

Sources
and
Studies
in World
History

the Alchemy of Happiness



Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī
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M. E. Sharpe Inc.
Armonk, New York
London, England

Preface

In studying the history of world civilizations, few if any concepts are more difficult for people of modern times to comprehend than the intense religiosity which characterized so many civilizations—medieval European, Byzantine, Islamic, Indian, East Asian—during the period from the fall of the classical empires to the beginning of the European expansion. Whether because of the pervasive secularity of modern civilization, or the blatant materialism of contemporary life, or simply because of the rigid compartmentalization of religious life (such as it is) well away from social and political existence, it is not easy to appreciate the spiritual sentiments that once impelled so many people to fight each other in the name of religion, to flock to monasteries or ascetic retreats, to pour their creative and artistic energies into religious works, or to govern every aspect of their lives with a piety founded on transcendent scriptural ideals.

One work which surely captures and vividly expresses the essence of the pre-modern religious spirit is *The Alchemy of Happiness*, written by perhaps the greatest and certainly one of the most original of Muslim thinkers, Abû Hâmid Muḥammad al-Ghazzâlî. In composing *The Alchemy of Happiness*, Ghazzâlî not only outlined a comprehensive world-view based on the religion of Islam, he also specifically attempted to demonstrate how all human behavior should be guided by a religious faith as intense and unshakably certain as it was all encompassing. It is precisely these two concepts—the extension of religious piety into all phases of life and the constant link between faith and action—which tend to be the most alien to contemporary, and

particularly Western, culture. Thus, Ghazzâlî's treatise is of exceptional value to those seeking insights into this ancient and very different understanding of the world.

The Life and Works of Ghazzâlî

Abû Hâmid Muḥammad, son of Muḥammad, al-Ghazzâlî was born to a family of spinners and sellers of wool in a small village in the environs of the city of Ṭûs in eastern Iran in the year 450 after the hijra (1058 A.D.).¹ Ghazzâlî, or alternatively Ghazâlî, the descriptive name (called in Arabic the *nisba*) by which he is generally known, may be explained as either a reference to his occupation in the wool trade (*ghazzâla*) or to the name of his home village (Ghazâl). His father having vowed that his son should be dedicated to the service of Islam, Ghazzâlî received the education appropriate to becoming a Muslim scholar, first at a mosque school to learn the rudimentary skills and then at an institution known as a *madrasa*, which was emerging as the main center for advanced formal instruction in the theory and practice of Islamic law. On his own, Ghazzâlî also developed an early interest in Sufism, the Islamic form of individual and organized religious mysticism, and received private instruction in the ways of its practitioners, the Sufis. It was, however, his command of Muslim jurisprudence which first brought him fame; after studying in madrasas in his native Ṭûs and the city of Jurjân (modern Gorgân), he became a protégé of the famous

¹ Modern biographical studies of Ghazzâlî include Duncan Macdonald, "The Life of al-Ghazzâlî," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 20(1899):71-132; W. Gardener, *An Account of al-Ghazâlî's Life and Works* (Madras, 1919); S. M. Zwemer, *A Moslem Seeker after God* (London, 1920); Dwight Donaldson, "Mohammed al-Ghazzali," *Muslim World* 11(1921):377-88; Margaret Smith, *Al-Ghazâlî the Mystic* (London, 1944); and W. M. Watt, *Muslim Intellectual* (Edinburgh, 1963).

theologian and scholar of the Shâfi'î school of Islamic law, the Imâm al-Ḥaramayn Abu'l-Ma'âlî 'Abd al-Malik al-Juvaynî, at the madrasa in Nishapur from 470/1077-78 down to the death of Juvaynî in 478/1085. In addition to continuing his interest in Sufism, Ghazzâlî also began to develop ideas not typical of the conventional legal scholar of his day, in particular his belief that such scholars should master a variety of academic fields of study, not just those necessary for law itself, and that guidance in problems of religious law should be based on something more than simply following the opinions of previous jurisconsults, a practice known as *taqlîd* or "imitation."

After Juvaynî's death, Ghazzâlî was sufficiently prominent to attract the attention of the powerful statesman Nizâm al-Mulk and through his patronage to be admitted to the court of Malik Shâh, the Seljuk Turkish sultan who was the real political master of most of the eastern half of the Muslim world. This led, in 484/1091, to his appointment as a professor at the greatest institution of Sunni Muslim learning of the age, the Nizâmiyya Madrasa in Baghdad. In this capacity, it was inevitable that Ghazzâlî would be caught up in the political affairs of the capital, and this may have led him into trouble after the assassination of his mentor Nizâm al-Mulk in 485/1092 and the subsequent death of Malik Shâh. In the succession struggle between Barkyârûq and his uncle Tutush, Ghazzâlî probably favored Tutush. When Barkyârûq came to power in 488/1095 and put Tutush to death, Ghazzâlî's position would have thus become precarious.

In any event, it was in that very year that Ghazzâlî experienced what he describes in his famous autobiography, *The Deliverance from Error*, as his great spiritual crisis. Struck dumb while lecturing to his students, Ghazzâlî fell ill and gradually came to realize that his affliction was spiritual in nature: He had devoted himself to religious studies in hope of

worldly fame and success rather than out of pure love of God. Consequently he gave up his position at the Nizâmiyya and moved from Baghdad to Damascus (where, probably not coincidentally, Tutush's supporters were strong). From 488/1095 to 499/1105 Ghazzâlî lived in private retreat, often working at menial jobs, writing, and spending time in contemplation and learning from various Sufis still more about a life of asceticism and mysticism. In addition to his stay in Damascus, he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and visited Jerusalem, Hebron, the Hijaz, and Egypt.

Around 499/1105, shortly after the death of Barkyârûq, Ghazzâlî returned to public life, accepting a post at the Nizâmiyya Madrasa in Nishapur, where he had previously studied with Juvaynî. He later took charge of a madrasa and a Sufi retreat (*khânqâh*) near his native city of Tûs. It was there that he died in the year 505/1111.

Ghazzâlî is reputed to have written an enormous number of books.² Some of the works ascribed to him were merely brief epistles; others were duplicates of works known under variant titles; still others were incorrectly attributed to Ghazzâlî or were outright forgeries. Nonetheless, the corpus of his authentic works, many of which are still extant, included about seventy books dealing with such subjects as Islamic law and legal theory (*fiqh*), the theoretical and the practical aspects of Sufism, critiques of philosophy and theology, polemical tracts, and discussions of ethics and politics.³

² The corpus of writings attributed to Ghazzâlî has been surveyed and arranged in the probable sequence of composition by Maurice Bouyges (edited and revised after his death by M. Allard), *Essai de chronologie des oeuvres de al-Ghazali* (Beirut, 1959). See also G. Hourani, "The Chronology of Ghazâlî's Writings," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 79(1959):225-33.

³ An excellent representative sampling of Ghazzâlî's various writings in English translation may be found in R. McCarthy, *Freedom and Fulfillment* (Boston, 1980).

