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VOL. IV

Al-Ghazālī's  
*Al-Munqidh min Al-Ḍalāl*

وَالْحَمْدُ ذِكْرُهُ حَتَّى لَا يَنْسَاهُ وَعَصْمَةُ مِنْ  
شَرِّ نَفْسِهِ حَتَّى لَا يُؤْثِرَ عَلَيْهِ سِوَاهُ وَاسْتِغْلَامَهُ  
لِنَفْسِهِ حَتَّى لَا يَعْبُدَ إِلَّا آيَاهُ وَصَلَّى عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ  
وَعَلَى الْمُسْلِمِينَ أجمعين

فجز الكتاب بحمد الله  
وفزع عبد الحميد الفصل الرابع في الطهارة  
غرضه صحة يوم الجمعة لسمع ظنون  
مروال منه تسع وخمسة  
ومحمد الله تعالى على آياته  
ونكره على جميل بلائه  
وجزيلة عطائه  
وبصل على النبي محمد سيد انبيائه  
وعلى آله وصحبه  
وحسن السجود وحسن

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

ل	ح	ب	و
ح	ل	ب	ه
س	و	ر	ط
ا	ن	د	د

Last page of the ms. of the *Munqidh min al-Dalāl* contained in no. 1712 of the Šehid Ali Paša of Istanbul. The colophon is dated 509 A.H. [=1115-1116 A.D.]

# Freedom and Fulfillment

An Annotated Translation of  
Al-Ghazālī's *al-Munqidh min al-Dalāl*  
and Other  
Relevant Works of al-Ghazālī  
by

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Al-Ghazālī

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ATQUE DEFUNCTIS  
MICHEL-RICHARD-HARRY-JOSEPH

### *Editor's Preface*

Classical Arabic Literature is still almost inaccessible to most scholars, and is even less read and enjoyed by the general educated public. Neither the range of its subjects—from poetry and folklore to historiography, religious speculations and philosophy, not to mention scientific works of all kinds—nor the skill and artistry of the writers are generally recognized outside the small circle of specialists. The nonspecialist does not always realize that Arab literature flourished far earlier than did most European literatures and that it reached its zenith (and, one might say, began to stagnate) at a time when the latter were just beginning their ascent. Not all of the authors, nor even a majority, were Arabs; they used Arabic as the *lingua franca* of the medieval Muslim empire.

The Library of Classical Arabic Literature aims at making the work of the Arabic-writing thinkers and literati available to those scholars and lovers of literary works unable to read them in the original. Translations of some works into various European languages, including English, have appeared. Most of these, however, lacked grace by adhering slavishly to peculiarities of the Arab style; they failed to express the idiom used in the original by its equivalent in the language of translation. Others, by paraphrasing, deviated so far from the original text that the scholar could not always be sure of the correct rendering of the author's thought. Memorable modern exceptions to this statement are Enno Littmann's German translation of the *Arabian Nights*, Sir Hamilton Gibb's translation of Ibn Battûta's *Travels*, and the most recent version of the Koran by A. J. Arberry.

This series plans to present readable and enjoyable versions which, though cast into idiomatic English, will remain true to the author's own thoughts. They will be introduced by an essay on the work and its author, his life and *oeuvre*, his rank and role in medieval Arab literature and scholarship. Full scholarly and interpretative notes will give added help and information.

Thus, the historian, the sociologist, the literary critic or the humanist, as well as the philosopher may find valuable research material for his own field.

But these works should—and can—be read for their own sake. This series differs from previously offered translations in that it will, whenever applicable, emphasize the relevance of the thought contained in these ancient writings for our own culture and times. It is hoped that this approach will enrich its value and provide an added dimension for our generation in the understanding of the ideas of a brilliant civilization of the past.

The present volume was prepared for the press during the weeks of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The religious frenzy of the masses, stirred by the “holy man,” the Ayatullah Ruhullah Khomeini, bewildered the Western observer who watched millions of men and women follow him as if in a trance, unquestioning, declaring themselves willing to die for him and the cause he represented. We wondered whence he received his power—not only over the masses, but for himself. Perhaps the following pages, transmitting the thought of a twelfth-century Muslim spiritual leader—philosopher as well as mystic—may help to explain in a certain measure the phenomenon of Muslim spirituality in the twentieth-century world, the differences between Ghazālī’s Sunni convictions and the Ayatullah’s Shi’ism notwithstanding.

However, in this instance “tout comprendre” is not “tout pardonner.”

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## Introduction

1 “With the time came the man.” These words are the introductory sentence of the chapter on Ghazālī in Duncan Black Macdonald’s famous book *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Theory*. Even in my first reading of them I seemed to hear in their background a flourish of trumpets: philosophical and theological and mystical trumpets, trumpets of strife and battle, trumpets on this side and from the other side, trumpets of death and of life. With the time came the man. The time was the period encompassed by the years 1058–1111 A.D. [450–505 A.H.: the Muslim calendar]. The man was Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad son of Muḥammad son of Muḥammad al-Ghazālī.

2 The time in which Ghazālī lived and labored was, politically speaking, a time of agitation and turmoil. According to the historian Abū l-Fidā’ the Abbassid Caliphate was in a state of abasement and decline, the Arab rule in Baghdad had passed away, or nearly passed away, Spain was revolting against its Muslim rulers, Peter the Hermit was summoning men to the Crusades, men were divided into Shi’ites and Sunnis by religious and political differences, and Ash’arism and the “Scholastic Philosophy” in Islam, with the support of the Seljuqs, were opposing the Mu’tazilites. The political regime in Baghdad was complicated and confused. On the one hand there was the Caliph, whose dominion seems to have been limited to the mention of his name in the canonical Prayer in the mosques, and on the other there was the Seljuq Sultan, who dominated the army and politics.

3 The Caliphs who supported Ghazālī were al-Muqtadī Billāh [d. 487 A.H.] and al-Mustaẓhir Billāh [d. 512 A.H.], and he was backed by the Sultans ‘Aḍud al-Dawla [d. 465 A.H.], Jalāl al-Dīn Malikshāh [d. 485 A.H.], Nāṣir al-Dīn Maḥmūd [d. 487 A.H.], Rukn al-Dīn Abū l-Muẓaffar Barkiyārūq [d. 498 A.H.], Rukn al-Dīn Malikshāh al-Thānī [d. 498 A.H.], and Muḥammad son of Malik-

shāh [d. 511 A.H.]. At the Sultan's side was his Wazīr [Minister], who usually held the reigns of power. One of these powerful Wazīrs was Nizām al-Mulk, who was able to dominate the state for nearly a quarter of a century. This man had a great influence on the cultural life of the time because it was he who founded the renowned Nizāmiyya Schools. He was a contemporary and fellow student of Ghazālī. And it was Fakhr al-Dawla, the son of Nizām al-Mulk, who urged Ghazālī, toward the end of the latter's life, to return to teaching in the Nizāmiyya [School] of Nisābūr.

4 In farthest North Africa the State of the Veiled Ones [tribes whose men veiled their faces] was ruled by Yūsuf son of Tāshfin, and after him by his son. In another part of North Africa the Berbers ruled, the most famous of them being Tamīm son of al-'Izz son of Bādīs and Yaḥyā son of Ghanīm. The Fāṭimids reigned in Egypt. Their most famous caliphs who were contemporaries of Ghazālī were al-Musta'li Billāh Abū l-Qāsim Aḥmad son of al-Mustaṣṣir and al-Āmir bi Aḥkām Allāh 'Alī al-Manṣūr son of al-Musta'li.

5 Ghazālī witnessed, or rather heard of, the disaster which befell the Islamic world in the last years of his life. This was the incursion of the Crusaders, which led to their founding princedoms in Rahā [in the Euphrates valley] in 490 A.H. and in Antioch in 491. Jerusalem was conquered in 492 and Tripoli [of Lebanon] in 495. There is no mention of these events in any of Ghazālī's writings, a fact for which he has been criticized by Zakī al-Mubārak. But Farīd Jabre found an excuse for that in the fact that Ghazālī was in Khorasan, far from the battle, and the Islamic regions were all at that time embroiled in dissensions and plots, while the princes' battles for power were unceasing—something which distracted Muslims in one country from the affairs of those in the other countries.

6 At this time, too, the Bāṭinite peril was on the upswing. It reached a high degree with their assassination of Nizām al-Mulk in 485 and of his son Fakhr al-Dawla in 500 and of the Wazīr of the Sultan Barkiyārūq in 495. The Bāṭinites imposed a kind of terrorism on the eastern zones of the Islamic world. Behind their movement were the Fāṭimids, who exploited the political anarchy and the lack of outstanding leaders to cause

general havoc. I need not dwell here on the Bāṭinites since the reader will find much more information about them and about Ghazālī's preoccupation with them in the text of my translation and the notes and references attached thereto, and especially in Appendix II.

7 In the days of Ghazālī the Islamic world was subjected to various cultural influences. In addition to the pure Islamic element different cultural currents affected the thinking of the Muslims. Perhaps the most influential was that of Greek culture. As Dr. al-Ṭibāwī has declared: "It was the Greek culture which prevailed in the milieu of this East of ours from the time of Alexander's conquests, and it continued to progress with time and had added to it various factors in varying times and it became mixed with Indian, Persian and Egyptian philosophy; but it remained clear and dominant until the coming of the Muslims, who worked energetically after the consolidation of their rule to take over the civilization of those who had preceded them: and they found Greek culture within easy reach."

8 After the mingling of the pre-Islamic Greek culture with the other cultures and its being tinged with a Christian mode of metaphysical thought Neo-Platonism made its appearance in the third century A.D. and it had a great influence on Islamic thought, especially in the area of Sufism. The influence of Persian philosophy was not less than that of Indian philosophy. Its greatest effects were on the extremist Shi'ite beliefs concerning the divine right to rule and the "descent" [indwelling: *ḥulūl*] of God into the body of the Imām. Mention may also be made of the pagans of Ḥarrān, who are said to have hidden behind the name of the Sabaeans mentioned in the Qur'ān.

9 The Egyptian scholar 'Abd al-Karīm al-'Uthmān declares that the 'Abbassid ages can be divided into three eras: the first era is that of the stage of transition and expansion and creation and innovation by way of translation [of Greek philosophy and science] and the mingling of the Arab culture with other cultures. The second is the stage of application and the effort to reconcile philosophy and religion. The third (the era of Ghazālī) was marked by the appearance of a new flare-up, viz. that of religion's fury against philosophy. In this third era Ghazālī played a leading role, a role for which he was well

equipped by his own Sufi experience and his study of philosophy and, above all, by his authentic Muslim spirituality.

10 As a natural consequence of these different cultural factors, often mutually opposed, this age was characterized by a kind of intemperateness in thought and an unruliness in imagination which led to an extraordinary confusion and a curious concern with religions and sects and movements, with each tongue and pen going its own ideological way. There was conflict between the partisans and the opponents of the ancient Greek philosophy, while the *mutakallimūn* [Muslim theologians] were split between Ash'arism and Mu'tazilism. The Sufis, discontented with the general state of affairs, created their own trends—and were themselves influenced by elements from the doctrines of Persians and Indians and Greeks.

11 With the time came the man: what little I have been able to set forth here must suffice as a very sketchy description of "the time." It will be supplemented somewhat by the rest of this book, and the interested reader will find many references to sources which will provide a much more detailed and ample picture of an age which, in some profound respects, was not entirely unlike our own. Now we must turn to a brief consideration of "the man."

12 If Ghazālī, or one of his friends, had been able to compile a kind of proleptic scrapbook of adulatory references, or "rave reviews," it would have contained some rather remarkable items. Here are some random examples to illustrate this point.

1) "If there had been a prophet after Mohammed, it would have been Al-Ghazali"—al-Suyūṭī, cited by Zwemer.

2) "... The greatest, certainly the most sympathetic figure in the history of Islam, and the only teacher of the after generations ever put by a Muslim on a level with the four great Imams."—D. B. Macdonald.

3) "Al-Ghazālī has sometimes been acclaimed in both East and West as the greatest Muslim after Muḥammad, and he is by no means unworthy of that dignity"—W. M. Watt.

4) "... A man who stands on a level with Augustine and Luther in religious insight and intellectual vigour"—H. A. R. Gibb.

5) "He was the pivot of existence and the common pool of refreshing waters for all, the soul of the purest part of the people of the Faith, and the road for obtaining the satisfaction of the Merciful.... He became the unique one of his own day and for all time among the Moslem learned"—

Jamāl al-Dīn; and another nearly contemporary: "... An Imam by whose name breasts are dilated and souls revived, in whose literary productions the ink horn exults and the paper quivers with joy, and at the hearing of whose message voices are hushed and heads are bowed."

6) "Ghazali is without doubt the most remarkable figure in all Islam"—T. J. DeBoer.

