*. Moreover, the term *kalâm* was not utilized to translate the term *philosophia*, but first the term itself was used as *falsafah* and later the term *ḥikmah* was utilized. This is again an inaccurate usage because, as we have seen in Ṭabarî's explanation, it is based on earliest usages reported by Mujâhid. *Ḥikmah* is *fiqh*-knowledge but only in relation to the Qur'an, i. e. revelation[16]. The term *falsafah*, however, is only *fiqh*-knowledge without any relation to a divine source. We claim that this phenomenon clearly represents the nature of the early reaction against the Greek philosophical works.

It is the same spirit exhibited in the early reaction that determines Ghazali's reaction as well. However, by the time of Ghazali certain theories in Greek philosophical works became more apparent as contradicting the vital Islamic elements in its worldview, such as the ones cited and criticized in the *Tahâfut*. Thus was written his critique in the spirit of this scientific inquiry; no other motive should be sought for the composition of the *Tahâfut* and thus started the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate in this spirit of scholarly exchange of ideas.

II. The *Faylasūf* (and *Falsafah*)

Among the terms that are used as incorrect signifiers in the translated books, the most important for the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate is the Greek term *falsafah* in

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[14] See for details: *M. Hamidullah*. Educational System in the Time of the Prophet // Islamic Culture, 13 (1939). P. 53—55.

[15] For these wrong usages more examples can be given, such as the term *naẓar* instead of *ra'y* to mean 'theory' or 'theoretical'; *wujûd* in relation to God, whereas in the terminology of the early Islamic learning *ḥaqq* is used to express God's existence, and so on.

[16] Al-Ṭabarî, op. cit., 3: 60.

its Arabized form. Philosophy meant for the Ancient Greeks the "love" or "passion" for learning. But for Aristotle it carried the tone of 'scientific learning' as well. This ancient conception of philosophy continued until it put its impression on the minds of Muslim intellectuals. Farabi, (d. 950) for instance, classified sciences in his famous work *Ihsâ' al-'Ulûm*, and included in his classification such philosophical disciplines as logic, metaphysics, and ethics[17]. Ibn Sina wholeheartedly supported this classification. Perhaps he also utilized the phrase *al-'ilm al-ilâhî* for the first time to refer to 'metaphysics'. Kindi, for example, used only 'first philosophy'[18]. As it is clear also from his definition of this discipline, Ibn Sina regards it as a science. However, Ghazali opposed this classification of sciences and did not admit metaphysics as a science, namely, *'ilm*, as such, in the Islamic sense. This is in fact the point that is to be emphasized. For the term *al-'ilm al-ilâhî* already acquired a wide usage by the time of Ghazali.

The early translators found it difficult to translate the Peripatetic jargon such as 'metaphysics' and 'theology', although it was quite easy to translate the term 'First Philosophy' in an Arabized phrase (*al-falsafat al-ûlâ*). Therefore, they tried to also Arabize these terms as *uthûlujiya* and *matâfîsiqâ*. However, later when Muslim philosophers mastered in these disciplines they were able to come up with Arabic equivalents. Alas, this was achieved only by a significant divergence from the main stream of Islamic scientific terminology. This is because by the time of Ibn Sina, when most of this terminology was established, the term *'ilm* had acquired double meaning; one referring to its original revelational character, the other referring to any scientific inquiry. In fact, among the Muslim Aristotelian circles it referred primarily to scientific learning in a sense intimately related to Aristotle's *epistêmê*.

