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(F. Viré)

AL-GHAZĀL, YAŅYĀ B. ŅAKAM AL-BAKRĪ, A native of Jaén, was called by this name ('the gazelle') in his youth because of his slenderness and good looks. He became prominent, along with Abbas b. Firnas, at the court of al-Hakam I, who, on returning from his continual campaigns, liked to take part in the poetical tournaments of the little literary group which he had allowed to spring up round him. Al-Ghazāl was already 50 years old when his star shone even brighter at the court of 'Abd al-Rahmān II, who made him one of his favourite poets. In 225/840, after receiving with every honour the embassy of the Byzantine emperor Theophilus and being much flattered by this acknowledgement of his power, 'Abd al-Raḥmān II caused the Constantinople ambassador, when he returned to his country, to be accompanied by two Muslim emissaries: the poet Yahyā al-Ghazāl and another Yaḥyā called ṣāḥib al-munayķila ('the man with the little clock'). These two were charged with bearing the amīr of Cordova's reply to Theophilus's letter, in which he had proposed an alliance against the 'Abbasids of the East and their vassals the Aghlabids of Ifrīķiya because of their naval activities in Sicily. After delivering 'Abd al-Rahman II's reply and presents to Theophilus in Constantinople al-Ghazāl caused a stir at the Byzantine court with his talent and sparks of sly wit which he demonstrated brilliantly before the Emperor himself, his wife Theodora, and the crown prince Michael. By his charming manners and notorious cupidity he obtained jewels for his daughters from the Empress, just as he had contrived, before embarking on his mission, that the Cordovan amīr assign them a pension in case he should not return. His witty and sometimes coarse repartee was as famous as his avarice. He was a poet of mordant wit and greatly dreaded for his merciless satires. They were composed in a clear style devoid of rhetorical figures, which placed them within reach of the common people. Besides the personal gifts made to him by the court he brought back from his stay in Constantinople stocks of a variety of fig tree, of which the figs, called doñegal, are still known under the variant name bonigar given s.v. higo in the Dictionary of the Spanish Academy. During his time

the musician Ziryāb [q.v.] introduced the game of chess to Cordova, where it had a great success. But it was not approved by al-Ghazal, for in a poem addressed to a nephew of his who was a keen chessplayer he declared it to be sinful and an invention of the devil. Al-Ghazal's unusual diplomatic mission and the memory of Viking incursions gave rise to the legend invented in the 12th or 13th century by the Valencian Ibn Dihya (Mutrib, Khartoum 1954, 130 f.) according to which 'Abd al-Rahman II, satisfied with the way in which al-Ghazāl and his companion had carried out their mission, entrusted to them in later years another embassy to the North with the aim of dissuading the king of the Vikings from attempting a fresh landing in Andalusia. According to this story the poet and his companion fulfilled their task in northern Europe and returned to Cordova after a dangerous voyage of nine months in Atlantic waters. The falseness of this is obvious at a glance. The more or less marvellous elements of which it is formed are copied for the most part from episodes attributed in the 10th century to al-Ghazal's journey to the Greek emperor. No doubt the unusual activity of the Byzantine emperor in Cordova and the daring landing of the Vikings on Spanish territory, enriched with romantic details, finally amalgamated in the popular beliefs of Andalusia and so gave rise to a combined legend which little by little distorted the historical reality.

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(A. Huici Miranda)

AL-GHAZALI, ABŪ ḤĀMID MUḤAMMAD B. MUḤAMMAD AL-ṬŪSĪ (450/1058-505/1111), outstanding theologian, jurist, original thinker, mystic and religious reformer. There has been much discussion since ancient times whether his nisba should be Ghazālī or Ghazzālī; cf. Brockelmann, S I, 744; the former is to be preferred in accordance with the principle of difficilior lectio potius.

r. Life

He was born at Tūs in Khurāsān, near the modern Meshhed, in 450/1058. He and his brother Aḥmad were left orphans at an early age. Their education was begun in Tūs. Then al-Ghazālī went to Diurdjān and, after a further period in Tūs, to Naysābūr, where he was a pupil of al-Diuwaynī Imām al-Haramayn [q.v.] until the latter's death in 478/1085. Several other teachers are mentioned, mostly obscure, the best known being Abū ʿAlī al-Fārmadhī. From Naysābūr in 478/1085 al-Ghazālī went to the "camp" of Nizām al-Mulk [q.v.] who had attracted