7) "This man, if ever any have deserved the name, was truly a 'divine,' and he may be justly placed on a level with Origen, so remarkable was he for learning and ingenuity, and gifted with such a rare faculty for the skillful and worthy exposition of doctrine.... He was the first of the Mohammedan divines"—Dr. August Tholuck.

8) "I saw the Prophet in a dream, and he was contending with Moses and Jesus regarding the superiority of excellence of the Imam Al-Ghazālī, and saying to them: 'Have you had in your sects such a learned and righteous man?' alluding to Al-Ghazālī, and they both replied, 'No.'"—al-Damīrī, cited by Zwemer.

9) "Muḥammad son of 'Abdallāh—God bless him and grant him peace!—is the lord of the Prophets, and Muḥammad son of Idrīs is the lord of the Imāms, and Muḥammad son of Muḥammad son of Muḥammad al-Ghazālī is the lord of the writers [*al-muṣannifīn*]"—al-Ḥadārī.

10) "When I was sitting one day, lo, I perceived the gates of heaven opened, and a company of blessed angels descended, having with them a green robe and a precious steed. They stood by a certain grave and brought forth its tenant and clothed him in the green robe and set him on the steed and ascended with him from heaven to heaven, till he passed the seven heavens and reft after them sixty veils, and I know not whither at last he reached. Then I asked about him, and was answered, 'This is the Imam Al-Ghazālī.' That was after his death; may God Most High have mercy on him!"—al-Zabīdī, cited by Zwemer.

11) "There was in our time a person who disliked al-Ghazālī and who used to censure and calumniate him in Egypt. Then he saw the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—in a dream, and beside him Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and al-Ghazālī sitting in front of him and saying: 'O Apostle of God, this person speaks against me.' And the Prophet—God bless him and grant him peace!—said: 'Bring the whips!', and he commanded the man to be beaten on account of al-Ghazālī. And this man awoke from sleep and the marks of the whips were still on his back—and he was wont to weep and to recount this to people."—al-Subkī.

12) "The Proof of Islam and the Way of Religion by which one attains the Abode of Peace; collector of [or: uniter of] the scattered parts of the sciences, surpassing in the traditional and the rational.... He was a lion, before whom [all other] lions shrank and disappeared; and a perfect full moon, save that its guidance illumined by day; and a man among men, but he the high and towering mountain; and a part of creation, but as pearls set in order are a part of the stones; he came when men stood in greater need of the refutation of the philosophers than the darknesses of the lights of heaven and in greater want than the arid land of drops of water."

He fought for the True Religion with the charm of his utterance and defended the area of religion without being stained by the blood of those who passed the boundary of his blades until religion was firmly consolidated and the darkness of doubts were routed and became only fabricated prattle. In addition to this, his heart enclosed a piety and a solitude in which his chosen companion was none other than obedience to God and a denudation [*tajrīd*] which makes him visible, for he indeed was unique in the sea of unification [*tawhīd*: or, proclamation of God's unity; this and *tajrīd* have Sufi overtones]—

He cast down the page to lighten his luggage,  
And his provisions, and even his sandal he discarded.

He left the world behind him and devoted himself to God, dealing [only] with Him privately and publicly.”—al-Subkī, in what Jabre calls “une longue introduction dans le style décadent de l'époque.”

13 Such is a sampler of the items which the proleptic scrapbook of Ghazālī or of one of his friends might have contained. But it was not all sweetness and light of adulation. Ghazālī had his critics, and even his detractors and vilifiers, as we shall see. But enough has been said to indicate that he was a very extraordinary man. Extraordinary, yes: but also a man. And what can be said about the man Ghazālī? ‘Abd al-Karīm, al-‘Uthmān has published a compilation of the principal Arabic biographical sketches of Ghazālī under the title *Sīrat al-Ghazālī*. It includes the earliest, that of ‘Abd al-Ghāfir al-Fārisī, who died in 529, eighteen years after the death of Ghazālī, followed by those of Ibn ‘Asākir al-Dimashqī [d. 571/1175], Abū l-Faraj son of al-Jawzī [d. 597/1200], Yāqūt al-Hamawī [d. 681/1282], Ibn Khillikān [d. 681/1282], al-Dhahabī [d. 748/1347], al-Yāfi‘ī al-Yamānī [d. 768/1366], al-Subkī [d. 771/1369], and al-Zabīdī [d. 1205/1790]. Usually, the more recent the biography, the longer it is, and also, in most cases, the less informative. What I propose to do here is to give a translation of the earliest biography of Ghazālī, that of ‘Abd al-Ghāfir al-Fārisī, who actually knew Ghazālī. Some further notes will be added from other sources.

#### *‘Abd al-Ghāfir’s Life of Ghazālī*

14 Abū l-Hasan ‘Abd al-Ghāfir son of Ismā‘īl, the Khaṭīb [the preacher] al-Fārisī said: The Khaṭīb of Nisābūr, Muḥammad

son of Muḥammad son of Muḥammad Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī, the Proof of Islam and the Muslims, the Imam of the Imams of Religion, whose like eyes have not seen in eloquence and elucidation, and speech and thought, and acumen and natural ability, in his childhood in Ṭūs, acquired some learning in jurisprudence from the Imam Aḥmad al-Rādhkānī. Then he went to Nisābūr where, with a group of youths from Ṭūs, he frequented the lectures of the Imām al-Ḥaramayn [the Imam of the two sanctuaries, i.e. Mecca and Medina, so called from his enforced sojourn there]. He worked so hard and seriously that he finished his studies in a short time. He outstripped his fellows and mastered the Qur’ān, and became the best reasoner [*anẓar*] of the men of his time and matchless among his fellows in the days of the Imām al-Ḥaramayn. The students used to derive profit from him, and he would instruct them and guide them and work hard himself [or: formulate his own independent judgments]. He finally reached the point where he began to compose works. The Imām, despite his high rank and lofty diction and the speed of his flow in speech and discussion, did not have a sincere private regard for Ghazālī because of his dislike for his speed in expression and his natural ability, nor was he pleased by his literary undertakings, even though Ghazālī had been trained by him and was associated with him, as is not unknown regarding human nature; but he made an outward show of pride in him and esteem for his position, contrary to what he hid in his heart. And Ghazālī continued thus until the end of the Imām’s days.

15 Then Ghazālī left Nisābūr and went to the ‘Askar [usually: *al-Mu‘askar*—camp-court, political and military base] and was officially [or: warmly] welcomed by Niẓām al-Mulk. And the Master [i.e. Niẓām] took an interest in him because of his high rank and conspicuous name and his excellence in disputation and his command of expression. And His Excellency was the stopping-place of the ulema and the goal of the imams and the literary men. So there befell Ghazālī some fine encounters from contact with the imams and meeting tough adversaries and disputing with luminaries and arguing with the distinguished, and his name became known in distant lands. He took the fullest advantage of that until circumstances led to his being appointed to go to Baghdad to take charge of the teaching in the blessed



Nizāmiyya School there. He went off to Baghdad and his teaching and disputation delighted everyone and he met no one like himself, and after holding the Imamate of Khurāsān he became the Imam of 'Irāq.

16 Then he looked into the science of the "roots" [*'ilm al-uṣūl*—i.e. the roots, or bases, or sources, of jurisprudence] and when he had mastered them he composed some books on that science; and he refurbished the School [of jurisprudence: the Shāfi'ite] and wrote works on it; and he molded *al-khilāf* [i.e. the branch dealing with differences in jurisprudential matters] and also composed new works on that. His rank and entourage (?) in Baghdad became so great that it surpassed the entourage of the notables and the princes and the residence of the Caliph. Then, from another aspect, the matter was turned around.

17 After studying the subtle sciences and applying himself to the books written about them, he was overwhelmed and followed the path of asceticism and godliness, and he gave up his entourage and cast away the rank he had attained to devote himself to the causes of piety and the provisions for the Afterlife. So he left his occupations and repaired to the House of God and performed the Pilgrimage. Then he entered Damascus and remained in that region for nearly ten years, wandering about and visiting the venerated religious shrines, and he began to compose the renowned works to which no one had preceded him, such as *The Quickening of the Religious Sciences* and the books abridged therefrom, such as *The Forty* [Chapters] and others of the treatises which, if one reflects on them, he will know the man's place vis-à-vis the branches of learning.

18 He began to battle against self and to regulate his character and to improve his qualities and to rectify his life-style. Thus the devil of frivolity and of seeking leadership and fame and of taking on bad qualities was transformed into serenity of soul and nobility of qualities and having done with [outward] forms and rites. He took on the apparel of the godly and reduced his hope and devoted his time to the guidance of men and to summoning them to what concerned them regarding the Afterlife and to making the world and preoccupation with it hateful to those in via [i.e. to the Afterlife], and to preparation

for the departure to the everlasting abode and obedience to everyone in whom he saw a promise of or smelt the fragrance of [spiritual] succor or alertness to any glimmer of the lights of [mystical] vision until he became pliant and supple regarding that.

19 Then he returned to his native land where he kept fast to his house, preoccupied with meditation, tenacious of his time, a godly goal and treasure for hearts to everyone who repaired to him and visited him. That went on for some time, and [his] works appeared and [his] books circulated. In his own day there appeared no opposition to what he was doing nor did anyone object to what he prescribed. Finally the office of Minister [Wazir] came to the most venerable Fakhr al-Mulk [son of Nizām, assassinated by a Bāṭinite in 500]—may God encompass him with His mercy! Khurāsān was adorned with the latter's entourage and government. He had heard of and verified Ghazālī's position and rank and the perfection of his superiority and his standing and the purity of his belief and his social intercourse. So he sought a blessing from him and had him brought and listened to what he had to say. Then he asked Ghazālī not to let his breaths and useful lessons remain sterile, with no one profiting from them or learning from their lights, and he went all out in importuning and suggesting until Ghazālī agreed to go forth. He was transported to Nisābūr—and the lion was absent from his lair, and the matter was hidden in the veiled and secret decree of God. Then Ghazālī was invited to teach in the blessed Nizāmiyya School [of Nisābūr]—God grant it length of days! He could not but yield to his master. By bringing forth that with which he had busied himself he aimed at guiding the trained [educated, those with learning] and benefiting the seekers [of learning] without going back to what he had been divested of, viz. seeking honor and wrangling with his peers and contemning the headstrong.

20 How often was he attacked by opposition and defamation and calumny regarding what he did not or did and slander and vilification: but he was unaffected by it and did not busy himself with answering the slanderers nor did he manifest any distress at the calumny of the confused [or: the muddle-headed, or: the scheming]. Indeed, I often visited him,

and I did not find in him what I had formerly been familiar with in his regard, viz. maliciousness [or: peevishness] and making people uneasy and regarding them disdainfully and looking down upon them out of haughtiness and arrogance and being dazzled by his own endowment of skill in speech and thought and expression, and his quest of glory and high status: he had become the exact opposite and had been cleansed of those impurities. I used to think that he was wrapped in the garment of constraint [or: affectation] and "blessed" by what he had achieved [the phrase is ambiguous: it perhaps has the nuance of "having his head turned by good fortune" (?)]. Then I realized, after reflection and examination, that the matter was not as I thought, and that the man had recovered from madness.

21 He related to us on certain nights how his circumstances had been from the beginning of his manifest following of the path of godliness and the victory of the mystical state (?) over him after his delving into the sciences and his behaving arrogantly toward all by virtue of his [superiority in] discourse [or: arguing], and the readiness with which God favored him in the acquisition of the various kinds of knowledge, and his capability for investigation and speculation until he became dissatisfied with preoccupation with the sciences alien to conduct and he reflected on the outcome and on what was profitable and useful regarding the Afterlife. He had begun in the company of al-Fāramdī and learned from him the beginning of the Way, and he followed what he suggested to him, viz. the performance of the offices of worship and intentness on works of supererogation and seeking to practice *dhikr* [remembrance of God; or the practice so designated] continuously and assiduity and diligence in the quest for salvation until he traversed those steep paths and undertook those hardships—but he did not attain the goal of his questing.

22 Then he related that he reviewed the sciences and waded into the [various] branches and applied anew his assiduity and diligence to the books on the subtle sciences, and he so acquired their interpretation that their doors were opened to him. For a while he remained preoccupied with their details and the counterbalancing of the proofs and the different sides of the problems. Then he related that there was opened for

him a door of fear to such an extent that it distracted him from everything and compelled him to abandon all else with the result that it became easy for him, and so on and so on until he became fully practiced [in religious matters] and truths were manifest to him and what we used to think was manipulation [?] and put-on [?] became [his] nature and ascertainment [conviction]. That was a sign of the beatitude decreed for him by God.