Thus Ghazali was able to launch his attack. In the *Tahâfut* he argued from the epistemological perspective that the human mind tried to reach the sort of certitude in metaphysical subjects, which it reached in formal studies such as logic and mathematics. The nature of metaphysical problems is, however, such that they evade the mathematical exactitude. This fact is clearly observed in the agreement of philosophers upon the solution of a certain mathematical problem. However, metaphysics has never succeeded in reaching a conclusion upon which all philosophers agree[19]. It is clear that when Ghazali refutes metaphysics to be science, he means *'ilm*; if it were translated as *fiqh*, his scientific motive would have been much clearer for us today. We do not, however, mean that had it been translated as *al-fiqh al-ilâhî*, namely as 'the science of metaphysics', he would have accepted it as such. For he accepts metaphysics neither as *'ilm* nor as *fiqh*. He thinks that

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[17] See al-Farabi, *Ihsâ' al-'Ulûm,* ed. 'Uthmân Amîn, Misr: Dâr al-Fikr al-'Arabî, l949. P. 53, 99ff. and 102ff.

[18] See: *Al-Kindi'.* Metaphysics: A Translation of Ya'qub Ibn Ishaq al-Kindi's «On First Philosophy» / Trans. A. L. Ivry. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1974.

[19] See *Tahâfut al-Falâsifah,* ed. Maurice Bouyges, Beyrût: Al-Matba'at al-Kâthûlikîyah, 1927, especially 39 and the First Introduction.

subjects discussed in this discipline are known only through the Revelation (the Qur'an), and as such they are not open for scientific scrutiny. Nevertheless, we are arguing in this context that if *al-fiqh al-ilâhî* had been used instead of *al-'ilm al-ilâhî*, Ghazali's scientific motives would have been more palpable and his remarks concerning the religious dangers of indulging in such issues would be understood also in that sense.

The term *philosophia*, moreover, was not translated properly as *kalâm*; but signified in its Arabized form as *falsafah*. Now if we carefully examine this term, we shall see that it was properly applied only to Greek speculative way of thinking and not to the *kalâm* way of thinking. Therefore, *falsafah* at that time did not signify what we mean by 'philosophy' today. Let us utilize the term 'philosophy' in today's sense and try to determine the exact position of the two ancient scientific activities; *falsafah* and *kalâm*. For this way of approaching the problem shall clarify the terms and the exact motive of Ghazali's critique expressed in the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate. We can say in this respect that *falsafah* and *kalâm* are two different modes of philosophy, the former referring to the Greek approach and the latter to the Islamic. Once this is well understood then we can clearly see that Ghazali's critique is not directed against philosophy and philosophers as understood today, but rather against a particular way of philosophizing that is expressed as *falsafah*. For Ghazali this way of philosophizing is not legitimate, neither in the epistemological sense nor in the Islamic.

We have historical evidence for the use of the term '*kalâm*' in the sense of philosophy. Shahrastani, for example, refers to Aristotle's system as 'the *kalâm* of Aristotle'[20]. These usages make it clear that *falsafah* means only the kind of philosophical thought found in the Aristotelian Neoplatonic corpus. We can translate accurately the term *faylasûf* as 'Hellenic philosopher' and the term *kalâm* as 'Muslim philosopher'. On the other hand, considering the wider meaning attached to the term *kalâm,* it can be understood today as 'philosophy' in the proper sense, namely 'any speculative thought carried out in any civilization'.

We must underline that some of the statements we make here are primarily related to Aristotelian and Neoplatonic metaphysics. As far as the other branches of *falsafah* are concerned they must be evaluated by the standards of *fiqh*, i. e. scientific criticism. The rules of *'ilm* do not apply to the other branches of *falsafah* because of the epistemology outlined above. Although Ghazali's approach to these disciplines differs from the way we have explained it, nevertheless he makes it clear in the *Munqidh* that his criticism is primarily directed to metaphysics and the other disciplines can be evaluated within their own standards since they are not related to religion[21]. When we come to this conclusion, we are in a better posi-

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[20] Al-Shahrastânî, *Al-Milal wa 'l-Nihal*, ed. Muhammad Sayyid Kîlânî, Beirût: Dâr al-Ma'rifah 1961, vol. 2.

