

SENSE — MIND RELATIONSHIP IN GHAZALI'S EPISTEMOLOGY

(Part I)

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To write on a specific topic selected from the vast treasure of an encyclopedic scholar is not an easy task. All the more if the subject-matter is scattered in various parts of his works, each discussed and elaborated within a different context, though not essentially disconnected from the rest. These are a few challenges facing the author of this essay in the course of his survey on al-Ghazali's treatment of epistemology. More over, we must explain at the outset that we do not intend to make an exhaustive treatment of Al-Ghazali's views about epistemology. Through clarifying his ideas on the perennial epistemic question of sense-mind relationship our primary object is to pave the way for a conducive systematization and reformulation of al-Ghazali's broader system of knowledge which is in fact distributed here and there in his various treatises and writings.

Here are some notes concerning the methods used in presenting his findings and researches;

1. His method is mainly descriptive. Therefore in many parts of this article, quotations from al-Ghazali's original expressions are provided so as to enable the readers to see their concordance with the author's inference and conclusion. However, due to various limitations, only some of al-Ghazali's works are consulted for the purpose of this study.
2. This paper mainly tries to discuss certain aspects of his epistemology by taking a point of reference with which his expositions in other works are compared, and more importantly, to which more will be added and accordingly

which will be modified and synthesized. The fundamental structure of our presentation would, however, be based on Ghazali's expositions of the question as given in his *Mi' yar al-' Ilm*.³¹⁷

3. Having decided that *Mi' yar* will be our point of reference, we have translated some portions of the original Arabic text that have a direct bearing on the subject namely, the sense-mind relationship. Altogether, we have identified four relevant parts in which al-Ghazali's exposition of the topic is apparent. All these parts will be included in Section A of this article. Accordingly, other explanations as given in the rest of his writings will be used so as to provide the background information, under pinning and the commentary, all of which further explain some relevant parts of the translated quotation. Such an analysis constitutes the content of Section B of this article.

4. Dealing with such an epistemological analysis it was also inevitable to delve, from time to time, into other related areas of discussion, mainly ontology, or to be more specific, the levels or degrees of existence, and psychology. But this necessary divergence and intersection is mainly due to the fact that, in a system, a rigid partial analysis amounts to a mere reduction and distortion of the over all picture. Moreover, it is rather difficult even to choose the proper subject into which this sense-mind relationship could be included; it can be psychological from one angle or epistemological if viewed from another perspective or even ontological in some respects:

Section A: THE SENSE-MIND RELATIONSHIP IN HIS *MI'YAR*³¹⁸

³¹⁷ So far, no serious attempt has been made at translating this important book of al-Ghazali into English except for a very limited part of it by M.E. Marmura; see his "Ghazali on Ethical Premises and "Premises That are Not Certain and Unusable in Demonstrations" in *The Philosophical Forum*, Boston: Boston University, 1969, Vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 393-403

Quotation 1:

In pages 33 upto 43 of Mi'yar al-Ilm, al-Ghazali states that.

It is possible that you O the one who is deceived by his own possession of the intellectual sciences (al-'ulum al-dhihniyyah) and who blindly succumbed to that which is forwarded to him by intellectual demonstration (al-barahin al-' aqliyyah) might say, 'What is the purpose of this [tendency of] greatly honoring and respecting [the art of logic] and what is really the need of those who possess the intellect of this yardstick (mi' ar) and balance (mizan) for the intellect is the just balance (al-qistas al-mustaqim) and the established yardstick (al-mi'yar al-qawim). Therefore, the possessor of it does not need _ after its perfection _ any kind of guidance (tasdid) and strengthening (taqwim). [The answer] Thus, [you must] act deliberately and proceed in caution in [your] belittling of that which is among the dangers (ghawa'il) of the intellectual ways (al-turuq al-aqliyyah), and-be further convinced and certain _ before anything else _ that there exist in you the sensory judge (hakiman hissiyyan), the imaginative_ estimative judge (hakiman Wahmiyyan), and the intellectual judge. The soul in the beginning of its natural development depends greatly on the sensory and imaginative_ estimative judges. Because these two [judges] preceded [the intellect] in presenting themselves to the soul in that early [stage of the] natural development of the soul and disclose it to the fact that they rule over it. [i.e. the soul]. For this reason it is familiar and is pleased with those two judges before the intellectual judge overtakes it in which case its [i.e. the soul's] weaning from its familiarity and its bond to that which is as if an outsider to its nature becomes stronger. Therefore, it will not stop to contradict the