23 Then we asked him how he had come to wish to leave his house and to return to what he was summoned to, viz. the business of Nisābūr. In defense of that he said: According to my religion I could not conceivably hold back from the summons and the utility of benefiting the seekers [of knowledge]. It was indeed imperative for me to disclose the truth and to speak of it and to call to it—and he was truthful in that.

24 Then he forsook that before being himself forsaken and returned to his house. He set up nearby a school [*madrasa*] for the seekers of knowledge and a place of sojourn [*khānqāh*: a kind of monastic dwelling (?)] for the Sufis. He apportioned his time to the tasks of those present, such as the recital of the Qur'ān and keeping company with the men of hearts [sufis, or, sufi masters (?)] and sitting down to teach, so that not a single one of his moments or of those with him was profitless. [This went on] until the eye of time attained him and the days begrudged him to the men of his age. Then [God] translated him to His gracious proximity after his endurance of the varied attacks and opposition of his adversaries and his being led to kings [?].

25 And God protected him and preserved him and guarded him from being seized by vexing hands or from having his religion defiled by any slips. The conclusion of his affair was his applying himself to the Tradition[s] of the Elect—God's blessing and peace be upon him!—and frequenting the company of those devoted to it [i.e. Tradition] and reading [or: studying] the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim [the two "Sound," or collections of sound Traditions, compiled by the authors mentioned], who are the Proof of Islam. Had he lived, he would have outstripped everyone in that discipline in a small number of the days in which he would have made every effort to acquire

that. Doubtless he had heard Traditions in former days, and at the end of his life he busied himself with hearing them, but he did not happen to relate them. There was no disadvantage [or: harm, i.e. he certainly] in what he left behind him of books written on the roots and the branches [of jurisprudence] and all the other kinds [of books] which immortalize his memory, and it is owned by all the students who have profited from them that he did not leave his like after him.

26 He passed to the mercy of God on Monday, the fourteenth of Jumādā II, in the year 505 [Dec. 18, 1111 A.D.]. He was buried in the outskirts of the citadel (?) of Tābarān. And God favors him with various marks of esteem in his Afterlife, just as He favored him with various kinds of learning in his life here below. He left only daughters. He had of the means of subsistence, by inheritance and by his earnings, what provided him with a sufficiency and the support of his household and his children. He was not at ease with [or: beholden to (?)] anyone regarding temporal [secular] affairs; wealth had been offered to him, but he did not accept it and shunned it and was content with the amount which would preserve his religion [i.e. keep him independent] and with which he would not need to address himself to asking and receiving from others. [End of the biographical account]

27 The last short section of 'Abd al-Ghāfir al-Fārisī's account is devoted mostly to answering some criticisms which were directed at Ghazālī—grammatical weaknesses, his use of some Persian words, and occasional injudicious writing which might harm those not capable of understanding it properly. This section need not detain us here, for we shall have more to say about Ghazālī's critics later.

28 Such is the oldest, and perhaps the most authentic, biography of Ghazālī. It is sober and brief, and it does not tell us much that we should like to know. Even the *Munqidh* is more informative, though more *l'histoire d'une âme* than *l'histoire d'un homme*. But, as in so many other cases in Islamic history, the simple account was greatly expanded during succeeding generations. I have no intention of entertaining—or wearying—the reader with details of little real value. Fortunately we possess the considerable corpus of Ghazālī's authentic writings. These

more than reveal his charm and his greatness and his significance for Muslims and non-Muslims, both his contemporaries and ours. Here I merely mention the valuable articles by Macdonald and Jabre and the books by Margaret Smith and Samuel Zwemer. In these, and in many other obvious items mentioned in the Annotated Bibliography, the interested reader may pursue his quest for the "life" of Ghazālī: I am more interested in trying to understand and appreciate his "spirit"—or what he himself might refer to as his *qalb* [cf. Appendix V].

### Ghazālī's Works

29 At this point I propose to offer some general remarks on

Ghazālī's literary output before dealing in detail with the work which is of primary interest in this book. Like certain other Muslim polymaths and more specialized writers Ghazālī left behind him a rich legacy of works. It is not my intention to try to list all his works here, or to discuss the status of those which are of doubtful authenticity. Father Maurice Bouyges has dealt most competently with Ghazālī's works and their chronological order, and I refer the interested reader to his book as edited by the much regretted Father Michel Allard [cf. Annotated Bibliography]. Even the casual reader will be struck by the abundance and the variety of Ghazālī's writings. His primary function, during his teaching periods, was to teach *fiqh* [Islamic jurisprudence]. But he was also thoroughly versed in *kalām* [the basically polemic theology of Islam] and philosophy and mysticism [Sufism].

30 Of Ghazālī's books on jurisprudence I am not qualified to speak with any authority, but some of them have remained renowned right down to our own day. Incidentally, I may observe here that anyone seeking the quintessential *Islamic* thought cannot afford to overlook the area of *fiqh*, though I know of no one who has really exploited it thoroughly. Professor Joseph Schacht, my own revered mentor, could have done it, but, unfortunately, he died before reaching his full potential and productivity.

31 Ghazālī's greatest work was undoubtedly his *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* [The Revivification, or Quickening, of the Sciences of Religion—i.e. of the learning closely related to the religion

of Islam]. This is a truly monumental work which alone would place Ghazālī among the great writers and thinkers and deeply spiritual men of mankind. It consists of four "Quarters," each of which contains ten books. The First Quarter begins with two introductory books on knowledge and on the bases of orthodox beliefs. The remaining books deal with ritual purity, the prescribed acts of worship, or the so-called "Five Pillars of Islam"—the canonical Prayer, almsgiving, fasting and the pilgrimage (the first "Pillar," the profession of faith, was dealt with in the second book of this Quarter)—and certain other practices.

32 The Second Quarter discusses what are called *'ādāt* [usages, ways of acting or of comporting oneself]. These include the etiquette, or decorum, to be observed in the use of food, the proper use of marriage, the practice of friendship, and so on. The Third Quarter has for its subject *al-muhlikāt* [the things which lead to perdition]. It begins with a psychological masterpiece on the explanation of the "mysteries of the heart" [cf. Appendix V]. The second book deals with the mortification of oneself and the acquisition of good moral qualities and the cure of the heart's maladies. The remaining books are concerned with the overcoming of the appetites, especially those connected with the misuse of food and drink and sex, and of the various other vices.

33 The Fourth Quarter, in which Ghazālī rises to spiritual heights, is the Quarter of *al-munjiyāt* [the things which lead to final salvation]. Among its subjects are repentance, patience, gratitude, fear, hope, poverty, love, familiarity with God, intention, spiritual watchfulness over oneself, the examen of conscience, meditation [or: reflection], and, as a fitting conclusion, death and the Afterlife. For a much more detailed synopsis the reader is referred to Bousquet's book mentioned in the Annotated Bibliography.

34 But no synopsis, however detailed, can replace actual contact with the text of the *Iḥyā'*. Several of its books have been translated into various modern languages. But even these fail to convey the indescribable "savor" of the original text. There we find not only a remarkably flexible and beguiling Arabic, but also a clarity of thought and a felicity of example and anecdote combined with deep psychological insights and a grasp of

what I can only call "the divine." A sympathetic global reading makes it easy to understand why one old author affirmed that the *Iḥyā'* would supply for all Islamic literature if the latter were to be lost. And he said "Islamic," not "Arabic." For this master work of Ghazālī does, I think, convey all that is best and most appealing in Islam as a religion and a "revelation" of God's love for man and the heights attainable by man's love for God.

35 One of Ghazālī's major concerns was the threat posed to

Islam by Bāṭinism. His own protector and patron, Niẓām al-Mulk, was assassinated by a Bāṭinite, as were several other outstanding men of the time. And it has even been suggested that Ghazālī's abrupt departure from Baghdad was motivated by a personal fear for his own safety—though I find this somewhat exaggerated. At any rate he addressed himself to polemic against the Bāṭinites in more than one of his works. Indeed, in some of this polemic he loses his customary academic serenity and becomes almost shrill in his denunciations. However, I need not dwell here on this aspect of his writing, since the reader will find ample evidence of it in Appendixes II and III.

36 Philosophy was another field which occupied Ghazālī's mind

and pen. He was certainly a master of the Aristotelian logic and wrote brilliantly on it. He was also preoccupied with the ancient physics and metaphysics, especially as interpreted and taught by the Islamic philosophers such as al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā [Avicenna]. With keen perception he saw the dangers inherent in certain doctrines of the latter. This resulted in his writing two important works. The first was *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifa* [The Aims of the Philosophers—Intentiones Philosophorum], a lucid and well-organized exposition of the logic, physics, and metaphysics of the ancients as presented by the "modern" Islamic philosophers. This was followed by the intellectual bombshell entitled *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* [The Incoherence of the Philosophers—Destructio Philosophorum]. According to some this sounded the death knell of philosophy in Islam—an opinion with which I cannot entirely agree. For many decades it awaited a reply by Ibn Rushd [Averroes], a reply the adequacy of which is debatable [cf. Annotated Bibliography under van den Bergh: his book presents both texts with valuable notes].

37 The only work of Ghazālī which deals explicitly with *kālam* is his *al-Iqtisād fī l-I'tiqād* [The Golden Mean in Belief]. It addresses the great theological questions succinctly and, in my view, more competently than most of the works of the professed *mutakallimūn*. It has been quite adequately translated by the great Spanish orientalist M. Asin Palacios [cf. Annotated Bibliography]. It is clear from some of Ghazālī's prefatory remarks, and from other writings of his, that Ghazālī had no very high regard for *kālam*. He recognized its essential character of a defensive apologetic and countenanced its use in certain limited cases as a possible remedy for those beset with doubts about the Faith. Interestingly enough his very last work, completed a few days before his death, was *Iljām al-'Awāmm 'an al-Khawḍ fī 'Ilm al-Kalām* [Curbing the Masses from Engaging in the Science of Kalām].

38 Ghazālī authored many other works. I merely call the reader's attention here to the two books which are the subjects of Appendixes I and IV. The first throws considerable light on Ghazālī's theological serenity and liberality. The second is a fine example of his gift for drawing spiritual treasures out of usages which were always in danger of becoming mechanical and ill-informed by the true spirit of Islam. I shall not try to settle any of the vexed questions about certain works which are considered by many to be falsely attributed to Ghazālī. The interested reader will find discussions of these in some of the materials indicated in the Annotated Bibliography. And none of them creates any real problem concerning our primary interest in this book.

### *The Munqidh*

39 I now turn to the work which is unique among all of Ghazālī's books, and, indeed, unique in all of the classical Arabic literature. Whether it was the first of its kind is not altogether clear. Some have referred to the *Munqidh* as "The Confessions of al-Ghazālī" and this led to the inevitable comparison with Augustine's famous work. It has also been called Ghazālī's "Apologia pro vita sua," with a Newman resonance, though Frick more perspicaciously referred to it as "Apologia pro doctrina

sua." I still think, however, that the *Munqidh* possesses its own "uniqueness" for reasons which should become apparent to the reader's own appreciation of the book.

40 The title of the book occurs in two readings. One is *Al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl wa l-muḥṣiḥ 'an al-Aḥwāl* [What Saves from Error and Manifests (Makes Plain) the States (the mystical states of the soul)]. The second is *Al-Munqidh min al-Ḍalāl wa l-Muwaṣṣil* [or: *al-Muṣil*] *ilā Dhī l-'Izza wa l-Jalāl* [What Saves from Error and Unites with the Possessor of Power and Glory]. From this it will be seen that possible translations include: Freedom and Fulfillment; Liberation and Illumination; Salvation and Consummation; Preservation and Perfection. I have chosen *Freedom and Fulfillment*, since it seems to apply to both readings.

41 There are many manuscripts of the *Munqidh*. But there is no real critical edition of the text. In his third chapter Father Poggi discusses the history of the text and of its translations. I have been able to use all the translations except those in Dutch and Turkish. As for the English translations, we have those of Field and of Watt. Father Poggi considers Watt's translation to be the best. Why, then, you may ask, have I undertaken to translate the *Munqidh* again? There are several reasons. First of all, it is obvious that no two translators from Arabic to English—a *fortiori* from English to Arabic!—are ever in perfect agreement on a translation. Then, over several pleasant years, it was part of my duty to teach the *Munqidh* to fine groups of students at Oxford. In the course of repeated readings of the text I made my own personal translation which, understandably, I personally preferred to others. But the chief reason for this new translation is that, thanks to my good friend Father Poggi, I obtained photographs of the manuscript of the *Munqidh* contained in No. 1712 of the Şehid Ali Paşa of Istanbul [Constantinople]. This manuscript is dated 509 A.H. [1115–1116 A.D.—see frontispiece], i.e. five years after Ghazālī's death and so about ten years after the composition of the *Munqidh*. It is an almost perfect manuscript. In hundreds of places it differs from the text edited by Drs. Jamīl Ṣalībā and Kāmil 'Ayyād, which was used by Watt, and which is printed along with Jabre's translation in the UNESCO edition. It is true that most of the differences are very minor. But in

several places the difficulties found in the printed text are cleared up by the manuscript readings. So my translation is based on the precious manuscript, and in my notes I have called attention to several of its different readings. As a final reason I may observe that acknowledged classics deserve to be translated over and over for the sake of new generations and to benefit by the constantly growing body of knowledge about distant times and authors.