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many scholars, and there he was received with honour and respect. At a date which he does not specify but which cannot be much later than his move to Baghdad and which may have been earlier, al-Ghazālī passed through a phase of scepticism, and emerged to begin an energetic search for a more satisfying intellectual position and practical way of life. In 484/1091 he was sent by Nizam al-Mulk to be professor at the madrasa he had founded in Baghdād, the Nizāmiyyā. Al-Ghazālī was one of the most prominent men in Baghdad, and for four years lectured to an audience of over three hundred students. At the same time he vigorously pursued the study of philosophy by private reading, and wrote several books. In 488/1095, however, he suffered from a nervous illness which made it physically impossible for him to lecture. After some months he left Baghdad on the pretext of making the pilgrimage, but in reality he was abandoning his professorship and his whole career as a jurist and theologian. The motives for this renunciation have been much discussed from the contemporary period until the present day. He himself says he was afraid that he was going to Hell, and he has many criticisms of the corruption of the 'ulama' of his time (e.g., Iḥyā, i); so it may well be that he felt that the whole organized legal profession in which he was involved was so corrupt that the only way of leading an upright life, as he conceived it, was to leave the profession completely. The recent suggestion (F. Jabre, in MIDEO, i (1954), 73-102) that he was chiefly afraid of the Isma'ilis (Assassins) who had murdered Nizām al-Mulk in 485/1092, and whom he had attacked in his writings, places too much emphasis on what can at most have been one factor. Another suggestion is that of D. B. Macdonald (in EI^1) that contemporary political events may have made al-Ghazālī apprehensive; shortly before he left Baghdad the Saldiüķid sultan Barkiyaruķ [q.v.] executed his uncle Tutush, who had been supported by the caliph and presumably al-Ghazāli; and it was soon after the death of Barkiyārūķ in 498/1105 that al-Ghazālī returned to teaching.

From al-Ghazālī's abandonment of his professorship in Baghdād to his return to teaching at Naysābūr in 499/1106 is a period of eleven years, and it is sometimes said, even in early Muslim biographical notices, that al-Ghazālī spent ten years of this in Syria. Careful reading of his own words in the Munkidh (see below), and attention to numerous small details in other sources, makes it certain that he was only "about two years" in Syria. On his departure from Baghdad in Dhu 'l-Ka'da 488/ November 1095 he spent some time in Damascus, then went by Jerusalem and Hebron to Medina and Mecca to take part in the Pilgrimage of 489/ November-December 1096. He then went back for a short time to Damascus, but his own phrase of "nearly two years there" (Munkidh, 130) must be taken loosely. He is reported to have been seen in Baghdād in Djumādā II 490/May-June 1097 (Jabre, op. cit., 87; cf. Bouyges, Chronologie, 3), but this can only have been a brief stay in the course of his journey to his home, Tus. It is sometimes said that al-Ghazālī visited Alexandria, but scholars are now inclined to reject this report; if he did go to Egypt it can only have been for a short time.

In this period of retirement at Damascus and Tüs al-Ghazālī lived as a poor sūfī, often in solitude, spending his time in meditation and other spiritual exercises. It was at this period that he composed his greatest work, Ihyā' culūm al-dīn ("The Revival

of the Religious Sciences"), and he may have lectured on its contents to select audiences. By the end of the period he had advanced far along the mystic path, and was convinced that it was the highest way of life for man.

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In the course of the year 499/1105-6 Fakhr al-Mulk, son of Nizām al-Mulk and vizier of Sandjar, the Saldiūkid ruler of Khurāsān, pressed al-Ghazāli to return to academic work. He yielded to the pressure, partly moved by the belief that he was destined to be the reviver of religion (mudiaddid) at the beginning of the new century, in accordance with a well-known Tradition. In Dhu 'l-Ka'da 499/ July-August 1106 he began to lecture at the Nizāmiyya in Naysābūr and not long afterwards wrote the autobiographical work al-Munkidh min al-dalāl ("Deliverance from Error"). Before his death, however, in Djumādā II 505/December 1111, he had once again abandoned teaching and retired to Tus. Here he had established, probably before he went to Naysabur, a khankah or hermitage, where he trained young disciples in the theory and practice of the sūfī life. Several names are known of men who were his pupils at Tus (cf. Bouyges, Chronologie, 4 n.).