³¹⁸ Mi'yar al-Ilm fi Fann al-Mantiq, Bey rut: Dar al-Audalus, 1964. Henceforth identified as MIFM. For the purpose of the present study, several portions, of this text are translated and each will then be denoted by the bold letter Q together with its number. Words in parentheses "[]" are added by the translator, whereas those in parentheses "()" are the transliterated Arabic words used in the original edition of the text.

judge of the intellect and to falsify it and to agree with the judge of the senses and imagination_ estimation and to affirm their truthfulness in accordance with the trick which we will explain later in this book.

And if you want to know the truthfulness of our claim concerning the deception of these two judges and their unsoundness, [you have to] pay attention to the sensory judge [as to] how it judges the sun whenever you observe it that it is [a tiny thing] in the width of the galaxy; and the stars, that they are scattered diamonds on a dark blue carpet; and the shadow reflected on the earth of the vertically standing individuals, that it is stationary and the shape of the child in the very early stage of his development [i.e. his childhood], that he is also stagnant. [See also] who the intellect knows the demonstrations (barahim) which the senses are not capable of disputing, that the round shape of the sun is-several times bigger than the earthly globe, and likewise, those stars [that they are much bigger than this earth], and how could we be guided to understand that the shadow which we saw as if it is stationary, is [in reality] in a constant motion, and that the height of the child in the period of his early childhood is also not stagnant, on the contrary, it grows continuously and progresses additively in a hidden step-by-step growth which is not perceptible to the senses but which the mind witnesses [such a progress].

And the errors of the senses of this kind are numerous and you cannot hope to thoroughly examine [all of] them. Therefore be content with this simple example from among the stories [of its weaknesses] so that you can bring it to its own temptations. As for the imaginative-estimative judge, do not forget about its denying an existent which has no indication of its dimension; and its disputing that which does not resemble the earthly bodies in both decomposition and composition, and which is neither qualified as being inside nor outside the universe. And if it were not due to the

protection of the intellect from the evil of the imagination in this kind of misguidance, [it will surely be] that the disruptive beliefs concerning the Creator of the earth and the heaven will be firmly fixed in the soul of the scholars [of religion] as they are firmly fixed in the heart of the masses and the ignorant. And we do not need such an extensive discussion so as to depict its deception and mere imagination-estimation. For it also deceives concerning that which is very intimate to the sense-perception (al-mahsusat) that we have mentioned before. Because if you were to demonstrate to it a single body in which there are motion, taste, color and smell, and that you suggest that it affirms the existence of such qualities in a single substratum by way of [their] gathering [together] ('ala sabil al-ijtima), it will [Surely] be reluctant to accept it and will also imagine that some of those qualities will be the opposite of the other and [at the same time] adjacent to it. It will be capable of sticking each of that with the others as in the case of a thin veil being appended to another veil, but it will never be able by its nature to grasp such varieties except by supposing the variation of space. Because the imagination-estimation whenever it takes [something] from the senses-and the sense in its utmost performance [only] perceives variation and difference as the space and time differ - and whenever these two factors are taken out of the consideration, then it will be difficult for it to affirm quantities which are different in quality and in essence being a condition [or a state] in that which is in a same realm [or pace] (al-tasdiq bi a'dad mutaghayirah bi al-sifah wa al-haqiqah halah fi ma huwa fi haya wahid). And this particular case together with the other similar errors of the imagination-estimation goes beyond the scope of enumeration and specification. And Allah the Most High is worthy of praise for whatever that has endowed to the intellect [in avoiding] from the error, and the One Who saves from the darkness of ignorance, and Who saves with the light of demonstration from the darkness and satanic temptation.