All of Ghazzâlî's writings are of great merit and interest, but there are three particularly important works on which his reputation primarily rests. First of all, there is his quasi-autobiographical treatise, *The Deliverance from Error* (*al-Munqidh min al-dalâl*),⁴ a work often compared to St. Augustine's *Confessions* but quite unique in Islamic literature. In it, Ghazzâlî not only recounts the spiritual crisis he experienced in Baghdad (discussed above) but goes on to describe his subsequent search for a truth that would transcend all question and doubt. In doing so, he provides concise and remarkably clear descriptions of the major religio-intellectual trends of his day and his critiques or appreciations of each. As an introduction to the main features of Ghazzâlî's thought, it remains unexcelled. The basic concepts outlined in *The Deliverance from Error* are developed fully in two other texts. *The Incoherence of Philosophy* (*Tahâfut al-falâsifa*), written while Ghazzâlî was teaching in Baghdad, is a thorough and rather merciless criticism from a Muslim perspective of the aims, methods, and conclusions of Hellenistic-style philosophy.⁵ *The Revival of the Religious Sciences* (*Ihyâ' 'ulûm al-din*), undoubtedly Ghazzâlî's greatest work, is well described as "a complete guide for the devout Muslim to every aspect of the religious life."⁶ It offers a Muslim theory of knowledge,

⁴ Available in a good English translation by W. Montgomery Watt, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazâlî* (London, 1953); it is also found in McCarthy's *Freedom and Fulfillment*.

⁵ The *Tahâfut al-falâsifa* (edited by M. Bouyges; Beirut, 1927). There is an English translation by S. A. Kamali, *Al-Ghazali's Tahafut al-falasifa: Incoherence of the Philosophers*. Lahore, 1963.

⁶ W. Montgomery Watt, "al-Ghazâlî," *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edition; Leiden, in progress), 2:1040. The *Ihyâ'* has been published many times, but it is an immense work and there is no satisfactory complete translation of it into English. Many of its individual sections, however, have been translated; see the bibliography at the end of this work.

followed by detailed guidance on matters of faith, ritual, daily life, virtues and vices, and the mystical experience of God.

To understand the significance and influence of these and other works by Ghazzâlî, it is necessary to consider the milieu in which they were created.

The Historical Setting

The period of Ghazzâlî's life, 1058-1111, coincided with a very momentous epoch in the history of the Islamic world, which was in turmoil politically, religiously, and intellectually. As a result, Ghazzâlî's ideas cannot be fully appreciated without some reference to the historical environment which helped to shape them and which they, in turn, may have helped to alter.

Of the various events which occurred during Ghazzâlî's lifetime, the one which would most likely be familiar to a Western, non-Muslim, reader would certainly be the First Crusade. Ghazzâlî's departure from Baghdad occurred just as the call for a crusading movement was reaching its climax in Europe, and he may actually have been residing in Damascus when Jerusalem fell to the Crusaders in 1099. Yet these events had little discernable effect on Ghazzâlî's thought. This is probably due to the fact that in his time most Muslims viewed the Crusades as no more than a minor disruption on the periphery of the Islamic world; it was not until much later that they were regarded as of sufficient magnitude to be a cause for alarm. Ghazzâlî made only passing references to the idea of holy war (*jihâd*) in his works, and then usually in the context of spiritual endeavor, not actual physical struggle against rival religions or infidels. While one anti-Christian polemical tract has been attributed to him, it is little more than a typical

Muslim critique of the belief in the divinity of Christ.⁷ For the most part, Ghazzâlî seems to have been genuinely interested in and favorably impressed by what he knew of Christianity, especially its ethical thought. In *The Alchemy of Happiness* and other writings, he frequently cites material about Jesus found in Christian texts to support his arguments and even quotes from the gospels. In short, Ghazzâlî's writing is remarkably free of the jaundiced communalism which the Crusades helped introduce into Muslim-Christian relations.

For Ghazzâlî and his contemporaries a far more spectacular and urgent political issue than the Crusades was the bitter sectarian struggle within the Muslim world between the Sunni Abbasid caliphate, with its capital in Iraq, and the rival Fatimid Shi'ite rulers based in Egypt. Ever since the death of the Prophet Muḥammad, there had been a general consensus among Muslims that there should continue to be one charismatic leader of the entire Muslim community, variously known as the caliph or "successor" of the Prophet (*khalīfat rasūl allāh*), the "deputy of God" (*khalīfat allāh*) the "commander of the faithful" (*amīr al-mu'minīn*), or the "authoritative leader" (*imām*). However, there had been profound and sometimes violent conflicts over who was entitled to hold this office and what its actual powers should be. After a period of rule by four close associates of Muḥammad (three of whom were assassinated), the office was held by various members of a clan known as the Umayyads (41-132/661-750). Although in many ways quite successful, these rulers were widely regarded by Muslims as little more than secular kings, or even as illegitimate usurpers, since they had seized the caliphate by force and in earlier times their clan

⁷ The *Radd al-jamīl 'alā sarīḥ al-injīl*, edited and translated by R. Chidiac, *Réfutation excellente de la divinité de Jésus Christ d'après les Evangiles* (Paris, 1939).

had been notorious for its opposition to the Prophet Muḥammad and his religion. In 132/750, they were replaced by the Abbasid dynasty of caliphs, who had come to power as the result of a great revolutionary upheaval in the eastern areas of the Islamic world. Using their kinship with the Prophet Muḥammad (as descendants of his uncle al-ʿAbbās) to bolster their claims to charismatic authority, they sought to exercise absolutist power over the whole Islamic empire and to intrude on all aspects of Muslim life. Probably for this reason, the early Abbasids were instrumental in promoting the development of formal "schools" of Islamic law, but the legal scholars struggled to preserve their autonomy and finally became more or less independent of state control. Several of the Abbasid rulers, notably the caliphs al-Ma'mūn (198-218/813-33) and al-Mu'taṣim (218-27/833-42), attempted to assert authority over the religious life of their subjects by enforcing theological uniformity through an inquisition known as the *miḥna*, but that also ended in failure. Politically, their absolutism was more successful, but less than a century after the dynasty was established, even that power also began to erode. Soon, the Abbasid caliphs were little more than figureheads, real power being held by various local dynasties which usually professed loyalty to the Abbasids, primarily as a way of legitimizing their own right to rule over the Muslims. In Ghazzālī's time, it was a dynasty of Turkish and Central Asian origin, the Seljuks (429-552/1038-1157), whose rulers (*sultāns*) both championed and dominated the Abbasid caliphate, having conquered the capital, Baghdad, in 447/1055.