2. Works and doctrines

(a) Questions of authenticity and esotericism. A great difficulty in the study of al-Ghazālī's thought is that, while he undoubtedly wrote many books, some have been attributed to him which he did not write. Bouyges in his Essai de Chronologie (composed before 1924 but only published posthumously in 1959 with additional notes on subsequent publications by M. Allard) lists 404 titles. Many of these are taken from lists of his works and no copies are known to exist. In other cases the same book appears under different titles, and a great deal of work has still to be done on manuscripts before scholars know exactly what is extant and what is not. Further, at least from the time of Muhyi 'l-Din b. al-'Arabi (d. 638/ 1240) allegations have been made that books have been falsely attributed to al-Ghazālī (cf. Montgomery Watt, A forgery in al-Ghazāli's Mishkāt?, in JRAS 1949, 5-22; idem, The authenticity of the works attributed to al-Ghazāli, in JRAS, 1952, 24-45). The works whose authenticity has been doubted are mostly works expressing advanced suffistic and philosophical views which are at variance with the teaching of al-Ghazālī in the works generally accepted as authentic. There are difficulties, owing to the richness of his thought, in establishing conclusively the existence of contradictions. Ibn Ţufayl (d. 581/1185), however, who called attention to contradictions, also suggested that al-Ghazālī wrote differently for ordinary men and for the élite, or, in other words, that he had esoteric views which were not divulged to everyone (Hayy b. Yakzān, Damascus, 1358/1939, 69-72). This complicates the problem of authenticity: but there is no reason for thinking that, even if al-Ghazālī had different levels of teaching for different audiences, he ever in the levels directly contradicted what he "higher" maintained at the lower levels. An alternative supposition, that he adopted extreme philosophical forms of sufism in his last years, seems to be excluded by the discovery that Ildjām al-cawāmm, in which he holds a position similar to that of the Ihya, was completed only a few days before his death (Bouyges, Chronologie, 80 f.; G. F. Hourani, The chronology of Ghazālī's writings, in JAOS, lxxix (1959), 225-33). In the present state of scholarship the soundest methodology is to concentrate on the main works

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of undoubted authenticity and to accept other works only in so far as the views expressed are not incompatible with those in the former (cf. Montgomery Watt, The study of al-Ghazālī, in Oriens, xiii-xiv (1961), 121-31.

- (b) Personal. A year or two before his death al-Ghazālī wrote al-Munkidh min al-dalāl, an account of the development of his religious opinions, but not exactly an autobiography, since it is arranged schematically not chronologically; e.g., he knew something of sūfism before the stage of development at which he describes it in the book. Most of the details about his life given above are derived from the Munkidh. He is also concerned to defend himself against the accusations and criticism that had been brought against his conduct and the views he had expressed. A small work answering criticisms of the Ihyā' is the Imlā'.
- (c) Legal. Al-Ghazālī's early training was as a jurist, and it was probably only under al-Djuwaynī that he devoted special attention to kalam or dogmatic theology. Some of his earliest writings were in the sphere of fikh, notably the Basit and the Wasit, but he apparently continued to be interested in the subject and to write about it, for a work called the Wadjīz is dated 495/1101, while the Mustasfā was written during his period of teaching at Naysābūr in 503/1109 (Bouyges, Chronologie, 49, 73). The latter deals with the sources of law (usul alfikh) in a manner which shows the influence of his earlier philosophical studies but is entirely within the juristic tradition. It is reported in biographical notices that at the time of his death al-Ghazālī was engaged in deepening his knowledge of Tradition.
- (d) Philosophy and logic. After the period of scepticism described in the Munkidh, al-Ghazālī in his quest for certainty made a thorough study of philosophy, a subject to which he had been introduced by al-Djuwaynī. This occupied all the earlier part of the Baghdad period. What he studied was chiefly the Arabic Neoplatonism of al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā. Though his final aim was to show in what respects their doctrines were incompatible with Sunnī Islam, he first wrote an exposition of their philosophy without any criticism, Makasid alfalāsifa, which was much appreciated in Spain and the rest of Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This he followed by a criticism of the doctrines entitled Tahāfut al-falāsifa, "The incoherence (or inconsistency) of the philosophers"; this was finished at the beginning of 488/1095 (Bouyges, Chronologie, 23). In it he noted twenty points on which the philosophers' views were objectionable to Sunnis or inconsistent with their own claims; in respect of three of these they were to be adjudged unbelievers. In the Tahāfut al-Ghazālī concentrates on demonstrating the inconsistencies of the philosophers and does not argue for any positive views of his own. Because of this he has been accused of having remained something of a sceptic. This accusation fails to notice that the Tahafut was written just before the crisis which caused him to leave Baghdad; it is therefore possible that at the time he was somewhat uncertain of his positive beliefs, but a few years later when he was writing the Ihya' he was in no doubt about what he believed. What impressed al-Ghazālī most of the various branches of philosophical studies was logic, and in particular the Aristotelian syllogism. For the sake of Sunnī jurists and theologians to whom philosophical books were not easily accessible or, because of their technical language, not readily understandable, he