If you need additional unveiling with regard to the precaution concerning the betrayal of these two judges, Beware and induce from whatever that has been mentioned in the Law (Shari) regarding [God's] attributing these [particular] distortions to the Satans and naming them as temptations (waswas) and assigning them to it [the Satan], and [His] naming the light of the intellect as guidance and light, and linking it to Allah the Most High and also to His Angels in His verse: 'Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth.' Since the locus (mazinnah) of these estimation and the imagination (al-wahm wa al-khayal) is the brain and both are the two sources of temptation. Abu Bakr May God's Blessing be upon him says to the one who carries out the punishment upon the perpetrator: 'Strike on the head for the Satan is in the head', The imaginative and estimative temptations (al-wisaw is al-khayaliyyah wa al-wahmiyyah) are closely attached to the faculty of thinking (al-quwwah al-mufakkirah) to such an extent that only few [people] are capable of really escaping from it so much so that that situation resembles the mixture of blood with our flesh and organs. The Prophet peace be upon him-says, 'Indeed the Satan moves in the body of the descendant of Adam as the movement of the blood'. And if you reflect with the eye of the intellect concerning these secret about which we have already informed you, then you will certainly know that you really need to think well about ways by which you can be saved from the error of these two judges.

And if you said, 'What is to be done concerning with whatever that you have described. Then, think about the delicateness (lutf) of the intellectual maneuvers (hiyal) in that case as the intellect leads gradually the senses (al-hiss) and the imagination-estimation (al-wahm) to those matters regarding which both the senses and the imagination-estimation help it to perceive from among the phenomena observed which are in agreement with the imagined-estimated (al-mawhum) and the intelligible (al-ma' qul). It then takes from them [i.e. those

matters] premisses (muqaddamat), regarding which the imagination helps the intellect. Therewith, the intellect arranges them in such a manner that the imagination will not challenge it, and concludes from them by necessity a conclusion which the imagination-estimation (al-wahm) is not able to deny. For the conclusion is derived from matters with which both the imagination-estimation and the intellect do not dispute in judging. Those matters are the knowledge in which the people do not dispute such as the necessary propositions (al-daruriyyat) and the sense-perceptions (al-hissiyat). The intellect yields them from the senses and the imagination-estimation and it receives this knowledge from both of them. Therefore, both the senses and the imagination-estimation affirm that the necessary conclusion of these matters is real truth (sadiqah haqaiyyah). The intellect then transmits those very matters in their offer to that which the imagination-estimation disputed, and derives from them [further] conclusions.

And whenever the imagination-estimation denies it [i.e. the conclusion] and is reluctant to accept it, then it becomes easy for the intellect to sustain it. Because the premises which the intellect holds, the imagination-estimation testifies their truth according to the order that the imagination-estimation arranges so as to produce the conclusion as if the imagination-estimation has [already] accepted the necessity of the conclusion of the 'premises. Thus, it becomes clear to the observer that the refusal of the imagination-estimation from accepting the conclusion after testifying the truthfulness of the premises, and after affirming the validity of the order that is effective [of producing the conclusion] is due to the falling short of its nature in grasping this conclusion, and not because of the conclusion being wrong, since the order of the premises are transmitted from such a location that helps the imagination-estimation to testify them. Thus, our purpose in this book is to take from the natural sense-perceptions and the natural primary-necessary premises (al-mahsusat wa'l-

daruriyyat al-jabaliyyah) a standard for the study so much so that if we transmit it to the obscurity we will not be in doubt concerning the truthfulness of whatever that is necessarily derivable from them. It might be that you will now say, 'And if whatever that you have been mentioning for the study has been perfected, then why do they disagree concerning the intelligible (ma' qulat), and why not they agree upon them [the intelligible] as they agree upon the geometrical and arithmetical theories in which the imagination-estimation helps the intellect?' And the answer for you can be from two angles:

One of these, [is that] whatever that we have mentioned is only a part of the dangerous points [or causes] of the errors and not all of them. And beyond this in the study concerning the intellectual sciences (al-' aqliyyat) there are many dangerous obstacles which become strong in those who possess reason - the one who surpasses them [i.e. the obstacles] will be saved. And when you have become acquainted with the whole conditions of demonstration (shurut al-burhan) which are effective in producing certainty (al-yaqin), you will not regard as unlikely [the possibility of] the incapability of the faculty of majority of human beings in perceiving the essences of the hidden intelligibles (haqa'iq al-ma' qulat al-khafiyyah).