The dynasty of the Fatimids (297-567/909-1171) also came to power after a kind of revolutionary movement strikingly similar in form to that which had installed the Abbasids. Although the Abbasids had once used their indirect kinship with the prophet to legitimize their caliphate, the Fatimids

made the more specifically Shi'ite argument that their right to rule was based on direct descent from Muḥammad through his daughter Fāṭima, who had married Muḥammad's cousin and son-in-law, ʿAlī. As such they claimed to be Shi'ite imāms, the only legitimate rulers in the Islamic world as well as infallible authorities on all religious and secular matters. Under circumstances which are still historically obscure, this straightforward doctrine of political legitimism was combined with a subtle and highly esoteric religious ideology to produce a revolutionary movement which, drawing on the strength of Berber tribal recruits, seized power in North Africa and installed one ʿUbaydallah al-Mahdī as the first Fatimid caliph (proclaimed publicly in 297/910). In both religious and political terms, the absolutism of the Fatimid caliphs was far more complete and their ideology far more coherent than that of their Abbasid counterparts. After conquering Egypt in 358/969, they established various centers of learning, including the Azhar "university," to propagate their brand of Shi'ism and to train missionaries to preach on their behalf throughout the Muslim world. In the very year Ghazzālī began teaching in Baghdad, one of the most famous of the pro-Fatimid activists, Ḥassān-e Šabbāḥ, seized the fortress of Alamūt in northwestern Iran and attempted to advance the Fatimid cause through political assassinations of its chief opponents. His fanatical followers, popularly known as the Assassins, were thought to be responsible for the murder of the minister Nizām al-Mulk and other prominent pro-Abbasid leaders. The Abbasid-Fatimid conflict thus involved many issues— theological, legal, political, economic, social, cultural, and geographic—and amounted to an all out contest for domination over the heartlands of the Muslim world.

Since the Abbasids had long since lost any real political power, the task of defending them and the cause of Sunni

Islam was taken up by various eastern dynasties, mostly of Turkish origin. In particular, the Seljuk dynasty enthusiastically endorsed the anti-Fatimid campaign. They worked against the Fatimids on both the military and the ideological fronts. It is likely, for example, that the Seljuk minister Nizâm al-Mulk decided to patronize the madrasa institution, and also founded the Nizâmiyya Madrasa at which Ghazzâlî taught in Baghdad, in order to help counteract Fatimid propaganda. Although the Seljuks managed to oust Fatimid and pro-Fatimid forces from Syria, the invasion of Egypt which they apparently contemplated never materialized.

In the end, it was an intellectual as much as a military counter-offensive which turned the tide against the Fatimids, and in that effort Ghazzâlî played an important role by vigorously attacking the ideological underpinnings of the Fatimid cause, both at the political and the religious level. In theory, Ghazzâlî, rather like St. Augustine, seems to have viewed any state authority as little more than a necessary evil which should be avoided if at all possible by the pious. The circumstances of his time, however, led him to defend the practical necessity and legitimacy of the Abbasid caliphate against the Fatimids. To an extent, his writings on this subject were simply restatements of traditional Sunni arguments. Ghazzâlî, however, was too intelligent not to be aware of the irony inherent in championing the cause of a Sunni caliphate which was in actuality powerless. He thus began to develop the much more original and significant, as well as realistic, idea that the sultanate was also a legitimate institution and should be supported since it served to maintain the Sunni political and social order. As he says in one often quoted passage, "We consider that the function of the caliphate is contractually assumed by that member of the Abbasid house who is charged with it, and that the function of government in the various

lands is carried out by sultans, who owe allegiance to the caliphs... Government in these days is a consequence solely of military power, and whosoever he may be to whom the holder of military power gives his allegiance, that person is the caliph."⁸ His arguments had the important effect of giving theoretical legitimacy and ideological support to what was the *de facto* political situation in the Sunni world.⁹

The Religious and Intellectual Milieu

Behind the political and military duel of the Fatimids and Seljuks, there also lay a profound religious and intellectual ferment. Even at the time Ghazzâlî was born, more than four centuries after the death of the Prophet Muḥammad, Islam itself was in many ways still in the process of being elaborated as a coherent religious system. Broadly speaking, five general trends had established themselves in this regard, and the proponents of each were competing vigorously for the allegiance of Muslim rulers and/or the Muslim masses. These five trends or tendencies may, for convenience, be labelled

⁸ In the *Revivification*, 2:124; cited by H. A. R. Gibb, "The Sunni Theory of the Caliphate," *Archives d'Histoire du Droit Oriental* 3(1939):402.

⁹ Ghazzâlî's political ideas were developed in the *Mustazhirî* (an early defense of the Abbasid caliphate dedicated to the reigning caliph al-Mustazhir) and the *Golden Mean in Belief* (*al-Iqtisâd fi'l-i'tiqâd*; edited Ankara, 1962). His most detailed discourse on the nature of kingship was in a Persian work of the *fürstenspiegel* genre dedicated to a Seljuk prince, the *Nasihat al-mulûk*; translated by F. R. C. Bagley, *Ghazzâlî's Book of Counsel for Kings* (Oxford, 1964). The same work exists in an Arabic version, the *The Smelted Ore* (*al-Tibr al-masbûk*). Another political treatise, *The Mystery of the Two Worlds* (*Sirr al-'âlamayn wa kashf mâ fi'l-dârâyin*) has probably been attributed in error to Ghazzâlî. For an excellent survey of his political thought, see Ann Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 107-29; also Henri Laoust, *La Politique de Gazâlî* (Paris, 1970).

traditionist legalism, metaphysical philosophy, rational theology, esoteric (*bâṭinī*) Shi'ism, and Sufi mysticism.

Traditionist legalism had as its goal the elaboration of a comprehensive system of holy law which would enable the Muslim to fulfill the duty of worshipping God and living as He intended. This law was based primarily on the careful study of the explicit commands provided through divine revelation in the Koran and supplemented by prophetic example in the *ḥadīth* (orally transmitted traditions or reports of things the Prophet Muḥammad had said or done), but it could also be derived with the help of certain rigorous and systematically applied juristic methods (*fiqh*). The totality of this holy law constituted the *sharīʿa*, a comprehensive body of rules to regulate virtually every aspect of Muslim life, whether public or private, religious or temporal. By the end of the third/ninth century, four "schools" of law (*madhhabs*), which survive to the present day, had crystallized around the teachings of four prominent legal scholars, for whom they were named: the Mālikīs, Shāfiʿīs, Ḥanafīs, and Ḥanbalīs.¹⁰ Although these four great branches of Sunni Islam varied greatly in attitude—from the puritanical and literalist populism of the Ḥanbalīs to the liberal and pragmatic, often state-oriented Ḥanafīs—they were remarkably uniform in their actual expression of a comprehensive code of holy law. In many ways, this idealization of an Islamic nomocracy through the formulation of the *sharīʿa* was the central concern and greatest achievement of classical Islamic civilization.

Ghazzālī himself, as noted above, was involved in this enterprise and first distinguished himself in the study of *fiqh*.

¹⁰ On Islamic law and its formulation, see Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford, 1950) and *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford, 1964); N. J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law* (Edinburgh, 1964).