42 No doubt seems ever to have been expressed about the authenticity of the *Munqidh*. But some aspersions have been cast on the sincerity of its author, as we shall see. As for its literary genre, it is clearly not a straightforward biographical account. Ghazālī sets forth, in a rather contrived fashion, the stages of his intellectual and spiritual evolution. But he does have an axe to grind. Clearly this is his intention to promote Sufism—and in fact he has been credited with making Sufism “respectable” in the Islamic milieu of his time and after. But quite another view of the *Munqidh* has been taken by an Egyptian author named Dr. ‘Abd al-Dā’im al-Baqarī in his book entitled *I’tirāfāt al-Ghazālī* [The Confessions of al-Ghazālī], Cairo, 1943.

43 To put it bluntly, Dr. al-Baqarī thinks that the account of the *Munqidh* is neither true nor sincere. As Father Abd-El-Jalil puts it: “By the sub-title ‘*Kayfa arrakha al-Ghazālī linafsihi*’ [How Ghazālī drafted his own history] the author [al-Baqarī] already orientates his own position. For him the account of the *Munqidh* is neither veridical nor sincere. There would be no question there of an *Apologia pro vita sua*, and still less of an Autobiography, but rather of a sort of novel with a proposition (roman à thèse) of which the hero would be Ghazālī himself. The great Muslim thinker would have sought, very consciously and often very judiciously, to leave to posterity a fictional image of his personality and to give an interpretation of his life which give him an unrivalled place in all the domains of thought and of the life of the Muslims of his time, including especially the knowledge and practice of *taṣawwuf* [Sufism]. And that thanks to a wise dosage of avowals and insinuations—in which he sometimes betrays himself—a wise dosage which, without being totally false, would not correspond to the historical reality.” Father Abd-El-Jalil goes on to discuss the book at considerable length, and the details of his discussion need not detain us much longer.

44 Father Abd-El-Jalil points out that the control level of all the machinery mounted by al-Baqarī against the *Munqidh* is found in the text where Ghazālī declares that up to the moment of his realization of the necessity of the practices of Sufism his intentions had not been pure; even in his best activity, that of teaching, “it was not directed purely to God, but rather was instigated and motivated by the quest for fame and widespread prestige” [Trans. Para 85]. Al-Baqarī makes this avowal the explicative principle of the whole life of Ghazālī, “of all his actions, movements, repose and intentions, not only before his withdrawal but even after.” So the steps of his intellectual and spiritual evolution, as he describes them in the *Munqidh*, have no real existence: they are imagined by Ghazālī at the moment that he writes his account. The pretended trial of doubt is only the ruse of a rhetorician who wants to make himself pass for a free inquirer among a crowd of the slaves of “conformism” [*taqlīd*]. The alleged mystical experience, of which Ghazālī assumed some external appearances, was aimed at adding, to the prestige and renown of the incomparable jurisprudent and the unrivaled conqueror of the philosophers and the Ta’līmites, the aureole of sanctity. Really it was all part of Ghazālī’s clever and careful progress toward his goal.

45 “What he wishes is to have ascribed to himself the prestige and the renown unattained, in extension and comprehension, by any other prestige and renown. For that he wishes, by the description of the different steps of his life as he has imagined them, to inculcate a precise conception of the rôle which he wanted to be acknowledged in the history of Islam: that of the initiator of a religious reform, of a renewer of religion at the dawn of the beginning century, of a man raised up by God to revivify Islam by leading it to the sole source of certitude, the prophetic light, to which the way of *taṣawwuf* conduces. So the *Munqidh* is found to be stripped of all historical value; it is an account woven from certain lived realities mixed with ‘realities of desire’ [*mutamannayyāt*], or with symbolic realities [*mithāliyyāt*].”

46 Al-Baqarī admits that Ghazālī was a great Muslim and that his reputation extends to the non-Muslim world. So he endeavors to find some excuse for his “trickery” in the *Munqidh*.

The excuse, curiously enough, he finds in Ghazālī's doctrine on lying as set forth in the *Iḥyā'* [Book XXIV (Fourth of the Third Quarter), On the Defects of the Tongue: the 14th Defect]. Ghazālī agreed with other Muslim doctors that lying is not intrinsically wrong, and that, in certain cases, it is licit and sometimes even obligatory. For language is a means to attain ends. If a praiseworthy end can be attained without lying, then veracity is obligatory and lying is absolutely forbidden. But if such an end can be attained only by lying, then lying is obligatory if the end is necessary, and permissible if the end is permissible, but always within certain limits. For lying is an evil which ought to be avoided and to which men are inclined by egoism and cupidity.

47 Father Abd-El-Jalil points out that al-Baqarī uses this teaching of Ghazālī, but unfortunately with certain lacunae which seem intentional and which permit him to insinuate as a general principle what Ghazālī did not really claim as such. He also makes the term *islāh*, which is used by Ghazālī in the sense of "reconciliation," possess the wider sense [which the word may have] of "reform." Hence [Abd-El-Jalil] the thesis: Ghazālī wishes to leave behind him the renown most envied in the Muslim world, that of a reformer who revivifies religion. He constructs the *Munqidh* by directing it toward that end and invents wholly, or nearly so, the account of a spiritual evolution which led him, through theoretical study and practical experimentation, from the doubt of the sophists to the certitude of the mystics. In forging this history he harms no one, or at most only himself. Moreover he has a good intention. So even if he does not invent it to try to justify himself, he does thereby induce believers to reform themselves and presents them with a model, one of their contemporaries, one of the greatest, himself, who was able to preserve himself from all the assaults of error and to verify loyally the ways which presented themselves to lead to certitude, and of which only *taṣawwuf* [Sufism] is sure because it leads to "the light of prophecy."

48 The weakness of such a construction—that of al-Baqarī's—seems evident to Father Abd-El-Jalil because of its apriorism, its contrived [système] character, its aggressiveness, its "lacunae," its paralogisms, and "the geometric spirit" of its

author. So I have no hesitation in agreeing with Father Abd-El-Jalil's conclusion: "Nothing of that authorizes a doubt about Ghazālī's sincerity. The human, intellectual and spiritual value of the *Munqidh* remains firm, though it cannot of itself alone serve as an historical source." Ghazālī's primary purpose in writing seems to have been didactic, not to give a detailed and precise historical account of himself. Some contrivance and some suppression were involved, but not, I believe, any lying. As for al-Baqarī's somewhat strange book, it is not necessarily the kind of "cheap shot" not unknown in history, viz. creating an impression and achieving a certain "fame" by an attack on a figure habitually revered and admired. We need not be uncharitable because another may have been, or may not have been, uncharitable.

49 I now wish to raise a question which is not unrelated to the problem of Ghazālī's sincerity and truthfulness. The question is this: Why did Ghazālī, at the apex of his public career, suddenly give it all up and go off to live, for about ten years, the life of a wandering sufi? His own account of the affair will be found in my translation, Paras. 84 ff. These are surely the most moving pages of the *Munqidh*. I see no reason why they should not be accepted literally, despite al-Baqarī and, as we shall see, Father Jabre. In other words, I am convinced that Ghazālī, in his second and far greater crisis, underwent a true *conversion*, a real *tawba* [turning to God], a genuine *metanoia* [change of mind and heart], which set him on the path of spiritual perfection. To support this view I feel justified in citing rather largely from Father Poggi, and also, on the other side, from Father Jabre—especially since their works may not be easily available to the general reader.

50 This citation from Father Poggi is from the eighth chapter of his book. This chapter is entitled "Il Šūfismo nel Munqidh," and my citation begins on p. 187. "But it is only in these last pages of the *Munqidh*... that the enthusiasm for Sufism is tempered with reserves concerning the abuses of a degenerate Sufism. On the contrary, in the chapter which is entitled 'The Ways of Sufism (*sic!*)' Ghazālī is not stingy with expressions of praise and his unconditioned approval. Only

à propos of the terms with which is designated the apex of contact with God in mystical ecstasy does Ghazālī manifest his aversion for every term which could engender the suspicion of any form whatever of pantheism. But in the *Munqidh* it is not said that such dangerous terminology was in use among the Sufis themselves nor does Ghazālī reproach any of them with it.

51 "Moreover the chapter 'The Ways of the Sufis' occupies a most important place in the structure of the *Munqidh*, not only because the encounter with the Muslim mysticism of his time was decisive for the development of Ghazālī's religious thought as well as because for our Author a certain dose of Sufism would seem necessary to revive religious practice and to gain the battle against error, but also because the 'second crisis' of Ghazālī is described precisely in this chapter and is found entirely inserted in a Sufi context. If indeed the first crisis had rescued Ghazālī from the slavery of pure *taqlid* [conformism] and caused him to find out that one cannot go beyond the first principles and that it is impossible to build on them a science apodeictic and of irrefutable religious convictions, this second crisis of which he speaks in the chapter on 'The Ways of Sufism' is rather a moral crisis and, better than the preceding, could be called 'conversion.' Relating it he describes the passage from the intense and most respected life of the Master in the Nizāmiyya school of Baghdad to the life of the wandering sufi which imposes as an iron rule of conduct the renouncement of the world and of everything which could separate from God. Speaking of Sufism as the spiritual doctrine which insists not only on theory but on practice and which cannot be understood save directly through taste [*dhawq*], i.e. direct experience, Ghazālī affirms his arrival at the conviction that there must be for him a clean break with the past if he does not wish to renounce as of now the hope of eternal life. . . .

52 "Now the battle is engaged within himself between the desire to continue the honored life led up to now and the interior call, impelling and implacable, to a more perfect life of abnegation and renouncement. This is one of the most human pages of the *Munqidh* and it may justly be compared with the *partim velle, partim nolle* of the *Confessions* of Augustine—VIII, 21. . . .

53 "Here, however, it was not a question of passing from a sinful life to the life of the just, but of abandoning an exterior justice sufficient for being considered a true believer in the eyes of others, yet completely insufficient for responding to the exigences of spiritual perfection. Ghazālī, who had confessed to finding until then theory easier than practice, discovered in the conduct of the Sufis the necessary compenetration of these two aspects, of thought and of action, in personal religious behavior. Indeed his statement that 'theory was easier for me than practice' follows his acquired knowledge that 'the Sufi Way is essentially made up of knowledge and of action.' Of this discovery Ghazālī declares himself an enthusiastic champion . . . [Para. 82].

54 "So one cannot be satisfied with 'knowing.' One must 'do.' And Ghazālī begins coherently with an examen of conscience on the state of soul in which he found himself at that moment [Para. 85].

55 "As we have already said à propos of the truthfulness of the *Munqidh*, this confession which Ghazālī makes publicly has all the criteria of sincerity. . . . The consequence which Ghazālī deduces from this pitiless examination of conscience is fear of the divine chastisements—"So I became certain that I was on the brink of a crumbling bank and already on the verge of falling into the Fire, unless I set about mending my ways" [Para. 85].

56. "In such fashion the interior battle of Ghazālī began. The Author even fixes its chronological extremes and describes it with an extraordinary effectiveness and a noteworthy psychological profundity. Perhaps none of the autobiographical elements of the *Munqidh* is so revelatory of Ghazālī's personality as this page is. 'I therefore reflected unceasingly on this for some time, while I still had freedom of choice' [Para. 86]. And the choice for men like Ghazālī, strongly emotional and introspective, but much less inclined to action, becomes precisely a tormenting fury with its steps ahead and its sudden withdrawals, doubts and uncertainties and above all the affective coloration, with more and more painful soul states and a physiological repercussion on the whole humoral condition . . . [Paras. 86–88].

57 "This time too, as in the case of the epistemological crisis, the tension and anguish reach the climax before giving way to the sudden solution which Ghazālī attributes only to the divine



mercy [Para. 89]. By now he is so decided on leaving Baghdad that he even devises a stratagem directed at gutting the danger that the authorities might impede him for reasons of public utility from giving up teaching [Para. 89]. His proposing a pilgrimage to Mecca while he had in mind a definitive departure for Syria scandalized Zwemer . . . because its first steps were taken in the sign of falsity and subterfuge. But it seems to us that this overly severe accusation ought to be refuted. The pilgrimage to Mecca was in fact accomplished two years later. The milieu of the time really manifested the greatest obtuseness regarding the reasons which pushed Ghazālī to leave. He had, then, foreseen this hostile incomprehension and had forearmed himself with that innocent pretext of the pilgrimage. We can also even deduce from such a particular that Ghazālī had reached the irrefragable decision to emerge from a state of uncertainty which was consuming body and spirit. The very tone of the narrative now becomes peaceful and serene [Para. 92].