Second, the imaginative-estimative propositions (al-qadaya al-wahmiyyah) whenever they are divided into that which are true and into that which are false, [it is the fact that] the false one has a strong resemblance with the true one. It will then appear in them such propositions concerning which it becomes difficult for the soul to distinguish from the false, and he has no power over them except he who is helped by Allah with His Guidance and he whom Allah has honored with following the method of the truth by means of His Way. And the intellectual sciences (al-' aqliyyat) are [further] divided into that which are easily perceived by the majority of

people and into that which is hardly perceived by the mind of the majority except by the extraordinary one i.e. the friends of Allah (Awliya' Allah) - the Most High - who are helped by means of the light of the Truth and whom the passage of time does not permit the existence of a group of them, let alone the great number of the people.

And [you must] know that the purport of this book is to teach the method of moving from the form [or image] produced in your mind to those matters which are abstruse for you. This movement has conditions and order. Whenever they are satisfied, they will lead [you] to the object of search, [but] if not, you will fall short of the object of search. And the one of its true conditions and order has a strong resemblance with that which is not true. Therefore the content of this science [i.e. logic] in general is this [i.e. the movement and its conditions]. As for its content in detail, it is that the object of search is the knowledge, and the knowledge is classified into the knowledge of the essences of the things (al-' ilm bi dhawat al-ashya') ... and this knowledge is known as concepts (tasawwar); and into the knowledge of the relation of some of these conceptualized essences with the other some whether by means of negation or by way of affirmation (salb or ijab) ... and this is named assent (tasdiq) because affirmation (at-tasdiq) and falsification (takdhib) are attached to it.³¹⁹

Quotation 2:

In pages 50 up to 52, that is to say, the section discussing the rank (or position) of terms in the hierarchical degrees of existence (rutbat al-alfaz min maratib al-wujud), al Ghazali says,

[And] Know that the degrees under discussion are four, and the term (al-lafz) is [only] in the third level. Because for everything, there is an existence [of it] in the external world

³¹⁹ Hereinafter cited as Q1.

(al-a'yan), then in the mind (aladhhan), and then in the terms (al-alfaz), then in the writing (al-kitabah). The writing points to (dallah 'ala) the term; the term [likewise] points to the meaning (al-ma' na) which is in the soul (an-nafs); and that which is in the soul is the resemblance (mithal) of the existent in the external world (al-mawjud fi al-a'yan). And [whenever] there is no fixation (thubut) of a thing in itself [namely, its external existence], then, its resemblance (mithaluhu) will not be formed in the soul. And whenever its resemblance is formed in the soul then it [i.e. that resemblance] is the knowledge concerning it [i.e. the thing or object]. For there is no meaning for knowledge except as a resemblance produced in the mind in accordance with that which it [that is to say, the resemblance or image or impression] is the replica of it [i.e. the thing] in the senses and this [object] is the known (wa mahma irtasama fi'l-nafs mithaluhu fa fhuwa al-' ilm bihi idh la ma' na ilm illa mithal yahsulu fi'l-nafs mutabiq li ma huwa mithal lahu fi'l-hiss wa huwa al ma'lum). And when this image (al-athr) is not clear in the soul, then a term by means of which that image is pointed to cannot be composed. And when the term in which the sounds and alphabet are ordered is not composed, then the writing for pointing to it [i.e. the term] cannot be formed. And the existence [at the level] of external world and in the mind does not vary from one country to another, and from a nation to the other although the terms and the writings do differ as both [of the latter] point to the place [or custom] and the terminology (dallatan di'l-wad' wa al-istilah).