Throughout his work, it is obvious that few things disturbed him more than any antinomian tendency which would lead to disregard of the *sharīʿa*. Although the *ʿulamāʾ*, the group of religious scholars responsible for expressing, guarding, and implementing the *sharīʿa*, enjoyed considerable popular support and moral authority (at least in the major urban areas of the Muslim world),¹¹ Ghazzālī was well aware of their potential vulnerabilities. He saw, for example, that there was sometimes a hypocritical disparity between the worldly life style of some of the scholars of the religious law and the demands of the code of pious conduct they taught; indeed, he had noted and worried about this tendency in his own life. Moreover, if the law was regarded simply as a set of intricate rules and regulations accepted on the basis of scholarly authority, without a firm foundation of faith and spirituality, it might appear terribly cold, austere, and empty to many ordinary Muslims. Ghazzālī thus had no quarrel with the importance of the holy law in Islam; he simply recognized that taken alone it could easily seem spiritually incomplete and intellectually unconvincing.

One way in which some Muslims sought to fill precisely this kind of void was through metaphysical philosophy. Works of

¹¹ The *ʿulamāʾ* were uniquely positioned to influence the Muslim populace. As legal authorities, they were involved in numerous matters pertaining to daily life (business transactions, marriage contracts, etc.). They dominated private education and religious instruction, both in the home and in the mosque. The Koran and the traditions were also easily accessible to the masses, even those who were illiterate, since the Koran was frequently memorized and recited and oral transmission of traditions was a common activity. This facilitated popular appreciation of the *ʿulamāʾ*'s command of these fields of knowledge, and we hear of huge crowds coming to hear famous scholars teach about the Koran and the *ḥadīth*. These points are brought out fairly well in Munir-ud-Din Ahmad, *Muslim Education and the Scholars' Social Status up to the 5th Century Muslim Era* (Zurich, 1968).

Greek philosophy, mostly of a late Hellenistic Aristotelian and neo-Platonic character, had been translated into Arabic and were being championed and developed by a number of famous Muslim philosophers: al-Kindî (d. 252/866); al-Fârâbî (d. 339/950); and especially Ghazzâlî's great contemporary Ibn Sînâ (known in the West as Avicenna; d. 428/1037).¹² Ghazzâlî saw this tendency as a positive danger to the Muslim community and attempted to discredit it in two major works, *The Intentions of the Philosophers* (*Maqâsid al-falâsifa*) and *The Incoherence of Philosophy* (*Tahâfut al-falâsifa*); his findings were also summarized in his *Deliverance from Error*.¹³ While he admitted that philosophy had produced much of value that should not be rejected out of hand, particularly logic and the mathematical sciences, he argued that it also held up as certain knowledge what were really nothing more than opinions. Worse, many of these ideas conflicted with the religion of Islam and led to outright heresy. On three crucial points, all derived ultimately from Aristotle, Ghazzâlî held that the philosophers were not only wrong but so irreligious that they were really infidels (that is, they had forfeited their status as Muslims). These points were (1) the concept of the eternity of the world as opposed to the creation *ex nihilo* of revelation; (2) the concept that God knows only universals not particulars as opposed to the personal God of the Koran who is "closer than one's jugular vein" and is aware of all that happens; and (3) the

¹² On this subject, see Majid Fakhri, *A History of Islamic Philosophy* (second edition; London, 1983); De Lacy O'Leary, *Arabic Thought and Its Place in History* (London, 1939); T. J. DeBoer, *The History of Philosophy in Islam* (London, 1903).

¹³ *The Intentions of the Philosophers* (*Maqâsid al-falâsifa*; ed. Cairo, 1331/1915-16); for the *Tahâfut*, see above n. 5. While critical of many of the teachings of the philosophers, he did not reject all their methods; he explained and justified the use of logic in works such as the *The Standard for Knowledge* (*Mi'yâr al-'ilm*) and *The Just Balance* (*al-Qisâs al-mustaqîm*).

denial of the resurrection of the body in direct contradiction to Koranic doctrine. It is not necessary here to describe the many complicated Ghazzâlî arguments developed to rebut these notions. As a practical matter, it was sufficient for him to bring to public attention the fundamental conflict of the teachings of the philosophers with Koranic doctrines. The cause of the philosophers against Ghazzâlî was not helped by their frequent arrogance, elitism, and antinomianism, as when Ibn Sînâ taught that the soul of the philosopher was superior to the soul of an ordinary person or that the philosopher, being superior to the prophet by virtue of greater understanding, was freed from the bonds of the holy law that applied to common people.¹⁴ However convincing or unconvincing Ghazzâlî's critique may have been to later philosophers,¹⁵ there is no doubt that in the court of Muslim popular opinion it prevailed, forever altering the intellectual climate of the Islamic world.

The trend represented by the study of rational theology (*kalâm*) was similar to that of philosophy except that it wanted to use reason in defense of a religious framework, not as an end in itself. In the early centuries of Islam, a purely rationalist theology known as Mu'tazilism had been a powerful movement, at times backed by the Abbasid government. Mu'tazilî theologians had emphasized the importance of correct belief and utilized the concepts and methodology of philosophy to concentrate on the formulation of doctrine. In this they emphasized that in discussing the attributes of God

¹⁴ Ibn Sînâ and Fârâbî are singled out for criticism of this sort in the *Deliverance*; see Watt, *Faith and Practice*, pp. 72-73. An English translation of some of the passages that Ghazzâlî would probably have regarded as offensive may be found in A. J. Arberry, *Avicenna on Theology* (London, 1951), especially pp. 9-24, 64-76.

¹⁵ The best known attempt by a Muslim philosopher to rebut Ghazzâlî was by Ibn Rushd (Averroes); see Simon van den Bergh, *Averroes' Tahâfut al-Tahâfut (The Incoherence of the Incoherence)* (London, 1969).

any form of anthropomorphism had to be rejected (even if this meant making allegorical interpretations of certain Koranic verses); that God's justice necessarily limited his power and endowed humans with free will; and that "God's speech" (the Koran) was created rather than eternal. The Muslim community, especially those most concerned with the primacy of traditionist legalism, were uncomfortable with these teachings and even more disturbed by the fact that they were being imposed with the help of state power.

By Ghazzâlî's time, this form of theology had been decisively rejected in favor of a dogmatic theology known as Ash'arism.¹⁶ Its founder, Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash'arî (d. 324/935-36), frowned on any purely speculative theology and consequently rejected almost every teaching of the Mu'tazilites. In keeping with a more literal reading of scripture and tradition ("without asking how"), he accepted the Koranic attributes of God while denying that they implied anthropomorphism; held that the Koran was the uncreated Word of God; and insisted on the primacy of God's omnipotence even if that required belief in predestination. Al-Ash'arî's goal was clearly to harmonize this type of theology with traditionist legalism, and it should be noted that Ghazzâlî's teacher, Juvaynî, was an eminent authority in both fields and so, to an extent, was Ghazzâlî himself. But the alliance was an uneasy one. While the theologians professed to admire the legal scholars and sought, unsuccessfully, to have legal and theological training combined in the curriculum of the madrasas, they often viewed traditional and popular religion with disdain. The legal scholars suspected that the

¹⁶ On which, see R. C. McCarthy (ed. and tr.), *The Theology of al-Ash'arî* (Beirut, 1953); A. S. Tritton, *Muslim Theology* (London, 1947), pp. 166-74; George Makdisi, "Ash'arî and the Ash'arites in Islamic Religious History," *Studia Islamica* 17(1962):37-80 and 18(1963):19-39.

theologians were still overly influenced by the methods of non-Islamic philosophy, were dangerously close to allowing reason to supplant reliance on revelation and prophetic tradition, and were all too eager to co-operate with the authorities of the state in enforcing doctrinal conformity.