58 "His life in this period is very different from that of the famous imam venerated by students and consulted by princes. He even asserts with a certain pride that he had perdured for ten years far from teaching and that, in this phase, he had reached the loftiest summits of spirituality [Para. 94]. From this point he enters into his unconditioned panegyric of the Sufi life [Paras. 95 ff.].

59 "The fact that the Sufis 'attain to the lamp of the prophetic revelation' is undoubtedly a reason for Ghazālī's sympathy for them, for him who was preoccupied with the indifference of his contemporaries regarding the divine Revelation mediated through the Prophets. But the principal cause of Ghazālī's making himself a propagandist of the 'way of the Sufis' is more profound. They recognize indeed the necessity of purifying the heart and work conformably to such a conviction. In a word it would be a question of a confirmation of what Father Jabre calls 'the great theory of Ghazālī,' or the necessity of purification of the heart to attain the essence of reality [a notion Father Poggi does not entirely accept: cf. his long note 47, p. 201].

60 "Simplifying for reasons of clarity one might thus sum up the position of Ghazālī: Sufism is not to be studied, but should be lived. The first condition for entrance into its 'way' is

precisely the purification of the heart from all that is not God. In such fashion is theory blended with practice, as is particularly characteristic of Sufism. Thus before the seeker of the truth is opened that new form of knowledge which has as instrument *dhawq*, taste or direct experience.

61 "Such a new form of intuitive and concrete apprehension of reality is essential, for Ghazālī, to grasp the reality of the prophetic revelation and the necessity of an unconditioned and coherent faith in the revealed datum communicated to us from God by means of an authentic Prophet. In such case, seeing the *Munqidh* in its true apologetic aspect as van Leeuwen justly wished, the importance of Ghazālī's encounter with Sufism and the propaganda for that conception of life acquire, it seems to us, all their perspicuous plausibility. Most times error arises from a failure to control the passions and the instinctive tendencies. Speaking of philosophy Ghazālī had said that men can remain attached to a false conception of reality suffered passively at the beginning without remaining convinced by apodeictic contrary arguments because they are slaves 'of vain passion and of love of appearing to be clever' [Para. 40] persisting in a given judgment. Now Sufism, by striking out along the way of ascetism and the purification of the heart liberates man from this most frequent negative factor, one of the main causes of error.

62 "The 'conversion' of Ghazālī, that described precisely in the chapter on Sufism, is only liberation, not so much from actual and proper error, as from this constant danger of falling into it in which Ghazālī found himself when he was intent on diffusing a knowledge promising in return only worldly splendor and honor [Para. 139]. The practice of the purification of the heart and of the control of one's own states of soul, learned in the school of the Sufis carried with it the experience of that form of apprehension through contact which among them was another principal distinctive sign.

63 "Briefly, it is in this perspective, rather than in that of an acclaimed subjectivism (we have in mind the essay of Obermann) that the Ghazālī of the *Munqidh* is to be considered. At most, paradoxically it would have to be said that Ghazālī becomes subjective through a scruple of objectivity. Ghazālī

falls back on himself to remove the interior obstacle to the objective vision of reality. Convinced, as we ourselves are, that the religious solution of the problem of reality is a solution postulated by the facts and especially by the discovery of our own limits, Ghazālī seeks a valid and incontestable foundation for sincere religiousness. Augustine had discovered that God is 'intimius intimo meo,' i.e. He is found above all by reentering into ourselves and listening to the dialogue of our own conscience with Him. On his own part Ghazālī discovers in the school of the Sufis that man enters into conscious contact with God, i.e. fully confronts the religious problem, with all of himself without excluding his emotivity and action. Thus for him, as for the mystics of the Meccan and Baghdad school, 'ilm, ḥāl, and 'amal are *pleno iure* essential constituents of religiousness.

64 "How much of the Sufi 'way' Ghazālī had covered can be deduced from the pages of the *Munqidh*. He speaks of successive and gradual stages of mystical ascent. 'From the very start of the Way revelations and visions begin. . . . Then their state [ḥāl] ascends from the vision of forms and likenesses to stages beyond the narrow range of words' [Para. 96]. Everything leads one to believe that Ghazālī has traversed these different stages, from the purgative askesis to the incessant recital of the name of God [dhikr], to the unitive stage of *fanā* [becoming completely lost in God, annihilation: cf. Note 180]. It is true that at a certain point he complains of the preoccupation with his children and the hindrance that cares of a material and economic character constituted for his desire of withdrawal and of solitude. Notwithstanding that, Ghazālī asserts that he sometimes achieved ecstasy and had the revelation of things which could neither be numbered nor expressed [Paras. 93-94]. Certainly from the words of Ghazālī it appears clear that the Author would wish to share with his reader the enthusiasm for similar experiences and for the courageous and heroic undertaking of the Sufi 'way.'

65 "On the contrary it seems to us that Ghazālī would offer to everyone, even to him who would today be called the man in the street, a teaching to draw into contact with Sufism. Certainly the *Munqidh* does not quite encourage the representation of an esoteric Ghazālī determined to reserve for 'the happy few' a

spiritual benefit which can turn, according to the various receptive capacities, to the profit of all [Para. 98].

66 "Certainly the royal way to draw fruit from Sufism is actually the way of practice, that precisely which conduces to 'taste it' through the typical form of apprehension which Ghazālī calls *dhawq* [taste, geusis, direct experience]. But, apart from this ideal introduction into the Sufi world, there can be another accessible on a wider scale: that of frequenting the Sufis themselves, of observing them and of listening to them when they narrate their experiences or give counsels of the spiritual life. It is a question in effect of people whose company cannot do other than good. Finally, if not even this entry into contact with them could be realized, an ultimate way would still remain open to the condescension of Ghazālī for those who would at least have the integrity to believe in the existence of this remarkable mystical world. 'But whoever is not favored with their company . . . ' [Para. 98].

67 "Ghazālī, on his return from the period of hiding to the public life of Master at Nisābūr, conscious of a mission which had been reserved to him for the benefit of his co-religionists who were lax in religious practice and hard pressed by the succession of tragic events [Para. 70—"Surely it was to be feared . . ."], then launched to all his calls to inwardness and placed within reach of everyone the fruit of his long sufistic practice" [End of citation from Father Poggi].

68 I make no excuse for setting this long citation before my reader. It gives what I think is the correct answer to the question asked at the beginning of Para. 49 above. More than that, it emphasizes and interprets the central position played by Sufism in Ghazālī's own life and in his *Munqidh*, and that in a most perceptive way. But now it is only fair to turn to another at least partial answer to that question. This answer is found in two places in the writings of Father Jabre. Since these are not likely to be readily available to the general reader I shall again have recourse to citations to avoid any appearance of distortion of Father Jabre's view. The first citation is from the Introduction to his translation of the *Munqidh*. He mentions, in abridged form, al-Fārisi's text [Para. 17 above], and then goes on:

69 "What is clearly intended here is the definitive conversion of Ghazālī to sufism. It took place, surely, at the beginning of the year 486/1093–1094. . . . Now one knows from elsewhere that in 484/1091 Ghazālī had arrived in Baghdad with entirely different dispositions. On his own confession he was then seeking 'glory and honors' [Para. 139]. Not that he had lost the faith; he affirms that he had always had a very solid belief in what concerned the three essential dogmas of Islam (the Existence of God, the Last Day and Prophethood) [Para. 83], and there is no reason to doubt his sincerity on this point. But his state of soul vis-à-vis the reasoning built, in his view, on the 'equipollence of proofs,' did not allow him to find on this terrain a valid certitude regarding the three great truths in question. The science of *fiqh* [jurisprudence] does not have as its aim to justify them; it presupposes them as point of departure. Ghazālī, then, could unreservedly give himself up to them and could experience the comforting feeling of touching the real. The concrete object of this discipline [*fiqh*] and the practical results of its deductions were able to give him at least the illusion of the solid, an illusion all the less sensible since he was able to claim to be doing something useful in seconding, on the intellectual level, the effort that Nizām al-Mulk was supplying to protect the existence of sunnism [roughly: orthodoxy] seriously threatened by the Shi'ite *Bāṭinism* in its new form, *ta'limism*. So Ghazālī devoted himself to this science of *fiqh* and knew in it success, a success which he appreciated all the more because his profound attachment to his sunnite dogma seemed to him in no wise incompatible with a no less profound attachment to the affairs of this world and their glitter.

70 "What took place between 484/1091 and 486/1093 so that there was in him this total reversal signaled by all the chroniclers and of which [Abū Bakr] Ibn al-'Arabī gives the precise date? Why was he thus diverted from the 'Here Below' and its preoccupations to turn himself towards the 'Hereafter' and the 'Science of the hidden aspects of religion' (to resume his own terminology)? Is this 'conversion' due only to factors of an intimate order, spiritual and religious? Their reality certainly must not be denied; but it really seems that these factors were themselves provoked by external causes and that they owe

their origin to some historical circumstances which weighed on the life of Ghazālī. Here precise and positive pieces of information are totally lacking, but it is not forbidden, to supply for them, to have recourse to data the cross-checking of which can lead to a certitude, if not convincing, at least quasi-moral.

71 "This is that on the 10th of Ramaḍān, 485/1092, Nizām al-Mulk fell beneath the blows of a young Bāṭinite. It has been said [in another article of Father Jabre] how this event and the upheavals which followed it, and this in Baghdad itself, must have affected Ghazālī, the protégé and friend of the great Seljuq minister. The death of the latter represented for the Master [Ghazālī] the collapse of a dream of a humano-divine earthly power which together they had long cherished. Is it, then, so rash to affirm that these circumstances led Ghazālī to take no further interest in the 'things of this life' and to turn himself towards the spiritual and religious problems of 'the Hereafter'? In any case it is to this 'conversion' that Ibn al-'Arabī alludes when he declares that from the beginnings of 486/1093 (i.e. several months after the death of Nizām al-Mulk) Ghazālī pledged himself to sufism and there cleared a way of his own.

72 "But Ibn al-'Arabī was then speaking of a Ghazālī as he had known him in 490/1097 when he met him in Baghdad, which the Master had regained after having left it in 488/1095. Until this date, and despite his engagement in the 'way,' the Master had not believed it necessary to renounce either the intellectual burden of studies or that of teaching. He documents himself on the doctrine of the *falāsifa* [the philosophers] by reading their works; and he still feels himself moved by the 'desire of prestige and a wide renown.' It is only at the last date cited that he feels himself irrevocably pushed to leave all, both the capital of the Caliphs and the 'honorable situation' in which he found himself. And still he does it, following long hesitations, only after he has entrusted his [professorial] chair to his brother and assured the livelihood of his family. Furthermore, he makes it believed that he was going to Mecca when in reality his formal intention was to gain Syria. Whence a whole series of questions: Why does the kind of life which he had been leading since 486/1093 cease to be conformed to the pressing appeals of the Hereafter? Why, in 488/1095, this haste and this decision 'strong

and irrefragable' to flee? Why this solicitude to take the precautions necessary so that all hope of recovering his chair at Baghdad be not lost? Why especially conceal his design to betake himself to Damascus and indicate the Holy Places as the goal of his voyage? At bottom, all the while he affirmed that he was giving up all, Ghazālī renounces nothing: not his goods, not his family, nor his chair at Baghdad, neither study nor teaching.

73 "It is certainly impermissible to affirm that the influence of the contemporary events is exclusive of a true authentic spiritual evolution. In a Muslim climate, especially in the case of a *faqīh* borne by conviction and by temperament to action, that might not present itself with the exigencies of an absolute which one would quite naturally expect to find elsewhere. But everything prompts the belief that Ghazālī certainly suppresses here the political circumstances which weighed on his decisions and options. And if one refers to what has been said elsewhere about the violent death of Nizām al-Mulk and its repercussions on the life of the Master, and recalls especially that in 488/1095 there was yet no trace of Bāṭinite emissaries at Damascus, it would not appear improbable that what has been elsewhere advanced on the subject of this crucial period of Ghazālī's life constantly retains its value as a highly probable explanatory hypothesis, viz. that it would have been through fear of an immediate danger coming from the Bāṭinites and directly threatening his life that the Master would have decided to leave Baghdad for Damascus after having entrusted his chair to his brother and made everyone believe that he was going to withdraw to Mecca."

74 The second citation from Father Jabre is to be found in his excellent article on the biography and works of Ghazālī in MIDEO [cf. Annotated Bibliography]. This citation will be found in pp. 92–94. It sheds more light on the reasons which could have given rise to fear in Ghazālī.