[21] For a translation of the «Munqidh» by W. M. Watt, see: The Faith and Practice of Ghazali. London: George Allen And Unwin Ltd., 1970. P. 33—39.

tion to evaluate the claim that Ghazali "did not consider himself a philosopher"[22]. Moreover, his rebuttal against the philosophers has also been interpreted as "his identification with the antiphilosophical party"[23]. Our analysis shows that we must be extremely careful in applying terms that have a different connotation today than what they signified for philosophers in earlier centuries. The same conclusion is valid for the uses of the terms 'rational' and 'rationalism'. Since the rational method is closely linked with philosophical thinking, Ghazali's attitude can easily be interpreted as 'anti-rational'. This is obviously not the case. Ghazali is a philosopher in today's sense, but he is not a *faylasûf*. Moreover, he is a rationalist in *fiqh*-knowledge (scientific inquiry), but revelationist[24] in the *'ilm*, namely metaphysical subjects.

III. The Aftermath

We have so far tried to analyze the nature of the reaction against *falsafah* through the development of early Islamic thought and tried to show that this nature also primarily dominated the spirit of the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate. Now we need to evaluate not only the aftermath of this Debate but also the reactions to this reaction itself. Normally looking at the problem today, the first reaction we are inclined to think is that, since Ghazali criticized the *falsafah* approach, he would have attempted to develop another philosophical approach that could rival the *falsafah*. If this was the case then we should be able to talk of a Ghazalian system of philosophy, which is based on an epistemology that is suitable to his approach. The only answer one can give for this is his *Iḥyâ'*. We can, I think, defend the *Iḥyâ'* as his philosophical system, especially considering its Introduction, which begins with a philosophical classification of sciences and proceeds therefrom. The only objection one can bring against this conclusion is that his methodology may not be entirely philosophical in the *Iḥyâ'*.

The question of methodology is a problematic issue in philosophy, which is closely linked with our conception of philosophy. We may raise the following questions: Is there a standard method that is applied alike in every philosophical venture? If there is, then what is the nature of that method? On the other hand, if there is no such universal method, is there then at least (a) some universal characteristic that belongs to all the particular methods applied in different philosophical traditions? This aspect of the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate is very much relevant to our concern in contemporary philosophical problems. We may approach the problem of methodology by first defining philosophy as a science. Since each science must have a subject matter, a method, and an organized body of knowledge,

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[22] *Campanini M*. Al-Ghazzali // History of Islamic Philosophy / S. H. Nasr, Oliver Leaman (eds.). London: Routledge, 1995. Vol. 1. P. 258.

[23] *Majid Fakhri*. A History of Islamic Philosophy. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983. P. 222.

[24] I avoid using the term 'dogmatist' because in the Islamic case the dogma can be questioned if there is such a thing as dogma. This term somehow appears to me to be irrelevant in the Islamic case.

consisting the theories and discoveries in that science, philosophy must also have these characteristics. Its subject matter is *systems* that are investigated and/or constructed by the method of establishing theories. It is clear, therefore, that philosophy as a science must have a method but there is no universal method belonging to all such scientific activities. Empiricism, rationalism, intuitionism, and mysticism all together mark a peculiar method belonging to a specific philosophical tradition. Moreover, it is extremely difficult to ascertain a universal characteristic pertaining to all philosophical methods. Yet the fact that some kind of a method is indispensable for a philosophical activity is a sufficient universal characteristic that belongs to all philosophical traditions. In the same way, Ghazali has his own method which is dictated by his worldview; and it is this methodology that he applies in the *Iḥyâ'*. We shall discuss this method briefly below in our concluding remarks.