Ghazzâlî certainly became aware of the limitations of theology and began to distance himself from it. In *The Deliverance from Error*, he noted that theology, like logic in philosophy, was a useful tool, but neither an end in itself nor a path to certain knowledge. Above all, it was no more appropriate to base matters of faith on the blind acceptance of authoritative theologians than it was to limit knowledge of the holy law to mere imitation of the legal experts: "Whoever claims that theology, abstract proofs, and systematic classification are the foundation of belief is an innovator. Rather is belief a light which God bestows on the hearts of His creatures as the gift and bounty from Him, sometimes through an explainable conviction from within, sometimes because of a dream in sleep, sometimes by seeing the state of bliss of a pious man and the transmission of his light through association and conversation with him, sometimes through one's own state of bliss."¹⁷ He was also appalled by the intolerance and exclusivity of some theologians as seen in their readiness to demean the simple faith of others: "Among the most extreme and extravagant of men are a group of scholastic theologians who dismiss the Muslim common people as unbelievers and claim that whoever does not know scholastic theology in the form they recognize and does not know the prescriptions of the Holy Law according to the proofs which they have adduced is

¹⁷ In *The Decisive Criterion for Distinguishing Islam and Unbelief* (*al-Fayṣal al-tafīqā bayn al-islām wa'l-zandaqa*; ed. Cairo, 1381/1961), p. 202; translated by Bernard Lewis, *Islam* (New York, 1974), 2:20-21.

an unbeliever.”¹⁸ It is perhaps revealing that one of Ghazzâlî’s very last writings warned of the dangers of exposing ordinary believers to any form of kalâm.¹⁹

Shi’ism in Islam is a very complex phenomenon about which it is difficult and dangerous to generalize.²⁰ The term is applied to a multitude of movements ranging from extremely heterodox and politically revolutionary sects to branches of Islam which are barely distinguishable from those regarded as mainstream or Sunni in character. About the only feature the various forms of Shi’ism have in common is that they substitute some charismatic leader, usually called an imâm, believed to have been designated as such by God and further distinguished by some degree of kinship to Muḥammad, for the various caliphs recognized by Sunni Muslims.

In Ghazzâlî’s time, by far the most powerful form of Shi’ism was that espoused by the Fatimids, known as Ismâ’îlî or “Sevener” Shi’ism.²¹ Although this went through its own process of evolution, it generally taught (1) that Islam had a concealed, inner, esoteric dimension (the *bâṭin*, often linked to a cosmology of strikingly neo-Platonic terminology) that was

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ *The Restraining of Commoners from the Science of Theology (Iljâm al-‘awâmm ‘an ‘ilm al-kalâm*; ed. Cairo, 1351/1932).

²⁰ Two general works on this subject are Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi’i Islam* (Oxford, 1985) and S. H. M. Jafri, *The Origins and Early Development of Shi’a Islam* (London, 1979). Unfortunately, the former is slanted towards coverage of Twelver Shi’ism and periods later than Ghazzâlî, while the latter deals only with the very early historical development of Shi’ism.

²¹ Scholarship on the type of Fatimid Shi’ism which would have been familiar to Ghazzâlî is still in its preliminary stages of development. For two radically different interpretations of one aspect of it, see M. G. S. Hodgson, *The Order of Assassins* (The Hague, 1955) and B. Lewis, *The Origins of Ismâ’îlism* (Cambridge, 1940). A new and important general work on this type of Shi’ism is Farhad Daftari, *The Isma’îlis: Their History and Development* (Cambridge, 1990).

far more important than its literal and outward aspects (the *ẓâhir*), (2) that the ordinary believer had to be gradually initiated into an understanding of the *bâṭin*, (3) that for this he absolutely required authoritative guidance from an infallible imâm who was divinely entrusted with knowledge of the deepest secrets of the faith, (4) that these imâms had appeared in cycles of seven going back to Adam, each seventh imâm bringing a new revelation to supplant that of his predecessors, and that this would continue until a future imâm, the Qâ’im, propagated a final and perfect revelation of the *bâṭin*; (5) that in its current phase the imâmate belonged to the lineage of the seventh Shi’ite imâm, Ismâ’il b. Ja’far al-Şâdiq, reputed ancestor of the Fatimid caliphs, and (6) that the authority of certain imâms thus extended even to the point of abrogating Koranic revelation and prophetic tradition, rendering the holy law and obedience to it redundant.

If Ghazzâlî was ever vehement about anything, it was in his rejection of this system of thought, which he felt was as dangerous as it was unconvincing. He derisively referred to its adherents as *bâṭinîs* (owing to their fascination with religious obscurities) and *ta’lûmîs* (misguided and gullible people who allowed reliance on a supposedly infallible imâm to substitute for real spiritual understanding). As he noted in the *Deliverance*, insofar as anyone needed an infallible instructor, that need had already been fulfilled by the Prophet Muḥammad. Beyond that, the *bâṭinîs* themselves could not always agree on who such an infallible teacher might be or claimed that he was “hidden.” Finally, most of what these supposedly infallible teachers produced seemed to Ghazzâlî little more than half-baked Pythagoreanism which he regarded as “the dregs of philosophy.”²²

²² See Watt, *Faith and Practice*, pp. 43-54 for the appropriate passages from the *Deliverance*. Ghazzâlî provided more sustained critiques of this type of

As diverse as these four strands of Islamic thought were, they all were ultimately based on a similar conception of the religion: a creed, doctrine, or practice formulated and guarded by an intellectual elite and passively accepted and followed by the masses of ordinary believers. It is easy to see how Ghazzâlî would worry that even something as fundamental as ritual might become merely mechanical and soulless under the weight of such a system. It was for this reason that he developed a strong interest in the fifth great trend manifesting itself in Muslim society, that of Islamic mysticism or Sufism (*taṣawwuf*).

Sufism represented more an attitude and a way of life than a school of thought.²³ Its practitioners, the Sufis (from *ṣūfī*, a word of uncertain etymology), had been active from the earliest periods of Islamic history. Their mysticism was of necessity intensely personal and individualistic and therefore diverse in its specific expressions. At heart, however, most of them were motivated by two primary factors: the desire to attain direct knowledge (*maʿrifa*) of God and the wish to live the kind of life that would enable them to do so. They emphasized the importance of asceticism, of sincere piety, of self-purification, of acting out of a genuine love of God rather than a sometimes hypocritical subservience to the holy law out

Shi'ism in the *Mustazhir* or *Infamies of the Bāṭinis* (*Faḍāʾih al-bāṭiniyya wa faḍāʾil al-mustazhiriyya*; ed. Cairo, 1964); the *Just Balance* (*al-Qistās al-mustaqīm*); and the *Decisive Criterion* (*Fayṣal al-tafrīq*). I. Goldziher, *Streitschrift des Ghazzālî gegen die Bāṭinijja-Sekte* (Leiden, 1916) gives an abridged translation of the *Qistās*; there are also excerpts from these works in McCarthy, *Freedom and Fulfillment*, pp. 145-74 (the *Fayṣal*), 175-286 (the *Faḍāʾih*), and 287-332 (the *Qistās*).