75 "After the death of Nizām al-Mulk and of Malikshāh disorder reigned in the whole Seljuq empire... Thanks to these troubles the Bāṭinites were quite easily able to infiltrate everywhere accompanied by 'assassins' ready to effect the disappearance of anyone who might oppose himself to their activities. Naturally those most aimed at were on the one hand the influential political men and on the other 'the flower of the Sunnite

savants,' especially those who were fighting Bāṭinism on the doctrinal terrain....

76 "Now Ghazālī was certainly the savant most in the public eye of his time (he was officially called 'the Honor of Religion') and, since 486/1093–1094, he had spoken of it [religion] at length against the Bāṭinites. In the *Mi'yār* and the *Mihakk* he had defended against them the intellect's capacity regarding the first principles of knowledge. In the *Tahāfut*, finished the 2nd of Muḥarram, 488/Jan. 12, 1095, he had done his best to show that reason, strong with its evidence, could not be satisfied with the hypotheses which they had in common with the philosophers. Finally, in the *Mustazhiri*, he had expounded and attacked, with his customary clarity, the central point of their doctrine, viz. the necessity of having recourse to an infallible Imam. This work was finished towards the end of 487/1094–1095, and from Muḥarram to Rajab 488/January to July 1095 it had had time to spread. Had Ghazālī had wind of some precise threat? In any case he knew that his life was seriously in danger. This would fit in well with the feeling of fear which underlies his whole doctrinal synthesis, the drafting of which was begun at this time. One would also have the explanation of this 'door of fear' which he mentions in his confessions to Fārisī [Para. 22 above] as the starting point of his definitive return to religious practice. Finally, these considerations allow an easy understanding of the terror which seized him starting in Rajab 488/July 1095, and which the *Munqidh* describes with such forceful expression.

77 "Our hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that Ghazālī chose Damascus as his place of retirement, all the while concealing this choice and trying to put the authorities as well as his acquaintances on a false scent. Indeed, if one consults the chronicles of the time, one is struck by the verification that Syria-Palestine was then the sole country sheltered from the Bāṭinite terror. The first text signaling the sect's presence there relates to the year 490/1097; the king of Aleppo is then urged by the 'Master of Egypt' to enter into the Bāṭinite obedience: he complies, then retracts. The first political murder in these regions took place in 496/1102–1103; but, as we shall soon see, Ghazālī leaves Syria before 492/1098–1099.

78 "It is, then, probably through fear of the Bāṭinites that Ghazālī decided to leave Baghdad for Damascus, entrusting his chair to his brother and leading everyone to believe that he was going to withdraw to Mecca. In Syria he would be able to reflect at his ease and to carry on in all security the composition of the *Ihyā'*" [End of citation].

79 I do not deny that Father Jabre has a point when he mentions Ghazālī's personal fear as a motive for his withdrawal from his eminent teaching post and from Baghdad. However, I do think that he overemphasizes it and finds too much significance in it. Anyone in Ghazālī's position might have felt a certain trepidation about his personal safety. To fear is human and not uncommon. But to experience and carry through the kind of "conversion" which I believe took place in the case of Ghazālī is rather superhuman—not inhuman, but superhuman—and certainly not common. Furthermore, Ghazālī *did* write at length and most strongly against the Bāṭinites and their insidious doctrine which really did threaten the essence and life of Islam. I might also mention that Ghazālī had just as good, or even better, reason to fear for his safety after his resumption of teaching at Nisābūr: his patron, Fakhr al-Mulk, was murdered by a Bāṭinite in 500. Yet Ghazālī did not give up teaching in Nisābūr until about three years later.

80 As for the "door of fear" which Ghazālī himself mentioned to al-Fārisī, I think the phrase has a very relevant and extremely profound significance. The "fear" mentioned here may include our ordinary notion of fear; but surely it goes much further and means primarily the fear which is biblically and proverbially known as "the beginning of wisdom"—*Rās al-ḥikma makḥāfat Allāh* [The beginning of wisdom is the fear of God—still heard, in its Arabic version, in the streets and homes of Baghdad]. This is what theologians and spiritual writers call "a salutary fear." In Book XXXIII of the *Ihyā'* [the third book of the Fourth Quarter] Ghazālī treats of fear and hope [*al-khawf wa l-rajā'*]. It may be helpful to present some of his observations.

81 Ghazālī begins by declaring that hope and fear are the two wings by which the elect fly to heaven and the two mounts on which they traverse the paths to the Hereafter. After discussing the meaning of hope, its merits, and how it is to be made to

dominate one's life, Ghazālī turns to fear. He defines what is meant by fear in general; then he discusses, in a religious context, its different manifestations in relation to what one fears, such as death before repentance, or insufficient performance of ritual obligations, or the agony of the punishment of the grave, or coming to a bad end, or the last judgment, and so on. Then Ghazālī expounds the merits of fear and what urges to it. It will be enough for my purpose here to cite the following passage:

82 "A thing's excellence is commensurate with its usefulness in leading to the beatitude of meeting God Most High in the Hereafter. For there is no [real] aim save beatitude, and there is no beatitude for a man save in the meeting with his Lord and nearness to Him. So whatever helps to this possesses excellence, and its excellence is commensurate with its end [cf. the "Principle and Foundation" of the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius of Loyola]. It is indeed evident that the attainment of the beatitude of meeting God in the Hereafter can be only by the acquisition of love of Him and intimacy with Him in this life. But love is acquired only by knowledge, and knowledge only by continual reflection [*bi dawām al-fikr*]. And intimacy is acquired only by love and continual remembrance [*dawām al-dhikr*]. And persistence in remembrance and reflection is facilitated only by lopping off the love of this world from the heart, and that is not lopped off save by renouncing the pleasures and appetites of this world. But the renouncement of such desires is impossible save by bridling the passions, and by nothing is passion bridled as it is by the fire of fear, for fear is the fire which burns the appetites [passions]: so its excellence is commensurate with the appetites it consumes and also commensurate with the sins it prevents and the acts of obedience it incites, and that differs in accordance with the differing degrees of fear, as has been said. How can fear not possess excellence when by it one acquires purity [abstinence, temperance, integrity] and godliness and piety and self-conquest, i.e. the virtuous acts which bring one very near to God!"

83 I believe, therefore, that the opening of "a door of fear" was Ghazālī's moment of truth, the starting point from which he mounted, so to speak, in reverse order the steps indicated above: from fear to the mastery of passions to the re-

nouncement of desires to the renouncement of the pleasures and appetites of this world to the lopping off of the love of the world from the heart to continual remembrance of God to continual reflection to knowledge to love to intimacy with God and the assurance of the beatitude of meeting God in the Hereafter. It is his program of spiritual awakening and realization leading, I am convinced, to what I can only denominate by a word so little understood by so many: his sanctity [personal holiness, his being a *walī*, or friend of God], i.e. his definitive "freedom," or "fulfillment," or "salvation," not only in the negative sense of escape from error, but much more in the ineffably positive sense of union with God and utter absorption in Him. No amount of technical knowledge and grand theorizing could equal his *dhawq* [tasting] of God and of the things of God. As he himself rather piquantly remarks, there is a world of difference between knowing the definition of drunkenness and actually being drunk! [Para. 82]. I may add that I believe my interpretation of Ghazālī's "door of fear" is corroborated by a reading between the lines of Ghazālī's own words in Paras. 84 and 85.

84 A few points remain to be mentioned. One of these is the question of the possible influence of the *Munqidh* in the Middle Ages. This is discussed by Father Poggi at some length in the second part of his book, Chapters IV, V, and VI. He begins by remarking that it is not easy to adapt oneself to the idea that the *Munqidh* remained absolutely unknown in the West until the nineteenth century, a notion seemingly affirmed by those who speak of the discovery of the *Munqidh* in 1842 with the publication of the work of Schmölders. We know that the author of the *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifa* [*Intentiones Philosophorum*] was known to the Scholastics from the second half of the twelfth century. The Spanish scholar Father Alonso, in his article on the fortunes of Ghazālī in the medieval West, cites some forty-five names of Christian writers, mostly ecclesiastical, who mention the name and one or more works of Ghazālī. And Assemani, in his Florentine catalogue, mentions sixty works attributed to Ghazālī, among which the *Munqidh* occupies an honorable third place.

85 Father Poggi then devotes more than twenty pages to a consideration of the relationship between the *Munqidh* and the Catalan Ramon Martí's *Pugio Fidei adversus Mauros et Judaeos*

[The Poniard of the Faith against Moors and Jews]. In this work, finished in 1278, there are certainly many passages seemingly derived from Ghazālī, and even some citations. Martí also mentions the *Munqidh* several times: "ut ait Algazel in libro qui dicitur Almonkid min Addalel" [as Algazel says in the book which is called . . .]; "ut ait Algazel in libro, Qui eripit ab errore," and so on. Many more details are given by Father Poggi.

86 The second instance of the *Munqidh*'s influence, discussed by Father Poggi at some length [twenty-three pages], is that found in the work by the Archdeacon of Segovia, later a collaborator of Juan Hispano [Joannes Hispanus—Ibn Dāwūd, or Avendeuth (?) ] in the School of Toledo founded by Archbishop Raymond. The Archdeacon is known as Domenico Gundisalvi [Domenicus Gundissalinus, or Gundisalvo]. To him are attributed various translations from the Arabic of works by al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, al-Ghazālī, Avicenna, and so on. The work of Gundisalvi which interests us here is the *Tractatus de Anima* [Treatise on the Soul], composed, it seems, between 1160–1166, i.e. about fifty years after the death of Ghazālī. Its authenticity has been questioned, but not, according to Father Poggi, very convincingly—and in any case it makes little difference in our present context whether Gundisalvi or Juan Hispano was its author. Jacob Teicher, in a polemic with Gilson, sought to show that the author of the *De Anima*, far from being original, derived from Muslim mysticism what seem to the layman to be his personal conceptions. Teicher mentions Gundisalvi's insistence on exclusively symbolizing the act of mystical knowledge by the sensation of *taste*, Arabic *dhawq*, a term which occurs seven times in the *Munqidh*, once only in its literal meaning, and six times in the sense of a mystical cognitive contact. Gundisalvi also mentions *altior oculus animae* [a higher eye of the soul], which is reminiscent of Ghazālī's "another eye is opened" [cf. Paras. 108 and 124]. For other parallels and a cautious conclusion the reader may consult Father Poggi.

87 Father Poggi next explores the possible influence of the *Munqidh* on Maimonides's [1135–1204] *Dalālat al-Ḥā'irīn* [The Guide of the Perplexed; also known as *Mōreh Nebūkim*, its translation into Hebrew by Samuel Ibn Tibbon]. Maimonides

composed the work in Arabic about 1190, almost eighty years after Ghazālī's death. The very title might suggest a relationship to the *Munqidh*, at least in Munk's translation *Guide des Égarés*, though "Perplexed" seems a more exact rendering. From the external standpoint of laymen one might be tempted to regard the *Munqidh* as an "Apology" for Islam and the *Dalāla* as an "Apology" for the Jewish religion, i.e. that Maimonides would have wished to render to the religion of his people the precious service which Ghazālī had rendered to Islam.

88 In the learned introductory essay to S. Pines's translation of the *Dalāla*, by Leo Strauss, the latter remarks: "To the extent to which the *Guide* is a whole, or one work, it is addressed neither to the vulgar nor to the elite. To whom then is it addressed? How legitimate and important this question is appears from Maimonides' remark that the chief purpose of the *Guide* is to explain as far as possible the Account of the Beginning and the Account of the Chariot 'with a view to him for whom (the book) has been composed' (III beginning). Maimonides answers our question both explicitly and implicitly. He answers it explicitly in two ways; he says on the one hand that the *Guide* is addressed to believing Jews who are perfect in their religion and in their character, have studied the sciences of the philosophers, and are perplexed by the literal meaning of the Law; he says on the other hand that the book is addressed to such perfect human beings as are Law students and perplexed. He answers our question more simply by dedicating the book to his disciple Joseph and by stating that it has been composed for Joseph and his like." Further on Strauss writes: "The readers of the *Guide* were told at the beginning that the first purpose of the book is the explanation of biblical terms. . . . The critical reader, however, will find many reasons for becoming amazed. To say nothing of other considerations, he will wonder why almost the only terms explained are those suggesting corporeality. . . ."