At this pint, we say, 'Whoever thinks that the singular term (al-ism.al-mufrad) does not necessitate the complete absorption (al-istighraq),³²⁰ he [that person] thinks that that simple term is a subject in opposite to the existent in the

³²⁰ Here, al-Ghazali is referring to the dispute which is discussed in the section just preceding the present quotation.-

external world.³²¹ since [for him] this external world (al-a' yan) consists of specific individuals (ashkhas mu' ayyanah) and the existent dinar is a specific individual, so when all the individuals are gathered, they are called Danair [the plural of dinar], [In fact] he does not know that from the physical individual dinar (al-dinar al-shakhsi al-mu' ayyan) is formed in the soul an image which is its [the dinar] resemblance, and which is the knowledge of it (al-' ilm bihi), and which is also a concept of it (tasawwur lahu). And this image conforms with that individual [dinar] and the rest of [actual] existent individual dinars and possible existent individual dinars. Therefore, the affirmed [or fixed] form (al-surah al-thabitah) in the soul form the point of its concordance with every dinar presumes universal (kulliyah) and not individual (shakhsiyah) form. And if you believe that the name 'dinar' points to the impression (al-athr) in the soul and not to the impressior (al-mu'thir) and that that impression is universal, then [it necessarily follows that] the name [i.e. the singular term] is universal without doubt. And whatever of the order (tartib) that we have put forward [it will] inform you that the terms point to that which is in the soul, and that which is in the soul is a resemblance of that which in the external world (anna al-alfaz laha dalalat ala ma fi'l-mufus wa mafi'l mufus mithal li ma fi'l a' yan)...³²²

Quotation 3:

Moreover, in page 63 up to 66, which is the section on the existing terminologies of meanings (mufradat al-ma'ani al-mawjudah) and the relation of some of them to the others, especially in the first subsection, concerning the relation of the existent things to our mental faculties [or intellectual discernment] (nisbat al-mawjudat ila mudrakina), al-Ghazali asserts that,

³²¹ What is meant by al-Ghazali here is that each singular term is in a one-to-one correspondence with a physical thing.

³²² Hereinafter cited as Q2.

If we were to concentrate on analyzing the existents and their realities (al-nawjudat wa haqa'iqiha) [we will find that] they are divided into the sensed one (mahsusah) and that which is known through inference [or reasoning or proofs] (ma' lumah bi'l-istidlal) whose essence is not immediately perceived by any of the senses. And the sense-perceptions (mahsusat) are the perceptions by means of the five senses (al-hawass al-khams) such as colours, and it follows from that the knowledge of the shapes and measures and all these are [perceived] through the sense of sight; sounds by means of hearing; tastes through the sense of tasting; odour by the sense of smelling; and also that of roughness and smoothness, and softness and hardness, and coldness and hotness, and wetness and dryness by means of the sense of touching. All of these matters and their adjuncts attend to the sense. In other words, the faculty of perception of the senses becomes essentially in contact with them (tata' allaq biha al-quwwah al-mudrikah mina'l-hawass fi dhariha). From among them is that [thing] whose existence is known and is proven through its impression (athar) and which is neither perceived nor acquired by the five senses, namely the hearing, the sight, the smelling, the taste and the touch. Its example is those senses themselves for the meaning of any one of them is the faculty of perception and that this perceptive faculty is neither sensed by means of the sensing of the senses nor perceived by the imaginative faculty (al-khayal).

Similarly, the capacity (al-qudrah) and the knowledge (al-' ilm) and the will (al-iradah) and even fright, embarrassment, love and anger; we certainly know all of these qualities from something other than [or different from] us by means of a kind of inference and not through the contact of any of our senses with them. And whoever writes in front of us, we know certainly his capability, his knowledge of a kind of writing, and his will by inferring from his action, and our certainty concerning the existence of such meanings [or ideas] (al-ma'ani) is as our certainty of the perceived movements of

his hand and the ordering of the darkness of the letters on the white [paper] regardless of the fact that these [movements] are observable whereas those meanings are not observable. In fact, many of the existents are known through inference of them by way of their impacts [or impressions] (athar) and are not sensed. Therefore, it is unnecessary that the senses become [so] great to you; that you believe the certain knowledge (al-' ilm al-muhaqqaq) to be the sense-data an the imagination (al-ihsas wa'l takhayyul); and that which is not imaginable (layatakhayyal) is not real (la haqiqah lahu). Because of you were to ask yourself to search for the essence (dhat) of capability and knowledge you will find that the imagination disposes freely over it by virtue of forming, coloring and measuring; and that you [surely] know that the disposal of the imagination is wrong for the essence (haqiqah) of capability, which is proven by means of the action, is a matter free from [any] form, valor, space and measure. Therefore, it is not necessary that you reject the proof of the intellect concerning those matters which are denied by the imagination.