²³ For an introduction to the vast subject of Sufism, see Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, 1975) which provides an extensive bibliography.

of fear. They also clearly believed that each individual was capable of some direct experience of God (or even union with Him), independent of any transmitted revelation, authoritative teaching, or intellectual exercise. People who attained this goal were regarded as "friends of God" and often idolized as saints and miracle-workers by the masses. Many began to act as spiritual guides (*murshids* or *pîrs*) to assist others in the mystic journey towards God. They often espoused unconventional methods for achieving this intensely personal, passionate, and ecstatic condition and described the mystical experience with poetical metaphors praising intoxication and eroticism. Some of their ceremonies and practices, such as various forms of *dhikr* (group meetings for songs, dances, or chants, often including both men and women, Muslims and non-Muslims together) or the visitation of the tombs of saints, were at variance with the established rituals and practices of formal Islam. Occasionally, mystics claimed to have reached an actual union with God and in their exuberance made no secret of their disregard for conventional religious practice and law. One of the most famous and popular of the mystics, al-Ḥallāj, was executed in 309/922 on just such charges of blasphemy.²⁴

The circumstances surrounding the martyrdom of al-Ḥallāj showed that Sufism was immensely appealing as a popular form of religion, but that it could also arouse the animosity of theologians, bāṭinî ideologues, and some members of the traditionist/legal establishment. The Shi'ites were particularly hostile to the Sufis because the substitution of personal experience and a host of "friends of God" for the charisma of a

²⁴ Al-Ḥallāj is the subject of one of the greatest works of Islamic scholarship, Louis Massignon's *La Passion de Ḥusayn Ibn Manṣūr Ḥallāj* (second edition; Paris, 1975); now available in an English translation by Herbert Mason, *The Passion of al-Ḥallāj, Mystic and Martyr of Islam* (Princeton, 1982).

unique, sinless, infallible imâm struck at the very heart of their system of belief. Most theologians instinctively distrusted any popular expression of religion, particularly one as anti-intellectual as Sufism could be (expressed in the slogan "break the inkpots and tear up the books"). The attitude of the legal scholars was ambivalent. They were not necessarily opposed to mysticism as such (many were privately Sufis themselves), but they realized that Sufism, by encouraging unconventional additions to Muslim ritual and tolerating ecstatic practices, could conflict with the holy law.²⁵ They also saw that Sufism provided convenient shelter for any number of eccentrics and charlatans whose behavior would normally be objectionable.

Ghazzâlî's genius lay in recognizing that Sufism, with its great popular appeal, could be an invaluable support to Sunni legalism against free-thinking philosophy and bâṭinî Shi'ism. To that end, he worked to give Sufism its own rigorously Islamic intellectual framework and to contain or redirect its pantheistic and antinomian tendencies. As he argued in *The Deliverance from Error*, his study of Sufism had convinced him "with certainty that it is above all the mystics who walk on the road of God; their life is the best life, their method the soundest method, their character the purest character."²⁶ The superiority of the mystics arose (1) from the fact that their knowledge was not derived as in other systems but based on immediate experience (*dhawq*) and was thus incontestable and (2) they

²⁵ George Makdisi has pointed out that the antipathy of some traditionists towards Sufism has been exaggerated; see his "L'Islam Hanbalisant," *Revue des Études Islamiques* 43(1975):45-76. However, there is a deep suspicion of it even today among some of the more conservative and legalistic religious scholars; R. Caspar "La Mystique Musulmane: recherches et tendances," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes (Tunis)* 25(1962), p. 289 n. 34 quotes an authority from the Azhar Islamic University in Cairo as saying that "the great majority of those whom the orientlists call Muslim mystics have nothing in common with Islam."

²⁶ As translated in Watt, *Faith and Practice*, p. 60.

were not just "men of words" but rather of purity and action whose every step was guided by "the lamp of prophetic revelation." The true mystic might attain to an indescribable absorption in God (*fanâ*), but not to a pantheistic union or connection with him. Above all, the true mystic would realize that any sin was a "deadly poison": No real mystic would think his knowledge of mysticism elevated him above the duties of worship or the requirements of the law.²⁷ Ghazzâlî consistently strived for a Sufism based on sober piety and masterfully buttressed the outward teachings of the law with the deep inner spirituality of the mystic. This insistence on the natural harmony of Sufism and the law pervades all of Ghazzâlî's finest writings and marks his greatest contribution to Islamic thought.

Ghazzâlî's Influence and Significance

In the history of Islamic civilization, Ghazzâlî can best be understood as a great reconciler of the diverse trends of thought just discussed. Although in a sense he attacked and discredited the philosophers and the bâṭinî Shi'ites, and diluted the importance of the theologians, he also incorporated some of their best ideas into his own work. He certainly did not shy away from use of logic and rational argument in defense of religion, from looking for the deep inner meanings in religious texts and practices, or even from employing metaphorical

²⁷ Ghazzâlî's most direct criticism of radically antinomian tendencies of this type was in a work on people he called "Latitudinarians" (*ibâhiyya*); the tract has been translated by Otto Pretzl, *Die Streitschrift des Ghazzâlî gegen die Ibâhîja*, Munich, 1933. His comments on the ecstatic state found in the *Alchemy* (below, Chapter Six) show that he had a broad tolerance for the eccentricities of the Sufis, but not to the point of disregard for the explicit requirements of the law.

interpretation of controversial Koranic verses.²⁸ To the dry study of the law, he added the warm and rich faith and deep spiritual understanding of the mystic; the ecstasy and enthusiasm of the mystic he tempered with the duty to know and obey God's commandments. He was thus able to sort out, prioritize, and synthesize the various religious tendencies of his time into a comprehensive religious system which has remained at the heart of mainstream Sunni Islam ever since.