The generations after Ghazali did not take *Iḥyâ'* to be a philosophical venture, either in the *falsafah* tradition or in today's philosophical sense. Two reactions followed naturally; defending Ghazali as the champion of religion, and attacking him as the enemy of *falsafah*. On the other hand, philosophers like Ibn Rushd tried to defend that tradition by launching another attack. But among the former reactionaries there were fanatics as well. These fanatics did not understand the purpose of philosophy. They thought that there could only be one type of philosophy which is to say the kind Ghazali criticized, i.e., *falsafah*. In this sense we will respond to Ghazali's approach. His criticism from the epistemological perspective was weak because he did not develop a systematic theory of knowledge, like, for example, Kant. Some have already claimed that Ghazali, like Kant, refused the validity of theoretical reason in matters of belief[25]. In this sense, of course Ghazali is a precursor of Kant. But he did not develop a systematic theory of knowledge as Kant did in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. I think because of this Ghazali was understood as a simple *salafî* rather than a profound philosopher. I am not saying that Ghazali does not have a theory of knowledge; on the contrary, it is possible to make up a theory of knowledge on the basis of Ghazali's works. But this would not be a systematic construction.

Another relevant point we can distinguish from the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate is Ghazali's role in the wave of the Greek philosophical influence. This issue is also to be evaluated within the framework of the terminological analysis established above. There is, on the one hand, Ghazali's legitimization of the Aristotelian terminology by his frequent use of these terms in his works. On the other hand, he attempts to invent new terminology in order to avoid legitimizing the Greek philosophical terminology by frequent use. We need to study this nomenclature in his works in order to judge this issue in an accurate way. Are the frequently employed terms the ones that belong to Ghazali's approved philosophical sciences or to the

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[25] Cf., for example: *Sharif M. M*. Philosophical Influence from Descartes to Kant // A History of Muslim Philosophy / M. M. Sharif (ed.). Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1995. Vol. 2. P. 1385.

metaphysical sciences that he rejected? In order to understand this correctly we shall try to give two examples. The first is from the *Iḥyâ'*, in which he classifies sciences with a completely new terminology based on the *fiqh* methodology[26]. We do not find this terminology in the Greek philosophical works; the other is from the *al-Qisṭâs al-Mustaqîm* in which there is an obvious endeavor to Islamize the Aristotelian logical terminology. For example, the first figure of categorical syllogism is named 'greater balance' (*al-mîzân al-akbar*) and is said to have been established by the Prophet Abraham as he used it to refute Nimrod's claim for divinity[27]. In the same manner Ghazali proves in this work that the main logical arguments can be derived from the Qur'an and that all these syllogistic rules are used to perceive the true knowledge. In that case we need to evaluate Ghazali's critique by paying attention to his works as a whole in order to understand the true spirit of his Debate with Ibn Sina.

One of the most common reactions brought against the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate is the claim that Ghazali denies causality in nature[28]. We react to this accusation by asking a simple question: Can a common sense thinker deny causality? If Ghazali has any common sense at all he cannot deny this phenomenon. Once we observe his brilliant critique of the *falâsifah,* even without examining his other works one can conclude that Ghazali does not deny causality. After a careful study of his works, however, one can clearly discern that Ghazali denies only the necessary logical connection attached to a cause and its effect by the *falâsifah*, i. e. the Aristotelian philosophers. This means that in nature there is no inherent necessary connection between a cause and its effect. There is, however, such a connection as far as we are concerned because there is regularity in nature thanks to God's regular creation. Therefore, we always observe God's regular actions and establish a relationship between them. God acts in this way so that life would be possible for us; for we cannot live in a chaotic nature. This is because human mind works only in an orderly system, out of which it is able to infer rules on the basis of which we can live. In that case the necessary connection is only from our point of view, not from the side of the natural events. With this theory Ghazali also becomes a precursor of Hume. Strangely enough, Hume has never been accused of denying causality in nature.

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[26] See the English translation by Nabih Amin Faris as *The Book of Knowledge* (New Delhi: International Islamic Publishers, n.d.).

[27] Al-Qisṭâs al-Mustaqîm / Ed. Victor Chelhot. Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq, 1991. P. 49—50.