- wrote two books on Aristotelian logic, Mi^cyār al-^cilm and Mihakk al-naṣar. A justification of the use of this logic in religious matters is contained in al-Kistās al-mustakīm, apparently written for some comparatively simple-minded believers who were attracted by Bāṭinī (Ismā'īlī) doctrines. While full of enthusiasm for philosophy al-Ghazālī wrote a work on ethics, Mīzān al-^camal, though whether the whole of the extant text is authentic has been questioned (JRAS, 1952, 38-40, 45). Since al-Ghazālī does not appear to refer to the Mīzān in his later works, and since he became very critical of philosophical ethics (Munkidh, 99 ff.), it is possible that, as his enthusiasm waned, he rejected much of what he had written in this work.
- (e) Dogmatic theology. His chief work of dogmatics is al-Iktisād fi 'l-i'tikād, probably composed shortly before or shortly after his departure from Baghdad (Bouyges, 34). This book deals with roughly the same topics as the Irshād of al-Djuwaynī, but it makes full use of Aristotelian logic, including the syllogism. In this respect Ibn Khaldun (iii, 41) is correct in making al-Ghazālī the founder of a new tendency in theology, although there is no striking novelty in his dogmatic views. In Kitāb al-Arbacīn, (Cairo 1344, 24), written after the Ihyao, al-Ghazali says that the Iktisad is more likely to prepare for the gnosis (ma'rifa) of the şūfī than the usual works of dogmatics; and this continuing approval strengthens the view that al-Ghazālī never ceased to be an Ash cari in dogmatics, even though he came to hold that intellectual discussions in religion should range far beyond the limited field of dogmatics, and that detailed discussions in dogmatics had no practical value. To dogmatic theology might also be assigned Fayşal al-tafrika bayn al-Islām wa-'l-zandaka. This is partly directed against the Batiniyya, but is mainly a defence of his own views on the extent to which ta'wil is justified, and on the relative places of tawātur and idimāc as sources of religious knowledge. Ildjām al-cawāmm can cilm al-kalām, which appears to be his last work, warns of the dangers in the study of kalām for those with little education.
- (f) Polemics. The Mustazhirī, edited in abridged form by Goldziher as Streitschrift des Gazālī gegen die Bāṭinijja-Sekte (1916), is a searching theological critique of the Nizārī Ismāʿūlīs or Assassins. A Persian work, edited by O. Pretzl as Die Streitschrift des Gasālī gegen die Ibāhīja (1933), attacks the antinomianism of certain mystics. The authenticity of a work of anti-Christian polemic, al-Radā al-ajamīl ʿalā sarīh al-inājīl (ed. and tr. R. Chidiac, Paris 1939), is doubted by Bouyges (126), but defended by Louis Massignon (in REI, 1932, 491-536).
- (g) Sūfistic practice. Al-Ghazālī's greatest work, both in size and in the importance of its contents is Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn, "The revival of the religious sciences", in four volumes. This is divided into four "quarters", dealing with 'ibādāt (cult practices), cadat (social customs), muhlikat (vices, or faults of character leading to perdition), mundiiyāt (virtues, or qualities leading to salvation). Each "quarter" has ten books. The Iḥyā' is thus a complete guide for the devout Muslim to every aspect of the religious lifeworship and devotional practices, conduct in daily life, the purification of the heart, and advance along the mystic way. The first two books deal with the necessary minimum of intellectual knowledge. This whole stupendous undertaking arises from al-Ghazālī's feeling that in the hands of the 'ulamā' of his day religious knowledge had become a means of worldly advancement, whereas it was his deep conviction

that it was essentially for the attainment of salvation in the world to come. He therefore, while describing the prescriptions of the Shart'a in some detail, tries to show how they contribute to a man's final salvation. Bidāyat al-hidāya is a brief statement of a rule of daily life for the devout Muslim, together with counsel on the avoidance of sins. K. al-Arba'in is a short summary of the Ihyā', though its forty sections do not altogether correspond to the forty books. Al-Makṣad al-asnā discusses in what sense men may imitate the names or attributes of God. Kimiyā' alsa'āda is in the main an abridgement in Persian of the Ihyā' (also translated in whole or in part into Urdū, Arabic, etc.), but there are some differences which have not been fully investigated.