In this, Ghazzâlî was certainly not free from critics, both in his lifetime and after his death. The Muslim philosophers, led by Ibn Rushd (Averroes; d. 595/1198) in his *Incoherence of the Incoherence* (*Tahâfut al-tahâfut*), sharply criticized Ghazzâlî for his attacks on philosophy and attempted to point out the many inconsistencies in his writing. The more conservative Muslim traditionists or literalists, notably Ibn al-Jawzî (d. 597/1200), accused Ghazzâlî of fabricating ḥadîth and concealing his actual esoteric beliefs behind a façade of piety; a few even called for his writings to be burned. Others, such as the very influential Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), did not necessarily attack Ghazzâlî directly but undermined some aspects of his work by denouncing various Sufi practices (which Ghazzâlî tended to tolerate) as dangerous innovations which the Muslim community should reject. But by far the overwhelming consensus among Muslims has been that Ghazzâlî was truly a "proof of Islam." As Tâj al-Dîn al-Subkî (d. 771/1370), a renowned Muslim jurist himself, put it, Ghazzâlî's "achievements and his fame have covered the earth and he who really knows his teaching knows that it goes beyond his fame... He taught at a time when people had more need of the truth than darkness has of the light of the heavens and the

²⁸ This will be apparent in his discussion of the "Throne" and "Chair" of God and the "Tablet of Destiny" in the *Alchemy of Happiness* itself, below, p. 18.

barren land of the fruitful rain... If there had been a prophet after Muḥammad, it surely would have been al-Ghazzâlî."²⁹

Ghazzâlî's influence also extended well beyond the Arabo-Persian Islamic world. Parts of his work have since been translated into Turkish, Urdu, Pushto, Bengali, Malay, Hebrew, Latin, English, French, Italian, Spanish, German, and Russian, thus reaching a vastly larger Muslim and non-Muslim audience. Not only can his influence be traced in the thought of numerous Muslim mystics and pietists, it can be found in the works of Jewish philosophers and mystics such as Maimonides, Alemanus, or Ibn Habib; among Eastern Christians like the Jacobite Bar Hebraeus; and in the writings of Europeans as diverse as Aquinas, Dante, and Pascal.³⁰

The Alchemy of Happiness

There has been much confusion about the text in Persian by Ghazzâlî known as *The Alchemy of Happiness* (*Kimîa-yi sa'âdat*) and its relation to his magnum opus, *The Revivification of the Religious Sciences* (*Ihyâ' 'ulûm al-dîn*).³¹ The confusion has not been helped by the fact that there is a treatise in Arabic with the same title.³² The *Revivification*, written in

²⁹ In Subkî's *Ṭabaqât al-Shâfi'iyya al-kubrâ* 4:101-2; cited in Smith, *Ghazzâlî*, p. 215.

³⁰ On Ghazzâlî's influence outside the Muslim world, especially through his concepts of Muḥammad's ascension to the seven heavens and the beatific vision, see Smith, *Ghazzâlî*, pp. 198-226; also the more technical articles by S. de Beaurecueil, "Gazzâlî et S. Thomas d'Aquin," *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 46(1947):199-238; M. Alonso, "Influencia de Algazel en el mundo latino," *Al-Andalus* 23(1958):371-80.

³¹ See Bouyges, *Essai de Chronologie*, pp. 59-60 for discussion of the various views.

³² See Bouyges, *Essai de Chronologie*, pp. 136-137. The Arabic treatise has been edited by Muḥammad 'Abd al-'Alîm (Cairo, n. d.); it is actually an Arabic translation of part of the opening of the *Alchemy*.

Arabic, has naturally been Ghazzâlî's best known work in the Arab world and among Western scholars of Islam. The *Alchemy* has generally been the work most familiar to Persian speaking audiences in Iran and the Indian subcontinent. Since relatively few scholars were familiar with both texts, and the Persian text lacked a critical edition, it was variously maintained that the *Alchemy* was nothing more than a translation, or an abridged translation, of the *Revivification* or that it was an altogether different work. Now that the full Persian text has been published,³³ it is possible to clarify this issue.

In the introduction to the Persian text, Ghazzâlî explicitly states that he wrote the *Alchemy* as an epitome of the Arabic *Revivification* and some of his other writings, simplified and written in Persian in order to reach a broader, popular audience.³⁴ The *Revivification* and the *Alchemy* are thus very similar to each other, almost close enough to call the *Alchemy* a translation of the *Revivification*. Both are organized according to the same plan. They are divided into four major sections, each of which is subdivided into ten chapters. They deal, in sequence, with acts of worship, acts pertaining to everyday life, acts that lead to perdition, and acts that lead to salvation. With only a few exceptions, the arrangement of the forty chapters of the *Revivification* is identical to that of those of the *Alchemy*. (For a comparison of the *Revivification* and the *Alchemy*, see pages xxxix-xli.)

There are, however, some significant differences between the two works. While the preface to the *Revivification* simply outlines the proposed structure of the book and hammers

home the point that it is intended as a guide to action rather than contemplation, the introduction to the *Alchemy* is much longer and more involved. It comprises four chapters, none of which are found in the *Revivification*, dealing with the theme of knowledge: knowledge of self, knowledge of God, knowledge of this world as it really is, and knowledge of the hereafter. Taken together, they offer an overview of Ghazzâlî's philosophy as a whole.

The specific contents of the individual chapters of the *Revivification* and the *Alchemy* are also somewhat different. The *Revivification*, for example, tends to make more extensive use of quotations from the Koran and citations of ḥadīth, while the *Alchemy* is somewhat more likely to use anecdotes from the lives of famous Sufis. The *Revivification* also tends to dwell at greater length on the external, legalistic aspects of religious practices while the *Alchemy* is somewhat freer in elaborating on their "inner" spiritual aspects.

Both the *Alchemy* and the *Revivification* have been attributed to the middle period of Ghazzâlî's literary career during his retreat from public life (from 488/1095 to 499/1105). The *Alchemy*, however, mentions several of Ghazzâlî's writings in addition to the *Revivification*, including the *Jawâhir al-qur'ân* (*Jewels of the Koran*), the *Ma'ânî asmâ' allâh al-ḥusnâ* (*Explication of the Names of God*), the *Bidâyat al-hidâya* (*Commencement of Guidance*), and the *Mishkât al-anwâr* (*Niche for Lights*). Since the *Mishkât* is a very late work by Ghazzâlî,³⁵ it would appear that the *Alchemy* should be dated to the final years of Ghazzâlî's life. It is thus particularly appropriate for a translation intended to acquaint a general

³³ A good recent edition is that by Ḥusayn Khadîv-jam (Tehran, 1361/1983).

³⁴ In the Khadîv-jam edition, 1:9, he explains that ordinary people (*'avâmm-i khalq*) had requested a version of his ideas written in Persian in a way that would not exceed their comprehension.

³⁵ See Bouyges, *Essai de Chronologie*, pp. 65-66; W. Gairdner, "Al-Ghazâlî's *Mishkât al-Anwâr* and the Ghazâlî-Problem," *Der Islam* 5(1914):133. The *Alchemy* text cites the complete form of the title of this work as found in the older Arabic manuscripts: *Mishkât al-anwâr wa misfât al-asrâr*.

modern audience with the ideas of this great Muslim intellectual, as it represents one of his last works, as well as a summation of his thought and an attempt to reach the broadest possible readership.

This collection of excerpts from the *Alchemy* is based on an English translation made by Claud Field in 1910. Just as an earlier translation of this work had been made from a Turkish text,³⁶ Field worked, unfortunately, from an uncritical Urdu version of the text rather than the original Persian. Despite this, Field's translation has two great merits: It renders the text in very felicitous, although pleasantly archaic, English prose, and it translates the whole of the four introductory chapters of the *Alchemy*, thus making available that section of the *Alchemy* which has no parallel in the *Revivification*.