[28] Some scholars do not accept this conclusion but still express the same claim in order to refute it. Cf.: *Majid Fakhri*. Islamic Occasionalism and its Critique by Averroes and Aquinas. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1958; Marmura M. E. Ghazali and Demonstrative Science // Journal of the History of Philosoophy, 3 (1965); Idem. Al-Ghazali's Second Causal Theory in the 17th Century Discussion of his *Tahɛfut* // Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism / P. Morewedge (ed.). Delmar, NY: Caravan Books, 1981; also *Janssens J.* Al-Ghazzali's *Tahɛfut*. Op. cit. The most comprehensive study of the problem is: *Goodman L. E.* Did Al-Ghazali Deny Causality? // Studia Islamica, 47 (1978).

Concluding Remarks

Most works dealing with Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate do not try to evaluate this issue from a broader perspective within its own historical and scientific setting, as it has been done in this study. They have so far concentrated on the philosophical problems discussed both in the *Tahâfut* and among the later participants of the Debate. This approach does not tell us accurately about the actual purpose of the Debate. That is why we have avoided approaching the issue from this perspective in this study. We have tried to understand Ghazali's motive in starting such a Debate by first attempting to analyze the nature of the early reaction against the Greek philosophical theories in the Muslim world. Only after this is done we are able to appreciate Ghazali's scientific approach to the problem.

The weakest point of the Debate has been expressed within the aftermath as the need for a systematic theory of knowledge, which is utterly urgent today in the Muslim world[29]. Without a theory of knowledge it is impossible to establish any significant philosophical theory. But we must understand that the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate should give us a better perspective to understand this need not only as a necessity of partial philosophical theories but also as an urgent need for the construction of a philosophical system. Such a system must obviously be based on a theory of knowledge.

One may argue that there is Ghazali's *Iḥyâ'* as a system so why look for another? We may reply by saying that scientific knowledge is not static, since systems are organized scientific knowledge based on an epistemology and/or ontology; there is a continual need to update systems. Therefore, we need to revise the old systems according to new scientific developments. This does not mean that knowledge changes according to scientific progress. For, we are merely claiming that theories change according to new scientific discoveries on the basis of which we must revise previous systems. It is clear that since the time of *Iḥyâ'* almost a millennium has passed and there is a considerable accumulation of new scientific knowledge. Hence, we have to either revise the *Iḥyâ'* today or simply make use of it and other previous systems in the Muslim world in order to construct a new system.

We may raise in this context the methodology utilized in the *Iḥyâ'*. For the methodology we establish today may not use the same approach. The method utilized in the *Iḥyâ'* can be called '*irshâdî* approach' as opposed to the discursive approach which is more common in philosophy[30]. I would like to translate the *ir-*

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[29] By emphasizing the urgent need for a systematically constructed theory of knowledge I do not mean that there is no such theory today. Cf.: *Syed M. N. Al-Attas*. Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition of the Fundamental Elements of the Worldview of Islam. Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1995. But such attempts must be studied and critically evaluated so that their full impact in the philosophical circles can be felt.

[30] Cf.: *Heer N. L.* Moral Deliberation in Al-Ghazali's *Iḥyâ' 'Ulûm al-Dîn //* Morewedge, Islamic Philosophy.

shâdî approach as 'spiritual illumination', which is more a practical philosophy as opposed to the theoretical approach commonly employed in philosophy. Both approaches, that is, the spiritual illumination and the discursive, are useful in their own spheres. For example, in developing a theory of society or a moral theory we can use a more discursive approach. However, in instructing the society of that moral theory, in other words in moral deliberation, we need the spiritual illimunationist approach as applied in the *Iḥyâ'*. Closely linked with the issue of methodology is the question whether Ghazali is a philosopher or not. Our terminological analysis has shown that he does not use the Aristotelian philosophical method and thus he is not a *faylasuf*, but the fact that he develops his own method qualifies him to be a philosopher.

We, therefore, express the lesson to be drawn from the Ibn Sina-Ghazali Debate as an urgent need for scientific philosophical discussions today in the Muslim world. This need cannot be fulfilled unless we try to develop new philosophical theories in order to work our way to a new expression of the Islamic philosophical system.