(h) Sūfistic theory. It is in this field that most of the cases of false or dubious authenticity occur. Mishkāt al-anwār ("The niche for lights", tr. W. H. T. Gairdner, London 1924; cf. idem, in Isl., v (1914), 121-53) is genuine, except possibly the last section (JRAS, 1949, 5-22). Al-Risāla al-laduniyya deals with the nature of knowledge of divine things, and its authenticity has been doubted because of its closeness to a work of Ibn al-'Arabi and because of its Neoplatonism (cf. Bouyges, 124 f.). There are numerous other works in the same category, of which the most important is Minhādi al-cābidīn. These works are of interest to students of mysticism, and their false attribution to al-Ghazālī, if it can be proved, does not destroy their value as illustrations of some branches of suffistic thought during the lifetime of al-Ghazālī and the subsequent halfcentury.

3. His influence

A balanced account of the influence of al-Ghazālī will probably not be possible until there has been much more study of various religious movements during the subsequent centuries. The following assessments are therefore to some extent provisional.

- (a) His criticism of the Bāṭiniyya may have helped to reduce the intellectual attractiveness of the movement, but its comparative failure, after its success in capturing Alamūt, is due to many other factors
- (b) After his criticism of the philosophers there are no further great names in the philosophical movement in the Islamic east, but it is not clear how far the decline of philosophy is due to al-Ghazāli's criticisms and how far to other causes. Its continuance in the Islamic west, where the *Tahāfut* was also known, suggests that the other causes are also important.
- (c) Al-Ghazālī's studies in philosophy led to the incorporation of certain aspects of philosophy, notably logic, into Islamic theology. In course of time theologians came to devote much more time and space to the philosophical preliminaries than to the theology proper. On the other hand, his speculations about the nature of man's knowledge of the divine realm and his conviction that the upright and devout man could attain to an intuition (or direct experience —dhawk) of divine things comparable to that of the worldliness of the culamā does not seem to have led to any radical changes.
- (d) He undoubtedly performed a great service for devout Muslims of every level of education by presenting obedience to the prescriptions of the Sharī'a as a meaningful way of life. His khānkāh at Tūs, where he and his disciples lived together, was not unlike a Christian monastery; and it may be that he gave an impetus to the movement out of which

came the dervish orders (but this requires further investigation).

(e) His example may have encouraged those forms of sūfism which were close to Sunnism or entirely Sunni. Before him, however, there had been much more sūfism among Sunnī 'ulamā' than is commonly realized. His influence on the sūfī movement in general, however, requires further careful study.

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AL-GHAZĀLĪ, AHMAD B. MUHAMMAD, brother of the more renowned Muhammad Ghazālī, the Şūfī and popular preacher, made his way via Hamadän to Baghdad, and took his brother's place when the latter retired from teaching at the Nizāmiyya. He died in 520/1126 in Kazwin. He wrote an abridged version of the K. al-Ihya' of his brother, which has not survived; an exposition in sermon form of his confession of faith, al-Tadjrid fi kalimat al-tawhid (Turkish translation by M. Fewzī, el-Tefrīd fī terdiemet el-Tedirid, Istanbul 1285); a discussion of the admissibility of samāc (Şūfī music and dancing), Bawārik al-ilmā' fi 'l-radd 'alā man yuḥarrimu 'l-samā', ed. J. Robson in Tracts on listening to music (Or. Transl. Fund, NS v), London 1938; a subtle psychology of love, Sawānih, ed. H. Ritter (Bibl. Islamica, xv) 1942; (probably) the Risālat al-Ţayr, which was the inspiration for the Mantik al-tayr of Farid al-Din 'Attar (see H. Ritter, Das Meer der Seele, 8-10); and other minor writings which have not yet