For this revision of Field's translation, I have compared his text to the appropriate sections of the recently published Persian edition. In contrast to the Persian text, Field's translation is considerably condensed in parts as it omits various redundant phrases, traditions, and anecdotes cited in the Persian text. Generally speaking, the opening and closing parts of each chapter are very close to the Persian text, but the middle sections tend to be abbreviated, sometimes to as little as a third of their original size. All in all, however, Field's translation is faithful to the Persian original and certainly does no violence to the essence of Ghazzâlî's message.

I have therefore limited myself to making only minor changes to the Field translation. I have corrected its typographical errors and changed the spelling of names and terms to conform with an acceptable modern system for the transliteration of the Arabic script. I have also reorganized the sequence of some of the chapters and altered the division of a

³⁶ H. A. Homes, *The Alchemy of Happiness by M. al-Ghazzali the Mohammedan Philosopher* (Albany, 1873).

number of paragraphs to make them conform to that in the Persian edition of the *Alchemy*. Finally, Field's annotations to the text were both few and inadequate; I have therefore omitted them and substituted my own footnotes to identify the people and quotations mentioned in the text, to clarify any points which might prove puzzling to readers unfamiliar with Ghazzâlî and Islamic thought, and to note any major discrepancies between the translation and the published text.

In conclusion, I must make some apology for presuming to offer what is, after all, no more than a revision of an English translation of an Urdu abridgment of a Persian recension of a book first written in Arabic almost a thousand years ago. To my mind, there could hardly be better testimony to Ghazzâlî's universal appeal than this polyglot transmission of his writing. If, as I hope, the clarity and brilliance of his thought can survive so many layers of obfuscation to reach the modern reader, it is yet another testimony to the magnitude of his genius.

Elton L. Daniel



The Hârfniyya Mausoleum. Popularly regarded as the tomb of Hârfn al-Rashîd, this thirteenth century building is most likely a mausoleum built in honor of al-Ghazzâlî. It is located on the outskirts of Mashhad, Iran, near the ruins of medieval Tus. (Photograph by E. L. Daniel)

A Comparison of Chapters in the *Revivification* and the *Alchemy*

Revivification of the Religious Sciences
(Cairo Edition)

Preface

Part I: Acts of Worship

1. Religious Science [1:4]
2. The Articles of Faith [1:73]
3. The Mysteries of Ritual Purity [1:102]
4. The Mysteries of Ritual Prayer [1:117]
5. The Mysteries of Required Charity [1:163]
6. The Mysteries of Fasting [1:181]
7. The Mysteries of the Pilgrimage [1:187]

The Alchemy of Happiness
(Khadîv-jam Edition)

Preface

Introduction:

1. On Knowledge of Self [1:13]
2. On Knowledge of God [1:47]
3. On Knowledge of this World [1:71]
4. On Knowledge of the Hereafter [1:81]

Part I: Acts of Worship

1. On Acquiring the Creed of the Sunnis [1:123]
2. On Religious Science [1:131]
3. On Ritual Purity [1:139]
4. On Ritual Prayer [1:159]
5. On Required Charity [1:185]
6. On Fasting [1:207]
7. On Pilgrimage [1:218]

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| 8. The Proper Recitation of the Koran [1:211] | 8. On Reciting the Koran [1:242] |
| 9. Invocations and Petitions of God [1:228] | 9. On Saying the Name of God [1:252] |
| 10. The Regulation of Private Night Prayers [1:249] | 10. On the Regulation of Private Night Prayers [1:268] |

Part II: Acts of Everyday Life

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| 1. The Etiquette of the Table [2:3] | 1. The Formalities of the Table [1:283] |
| 2. On Marriage [2:15] | 2. The Formalities of Marriage [1:301] |
| 3. The Acquisition of Goods and Earning a Living [2:42] | 3. On Earning a Living and Commerce [1:324] |
| 4. On the Legal and the Illicit [2:63] | 4. The Legal and the Illicit [1:366] |
| 5. The Duties of Friendship and Brotherhood [2:118] | 5. On the Duties of Fellowship and Brotherhood [1:390] |
| 6. On the Proper Way of Living in Retreat [2:162] | 6. On the Formalities of Living in Retreat [1:434] |
| 7. On the Etiquette of Travelling [2:181] | 7. The Formalities of Travelling [1:456] |
| 8. The Formalities of Listening to Music and Ecstatic Experience [2:199] | 8. The Formalities of Listening to Music and Ecstatic Experience [1:473] |
| 9. The Duty to Encourage the Good and Forbid the Evil [2:230] | 9. Ordering the Good and Forbidding the Evil [1:499] |
| 10. Customs and Conduct of the Prophet [2:271] | 10. On Governing and Being Governed [1:525] |

Part III: Acts that Lead to Perdition

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| 1. Exposition of the Mysteries of the Heart [3:1] | 1. On Finding Spiritual Self-Discipline [2:3] |
| 2. On Spiritual Self-Discipline [3:39] | 2. On Healing the Desires of the Table and the Flesh [2:37] |
| 3. On Defeating the Passions of the Table and the Flesh [3:64] | 3. On Healing Improperities of Speech [2:63] |
| 4. On Improperities of Speech [3:85] | 4. On Healing the Diseases of Anger, Hatred and Jealousy [2:107] |
| 5. The Shame of Anger, Hatred, and Jealousy [3:123] | 5. On Healing Worldliness [2:133] |

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| 6. The Shame of Worldliness [3:151] | 6. On Healing the Love of Money and the Plague of Avarice [2:149] |
| 7. The Shame of Avarice and the Love of Wealth [3:184] | 7. On Healing the Love of Status and Pomp [2:189] |
| 8. The Shame of Love of Status and Hypocrisy [3:206] | 8. On Healing Dissimulation and Religious Hypocrisy [2:207] |
| 9. On the Shame of Pride and Vanity [3:255] | 9. On Healing Pride and Vanity [2:247] |
| 10. On the Shame of Deception [3:288] | 10. On Healing Deception and Illusion [2:285] |

Part IV: Acts that Assure Salvation

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| 1. On Repentance [4:2] | 1. On Repentance [2:317] |
| 2. On Patience and Gratitude [4:48] | 2. On Patience and Gratitude [2:243] |
| 3. On Fear and Hope [4:112] | 3. On Fear and Hope [2:385] |
| 4. On Poverty and Asceticism [4:148] | 4. On Poverty and Asceticism [2:419] |
| 5. On the Unity of God and Entrusting Oneself to Him [4:187] | 5. On Truthfulness and Sincerity [2:453] |
| 6. On Love and Desire [for God] [4:227] | 6. On Introspection and Recollection [of God] [2:483] |
| 7. On Intention, Sincerity, and Truthfulness [4:282] | 7. On Meditation and Penitence [2:503] |
| 8. On the Recollection [of God] and Introspection [4:306] | 8. On Entrusting Oneself to God and His Unity [2:525] |
| 9. On Meditation [4:331] | 9. On Love and Desire [for God] [2:567] |
| 10. On Death and the Hereafter [4:352] | 10. On Death and the Hereafter [2:613] |