89 If we consider the judgment of *kalām* made by Ghazālī and Maimonides, we are struck by the singular agreement of the two texts. In the *Dalāla* we read: "Thus there arose among them [Greek and Syrian Christians] this science of *kalām*. They started to establish premises that would be useful to them with regard to their belief and to refute those opinions that ruined the

foundations of their Law. When thereupon the community of Islam arrived and the books of the philosophers were transmitted to it, then there were also transmitted to it those refutations composed against the books of the philosophers. . . ." [p. 177—compare this with what Ghazālī says in Para. 22]. Both authors bring out the essentially "preserving" nature of the Muslim scholasticism. And both make no secret of their dissatisfaction with *kalām*. Maimonides: "When I studied the books of these Mutakallimūn, as far as I had the opportunity—and I have likewise studied the books of the philosophers, as far as my capacity went—I found that the method of all of the Mutakallimūn was one and the same in kind, though the subdivisions differed from one another. For the foundation of everything is that no consideration is due to how that which exists is, for it is merely a custom; and from the point of view of the intellect, it could well be different. Furthermore, in many places they follow the imagination and call it intellect. . . . Now when I considered this method of thought, my soul felt a very strong aversion to it, and had every right to do so" [pp. 179–80]. And Ghazālī: "So *kalām* was not sufficient in my case, nor was it a remedy for the malady of which I was complaining" [Para. 23]. Both also seek to temper their severity toward *kalām* by protesting that they do not wish to scold those who find satisfaction in *kalām*.

90 Other similarities might be mentioned. In general it may be said that if the *Dalāla* does not furnish sure indications of its author's knowledge of the *Munqidh*, this is not a demonstrative argument for denying that Maimonides knew the *Munqidh*. Father Poggi also mentions that one fruit of his comparative study is the conclusion that the *Munqidh*, unlike the *Dalāla*, is not directed to a real, historical person, but has an impersonal and fictitious addressee. This he considers a new and modest contribution of the comparison instituted between the *Munqidh* and the *Dalāla*.

91 In her book *Al-Ghazālī the Mystic* Margaret Smith mentions the influence which the Toledo translations of Muslim authors, among them Ghazālī, undoubtedly had on Christian writers. She goes on to say: "The greatest of these Christian writers who was influenced by al-Ghazālī was St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), who made a study of the Arabic writers and ad-



mitted his indebtedness to them. He studied at the University of Naples, where the influence of Arabic literature and culture was predominant at the time" [p. 220]. It is interesting to note that in one place St. Thomas seems to use the very words of Ghazālī. "Again, in dealing with the spiritual aspiration of the human soul, St. Thomas states that the ultimate perfection of the rational creature is to be found in that which is the principle of its being, since a thing is perfect in so far as it attains to that principle. God is the greatest of all goods and He alone is true perfection, and St. Thomas holds that He is the end towards which all things move, in order to achieve the perfection which can be given by Him alone, which is to become like Him. Man . . . was not created simply for sensual satisfaction, for this is common to both man and the brutes, nor for the pursuit of material ends, for man shares the nature of the angels as well as [of] the brutes. This argument is set forth by al-Ghazālī, in almost the same terms, in his *Kīmīyā al-Sa'āda* [The Alchemy of Happiness] and elsewhere" [pp. 220–21].

92 I am not convinced, however, that Margaret Smith is right when she says that "it is in his teaching on the Beatific Vision and the gnosis which leads to it that St. Thomas seems to have derived most from the teaching of the Muslim mystics and especially al-Ghazālī" [p. 221]. That the Beatific Vision is made possible by the *lumen gloriae* [the light of glory] is certainly the teaching of the Angelic Doctor [cf. *Contra Gentiles*, III, 53]. But to equate this with the *nūr Allāh* [light of God] of Ghazālī seems to go too far and to base too much on verbal resemblance. From the many scriptural references involving "light" which St. Thomas cites it seems to me quite clear that he had no need to learn about *lumen gloriae* from Ghazālī or from "the teaching of the Muslim mystics"—and one may legitimately question how familiar he was with the latter, since the primary interest of the Scholastics was in the "philosophical" works of the Muslim writers.

93 "A much later writer in whom the influence of al-Ghazālī has been found was the French mystic Blaise Pascal (1623–1662) and his knowledge of the Muslim mystic's teaching no doubt came to him through his study of Raymond Martin's *Pugio Fidei* which came into his hands in a French edition, towards the

end of his life, when he was writing his *Pensées*" [M. Smith, p. 225]. However, I am inclined to question her finding a dependence of Pascal on Ghazālī simply because "[Pascal's] faith in intuition recalls al-Ghazālī's belief in the superiority of gnosis to reason": it may "recall" it, but this is far from establishing a dependence.

94 "Pascal's famous wager for and against belief in God [*Pensées*, 233] contains teaching and arguments which are also to be found in al-Ghazālī" [M. Smith, pp. 225–26]. It also, I believe, contains a great deal more—and again I am not prepared to admit that we possess convincing proof of dependence: a surface similarity or verbal likeness [not clear in this case] can lead to unsound and sometimes dangerous conclusions. The pertinent passage occurs in Ghazālī's *Kitāb al-Arba'in* [The Book of the Forty (Chapters)], a kind of epitome of his *Ihyā'*, toward the end of Part Three. The main point is brought out by Ghazālī in his citation of two verses by an unnamed poet, of whose intellectual ability Ghazālī does not seem to have had a high opinion:

The astrologer and the physician, both of them, alleged:  
The dead are not raised. I said: Look to yourselves!  
If your allegation be true, I am not a loser;  
If mine be true, the loss is yours!

95 I am in full accord with M. Smith's concluding remark that "al-Ghazālī, therefore, himself indebted to Christianity and the West for not a little of his own inspiration, was able to repay the debt in kind and to give to the thinkers of the West as well as the East and to Christian mystics as well as those of his own faith, much that was inspiring and helpful to them as they also sought to tread the path which he had trodden before them" [p. 226]. I shall have more to say about this later. But here I would like to call the reader's attention to something else which may be useful to him in helping to deepen his appreciation of the author of the *Munqidh*.

96 In Part Three of his excellent book Father Poggi discusses in three chapters [vii, viii, ix] the point of departure, Ṣūfism in the *Munqidh*, and *Munqidh* and apologetic method. Under the title "The Point of Departure" he mentions several



necessary investigation by the analytical method of verbal influence, they find within its limits no sufficient resources for attaining a conclusion" [Newman: *Grammar of Assent*, Burns and Oates, London, 1870, p. 285]. Indeed, Father Poggi believes that a study of the possible parallels between Ghazālī's thought and that of Newman, regarding certainty in religious matters and cognoscitive doctrine might yield the key of an interpretation of Ghazālī's thought more faithful and more coherent than that of Obermann.

103 Ghazālī's balance and impartiality in giving to the theologian what belongs to theology and to the scientist what belongs to science also made him sympathetic to those who cultivated logic [Para. 43]. But students of logic may also run a risk [Para. 44]. Briefly, Ghazālī speaks with respect of science and philosophy so long as they stay within their own areas. Duncan Black Macdonald recognized this merit of Ghazālī when he wrote: "[Ghazālī] never speaks disrespectfully of philosophy and science in their own sphere; his continual exhortation is that he who would understand them and refute their errors must first study them; that to do otherwise, to abuse what we do not know, brings only contempt on ourselves and on the cause which we champion" [article *The Life of Ghazzālī*, p. 85]. Father Poggi also agrees with this judgment of Macdonald: "Dr. Malter's description (p. xii) of al-Ghazzālī as a man who tried to keep on good terms with all parties, though based on Ibn Rushd, is singularly opposed to the facts of the case. Rather, he got himself into trouble with all parties. He had a combative nature, especially in his earlier life, and later it took much grace and discipline to keep it down" [loco cit., p. 132].

104 On another important point Father Poggi takes issue with Macdonald. This is the question of the very important argument, also in Catholic apologetics, of the miracle. Macdonald wrote: "There is a curious parallelism in al-Ghazzālī's attitude here to the latest phase in Christian apologetics. The argument from miracles seems now to be practically thrown aside; the doctrine rather must prove the miracle. The unique fact of the life and person of Christ is emphasized; it is shown how it appeals immediately to the human consciousness, and on that

the proof of the truth of His mission is built up. Logically this position is faulty; and practically it proves whatever you wish. Al-Ghazzālī uses it to prove the truth of the mission of Muḥammad. Miracles are difficult, almost impossible to prove—here we have again his attitude of historical agnosticism; but if any one will read the record of Muḥammad's life, he will receive a general impression that will assure him of the truth of the mission. The personality of Muḥammad will be its own proof" [art. cit., p. 96, Note 1]. This view, Father Poggi thinks, is notably nuanced even in the *Munqidh* alone [cf. Para. 72]. And elsewhere Ghazālī recommends a more efficacious way to attain a conviction of Muḥammad's divine mission [Paras. 116–19]. Father Poggi asks: "Would it, then, be really a question, as van Leeuwen would have it, of an attempt 'to anchor theology in subjective experience rather than in objective revelation'? But then, as the same author confesses, this would be to make of Ghazālī an enigma; and enigmas, according to the good rules of the philological method, are to be avoided as far as possible" [p. 242]. In the quest for a deeply-rooted, sincere personal conviction, Ghazālī clearly prefers "a 'global' conviction in which it is impossible to discern what the single components are and where certainty, become fully conscious, is not attributable to this or that argument in particular" [p. 244].

105 Ghazālī had enemies in times past, and even within the pale of Islam. In modern times he is also subject to misunderstandings. "The genuine and objective penetration of his thought can in fact be prejudiced by two opposed causes always operative: the lack of a personal openness to the religious problem, or an excessive zealotry in favor of one's own religion. In the first case one exposes oneself to misunderstanding totally the true religiousness of Ghazālī through making use of the deformed and aprioristic image of religion in general which one has made for oneself. Of this sort we would be tempted to consider the famous essay of Obermann. . . . On the other hand the second danger is characteristic of one who has strong, deep-seated religious convictions and would therefore seem better prepared to comprehend the religious feeling of others. But he is blinded by his preoccupation with seeking out every defective side in the other's attitude to such an extent as to expose himself con-

stantly to falsifying the true perspectives of that thought which should first be studied and exposed apart from every polemical or self-defensive preoccupation" [Poggi, pp. 247-48].

106 Father Poggi notes that Ghazālī "still has a word to say to the men of today" [p. 214]. This is the subject which I now wish to address. Doctor Lichtenstadter remarks in her preface that the works in this series "should—and can—be read for their own sake. This series differs from previously offered translations in that it will, wherever applicable, emphasize the relevance of the thought contained in these ancient writings for our own culture and times." The question is: Has the *Munqidh* anything to offer to the men and women of today?—or—Does Ghazālī, across the gulf of nearly ten centuries, have anything to say to us?

107 Let me begin by citing the almost classical summary of Ghazālī's works by Duncan Black Macdonald [*Development*, pp. 238-40]. "[Ghazālī's] work and influence in Islam may be summed up briefly as follows: *First*, he led men back from scholastic labors upon theological dogmas to living contact with, study and exegesis of, the Word and the traditions. What happened in Europe when the yoke of mediaeval scholasticism was broken, what is happening with us now [1903], happened in Islam under his leadership. He could be a scholastic with scholastics, but to state and develop theological doctrine on a Scriptural basis was emphatically his method. We should now call him a biblical theologian.

108 "*Second*, in his teaching and moral exhortations he re-introduced the element of fear. In the *Munqidh* and elsewhere he lays stress on the need of such a striking of terror into the minds of the people. His was no time, he held, for smooth, hopeful preaching; no time for optimism either as to this world or the next. The horrors of hell must be kept before men; he had felt them himself. We have seen how otherworldly was his own attitude, and how the fear of the Fire had been the supreme motive in his conversion; and so he treated others.

"*Third*, it was by his influence that Sufism attained a firm and assured position in the Church of Islam.

109 "*Fourth*, he brought philosophy and philosophical theology within the range of the ordinary mind. Before his

time they had been surrounded, more or less, with mystery. The language used was strange; its vocabulary and technical terms had to be specially learned. No mere reader of the Arabic of the street or the mosque or the school could understand at once a philosophical tractate. Greek ideas and expressions, passing through a Syriac version into Arabic, had strained to the uttermost the resources of even that most flexible tongue. A long training had been thought necessary before the elaborate and formal method of argumentation could be followed. All this al-Ghazzālī changed, or at least tried to change. His *Tahāfut* is not addressed to scholars only; he seeks with it a wider circle of readers, and contends that the views, the arguments, and the fallacies of the philosophers should be perfectly intelligible to the general public.

110 "Of these four phases of al-Ghazzālī's work, the first and the third are undoubtedly the most important. He made his mark by leading Islam back to its fundamental and historical facts, and by giving a place in its system to the emotional religious life. But it will have been noticed that in none of the four phases was he a pioneer. He was not a scholar who struck out a new path, but a man of intense personality who entered on a path already blazed and made it the common highway. We have here his character. Other men may have been keener logicians, more learned theologians, more gifted saints; but he, through his personal experiences, had attained so overpowering a sense of the divine realities that the force of his character—once combative and restless, now narrow and intense—swept all before it, and the Church of Islam entered on a new era of its existence.

111 "So much space it has been necessary to give to this great man. Islam has never outgrown him, has never fully understood him. In the renaissance of Islam which is now rising to view his time will come and the new life will proceed from a renewed study of his works" [End of citation from Macdonald].

112 Macdonald's words sum up Ghazālī's importance in the Islam of yesterday and today. But he also has a relevance for us who are outside Islam. Samuel Zwemer has some words on this: "By striving to understand Al-Ghazali we may at least better fit ourselves to help those who, like him, are earnest seekers after God amid the twilight shadows of Islam. His life

also has a lesson for us all in its devoted Theism and in its call to the practice of the Presence of God" [*A Moslem Seeker*, p. 13].

Zwemer, himself an ardent missionary, sees Ghazālī as a help to those working to bring Christ to those of our contemporaries who, like Ghazālī, are sincere seekers of God among the Muslims. But he also points out the lesson which Ghazālī's life can have for us all.

113 Professor Watt, in his *Muslim Intellectual* [pp. 179–80], has this to say: "Finally, there is the question to what extent [Ghazālī] influenced the life of the Islamic community as a whole. Although he produced no tidy theory and did not reform the official intellectual class, he seems to have had a wide influence. By largely removing the tension between *sūfism* and the 'Islamic sciences' he brought the community much nearer to accepting a modified ideation suited to the situation in which it found itself. This modified ideation was implicit in his thinking rather than explicit. It was a new conception of the function of religion in the life of a society. Religion was no longer to be the guide of statesmen in their more far-reaching political decisions, as it had been in the earliest days, and as some religious intellectuals hoped it might be again. It was instead to be the spiritual aspect of the life of the individual in his social relations. Al-Ghazālī seems to have assumed that not merely political decisions but all the outward forms of social life were beyond the ability of a man to control—this fixity of social forms was doubtless the result of the stabilization of the Traditions some two centuries before his time. Up to about 850 the religious aspirations of Muslims may be said to have been largely directed towards the Islamization of society. When this had been achieved in externals, there appeared as a new goal for religious aspirations the cultivation of greater beauty of character. Al-Ghazālī was not an innovator here, for many ordinary men were already looking in this direction, but he gave such men intellectual grounds for thinking their aspirations were sound.

114 "Al-Ghazālī thought himself called to be the 'renewer' of religion for the sixth Islamic century, and many, perhaps most, later Muslims have considered that he was indeed the 'renewer' of this age. Some have even spoken of him as the greatest

Muslim after Muḥammad. As his achievement is reviewed, it becomes clear that he was more of a prophet than a systematizer. Yet he is not simply a prophet, but is best described as a prophetic intellectual. He spoke to his fellows in terms of the highest thought of his time. Above all he made the individualistic aspect of religion intellectually respectable. It is probably his emphasis on the individualistic outlook that has appealed to the endemic individualism of Western scholars and gained him excessive praise; but he was far from being a sheer individualist. In his theorizing he sometimes fails to make explicit allowance for the communalism of the Shari'a, but he always presupposes it, and in his practice he effects a genuine integration of individualism and communalism. This is part of his title to greatness and of his achievement in 'renewing' Islam.

"In the background of the life of al-Ghazālī we see that much real piety continues to exist in the hearts of ordinary men despite the failure and corruption of their intellectual leaders. In his own life we see how the revivals or reforms, which frequently but unpredictably occur in the great religions, have their origin in the heart of a single man."

115 In his *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī* [pp. 14–15]

Professor Watt writes: "Al-Ghazālī has sometimes been acclaimed in both East and West as the greatest Muslim after Muḥammad, and he is by no means unworthy of that dignity. His greatness rests above all on two things: (1) He was the leader in Islam's supreme encounter with Greek philosophy—that encounter from which Islamic theology emerged victorious and enriched, and in which Arabic Neoplatonism received a blow from which it did not recover. (2) He brought orthodoxy and mysticism into closer contact; the orthodox theologians still went their own way, and so did the mystics, but the theologians became more ready to accept the mystics as respectable, while the mystics were more careful to remain within the bounds of orthodoxy.

"Yet perhaps the greatest thing about al-Ghazālī was his personality, and it may yet again be a source of inspiration. Islam is now wrestling with Western thought as it once wrestled with Greek philosophy, and is as much in need as it was then of a 'revival of the religious sciences.' Deep study of al-

Ghazālī may suggest to Muslims steps to be taken if they are to deal successfully with the contemporary situation. Christians, too, now that the world is in a cultural melting-pot, must be prepared to learn from Islam, and are unlikely to find a more sympathetic guide than al-Ghazālī."

116 The great Hungarian orientalist Ignaz Goldziher wrote in his *Vorlesungen über den Islam* [*Le dogme etc.*] that Ghazālī was well aware of the danger incarnate in two elements of theological activity which were, in his view, the worst enemies of interior religion: the subtleties of the dogmatic dialectic and the refinements of religious casuistry [i.e. *kalām* and *fiqh*]. "In the place of the dialectical and casuistical manner of the dogmatists and ritualists Ghazālī demands that one cultivate religion as an experience of an intimate order. It is in the elevation of oneself to the intuitive life of the soul and to the sentiment of man's dependence that he finds the center of the religious life. *The love of God* must operate there as central motive. As he analyzes, in general with great mastery, the moral sentiments, he has given, in his system, a profound monograph on this motive and this goal of religion and has pointed out the way by which one must tend to it."

117 Has Ghazālī anything to say to us? I can now give *my* answer to this in a particular sense, a general sense, and a personal sense. And since it is *my* answer, it must be the result not only of academic and human influence processes, but also of my profoundest personal convictions as a modest Catholic, theoretical and practical. The particular sense concerns my four to five hundred million Muslim brothers. I believe, as has been indicated in some of the above citations, that Ghazālī has a very great relevance for them as sincere Muslims who wish to deepen and spiritualize their Islamic belief and practice. The *Ihyā'* of Ghazālī, as well as others of his books, are still read by many Arabic-speaking Muslims in their original form, and by others in translations. This is attested by the fact that reprints and new editions are continually being brought out and bought out. It is perhaps not too much to say that Ghazālī is still on the all-time "best-seller" list of Arabic literature.

118 My answer in a general sense has been indicated by the Editors of the series "Ethical and Religious Classics of East

and West" in their *General Introduction*. They write: "As a result of two Wars that have devastated the World men and women everywhere feel a twofold need. We need a deeper understanding and appreciation of other peoples and their civilizations, especially their moral and spiritual achievements. And we need a wider vision of the Universe, a clearer insight into the fundamentals of ethics and religion. How ought men to behave? How ought nations? Does God exist? What is His Nature? How is He related to His creation? Especially, how can man approach Him? In other words, there is a general desire to know what the greatest minds, whether of East or West, have thought and said about the Truth of God and of the beings who (as most of them hold) have sprung from Him, live by Him, and return to Him...."

119 "Mankind is hungry, but the feast is there, though it is locked up and hidden away.... No doubt the great religions differ in fundamental respects. But they are not nearly so far from one another as they seem. We think they are further off than they are largely because we so often misunderstand and misrepresent them. Those whose own religion is dogmatic have often been as ready to learn from other teachings as those who are liberals in religion. Above all, there is an enormous amount of common ground in the great religions, concerning, too, the most fundamental matters. There is frequent agreement on the Divine Nature; God is the One, Self-subsisting Reality, knowing Himself, and therefore loving and rejoicing in Himself. Nature and finite spirits are in some way subordinate kinds of Being, or merely appearances of the Divine, the One. The three stages of the way of man's approach or return to God are in essence the same in Christian and non-Christian teaching: an ethical stage, then one of knowledge and love, leading to the mystical union of the soul with God."

120 In this sense I certainly believe that Ghazālī, in almost all of his writings, has something to offer to all the "hungry" men and women of today. Few, perhaps, can read the *Ihyā'*, the completest and most spiritual of Ghazālī's books. But all, I think, can profit from a reading of the *Munqidh*. Ghazālī, so to speak, touches all the bases, or at least the truly relevant ones. He makes a complete disjunction in Para. 18. Those who seek the

truth can do so whether through Theology [the Mutakallimūn], or through Philosophy [and Science], or through the following of a charismatic, infallible Leader, or through the "Way" of the Ṣūfis. As it turns out, the four ways are not necessarily exclusive for Ghazālī. Despite his strictures on *kalām*, he found it useful to a certain extent. And he certainly benefited from his study of philosophy. He also followed a charismatic, infallible Leader—Muḥammad, the Prophet and Apostle of God. But for him the "Way" par excellence was that of the Ṣūfis—the men who "tasted and saw how sweet the Lord is."

121 And the "Way" of the Ṣūfis is not an esoteric way reserved only for the elite. The number who actually follow it may indeed be small, but this is due to many factors including the difficulty of following it sincerely and wholeheartedly. I think that Ghazālī would agree with the evangelical dictum that "one thing is necessary," and also with the declaration that "many are called, but few are chosen." I also agree with the opinion commonly held by Catholic theologians that the mystical life is the "natural," or ordinary, fulfillment and flowering of the graces offered by God to all men of good will. For, as Gerson said, "Theologia mystica est experimentalis cognitio habita de Deo per amoris unitivi complexum" [Mystical theology is knowledge of God by experience, arrived at through the embrace of unifying love]. This is something possible for all in varying degrees, but the "unitive way" must normally be preceded by the arduous "purgative way" and the difficult and often lengthy "illuminative way." And at the heart of the matter it is God and God's free gift of supernatural grace which are prevenient, accompanying and fulfilling. Yet "facienti quod est in se Deus non denegat gratiam" [God does not deny grace to one who does all that lies in his power].

122 Finally, with some reluctance, I offer my personal answer.

It can be put briefly. My reading of Ghazālī has made me, or at least has incited me to be, a better practicing Catholic in the fullest sense of the term. It has not moved me, despite my real admiration, and even veneration, for Ghazālī to embrace Islam. Rather it has made me more aware of the great spiritual riches at hand in my own Catholic tradition. My experience has

been, though on a lesser level, somewhat like that of Louis Massignon and Harvey Cox.

123 Massignon, through the impression made upon him by certain Muslim friends and acquaintances and their devout practice of their Faith, was led back to the fervent practice of the Catholic religion of his youth. [One is also reminded of Charles de Foucauld.] And Harvey Cox tells us: "I have not seen Harry, Denise or Michael since the day they knocked at my door. I do not know if they still belong to the Hare Krishna group. They may not. In any case, I am grateful to them and I hope that wherever they now are in their pilgrimages, things are going well for them. They helped start me along a path which took a totally unexpected course. The journey I made, while helping me to appreciate more deeply what the East has to teach us today, also made me in some ways more Christian than I had been at the beginning. My guess is that the same thing, or something very similar, will happen to a lot of us before many more years go by" [Turning East, p. 21]. Harvey Cox's "turning East" led him to such diverse modern "gurus" as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Simone Weil, Dorothy Day, Father Camilo Torres-Restrepo, and Martin Luther King. Above all, it led him to "an authentic contemporary form of spirituality" for which he felt compelled to look in "the primal sources and to the Christians nearest us" [p. 157].

124 To sum it all up, I have to some extent found, and I believe others can find, in the words and example of Ghazālī a true *ihyā'* [quickening, revivification, bringing back to life, causing to live]—an *ihyā'* from the dark, dead coldness of atheism, or, more accurately, "without-Godness"; an *ihyā'* from enervating, debilitating, and crippling sinfulness; an *ihyā'* from lifeless and spiritless intellectualism; an *ihyā'* from the tepidity and listlessness and uncaring of social and moral mediocrity.

125 Someday, be it close or distant, I hope to sit down with Ghazālī in a quiet corner of heaven. We shall have many things to talk about, if indeed in heaven one can be "distracted" from the Vision of God. I shall want to thank him—him and so many others of his coreligionists, such as Rābi'a and al-Bisṭāmī and al-Hallāj. I cited in the beginning of this Introduction the words of Macdonald: "With the time came the man." Let me

conclude by saying: The time is gone; but the man remains, and will remain, for you, for me, and for all men.

126 I must mention a few pedestrian details. The basis of my translation has been the precious manuscript which I have already mentioned. In the "Notes to the Translation" I have tried to avoid the extremes of an irritating minimum and a maddening maximum. I can only hope that the general reader will find them informative and helpful. I have added an "Annotated Bibliography," since I feel that some of my readers may wish to further their acquaintance with Ghazālī. Translations of verses of the Qur'ān are sometimes those of Arberry, sometimes my own. And of course I am very grateful to ever so many persons who have helped me in ever so many ways! To paraphrase Péguy: One man is no man. My undertaking has been a labor of love—and not, I trust, a love's labor lost!