And we will make clear to you, now, the cause of this confusion; [You must] Contemplate that the human's first perceptive faculty in the beginning of his natural development is his senses and they overwhelm him. The dominant one of all of them is the sight which perceives the colors by first intention, and the forms by way of consequence [or entailment] (yadruk al-alwan bi'l-qasd al-awwal wa'l-ashkal 'ala sabil al-istitba'). Therewith, the imagination disposes over the sense-perception (al-mahsusat) and many of its disposal is over the observation (al-mubsirat), and it composes form the sights different froms whose units are the [single or individual] sight. [In fact] the composition is among its function. For' you are able to imagine (tatakhayyal) a horse which has a human head and a bird which has a horse head, but it is definitely impossible for you to imagine units other than whatever that you have observed so much so that if you

wish to imagine a fruit that you have never had a sight of it, you will not be able to do so. For your intention is to take something from whatever that you have seen and then you alter its colour, such as, for an example, a black apple because you had seen the form of the apple and [the colour] black, you combine both of them, or such as a big fruit, for instance, a water melon. You will not cease to compose from the units of those that you saw because the imagination follows the sights but it is capable only of composing (al-tarkib) and discomposing (al-tafsil). The imagination will keep in combining and separating, mastering over you through that. Whenever the information (ma'lum) through inference (bi al-istidlal) appears to you, the imagination is caused to fix its glance on the information, seeking its essence (haqiqah) employing a standard which, according to the imagination, is the essence of things (haqiqat al-ashya') [Indeed] there is no essence on its behalf but colour or [physical] form. Therefore, it seeks the form and the colour, and they are those which are perceived by the eye from among the existents so much so that if you were to contemplate on the essence (dhat) of odour with an imaginative contemplation, the imagination [for sure] will require for the odour a form, a color, a place and a measurement deceiving in its and in accordance with the requirement of its natural disposition.

And it is rather surprising that if you contemplate on a colorful shape, the imagination will not require from it its taste, and its smell and both of them are the property of the smell and the taste, whereas, if you contemplate on the essence of the taste and the smell, the imagination will ask for the property of the sight and it is the color and the shape. Although the imagination acts freely in the whole perceptions of the five senses since its intimacy with the perceptions of the sight is the strongest and the most dominant it becomes the case that its search for the property of the sight is the most dominant and prevalent. And if you were to subject

your knowledge concerning the Creator of the universe that He exists without qualification of dimension under the critical examination of yourself, the imagination will require for Him a color, and attribute to Him measure [such as] nearness and fairness; attachment with and separation from the universe; and any other quality from the colorful shapes which the imagination saw. It will not require for Him taste and smell. And there is no difference between the taste, and the smell, and the color and the shape, for all of them are the perceptions of the senses. And if you know the classification of the existent things into the sense-perceptions (mahsusat) and into that which is known through intellect and is not perceivable to the senses and the imagination, therefore turn away immediately from the imagination and depend on the requirement of the intellect concerning it, for it has become clear to you the classification of the existent into sense-perception (mahsus) and other than that.³²³

Quotation 4:

In another part of his Mi' yar, that is to say, in the "Book of the Syllogism; the Second View", pages 138 up to 139, concerning the matter of the syllogism (Maddat al-Qiyas), he states,

We have mentioned [previously] that every composition is composed of [o. consists of] two elements [or things]: One of them is its matter such as the relation of the wood to the bed. The second [one] is its form as the relation of the form [or structure] of the bed to the bed.

We have also satisfactorily discussed the form of the syllogism and its compositions, and the aspects of its composition. And [now] we are going to discuss its matter, and its matter is the knowledge [or sciences] (al-ulum), but not every knowledge, on the contrary, only the affirmative-

³²³ Hereinafter cited as Q3.

relational knowledge (al-'ilm al-tasdiqi) exclusive of the conceptual knowledge (al-'ilm al-tasawwuri). For this latter knowledge is the matter of the definition (maddat al-hadd). The affirmative-relational knowledge is the knowledge concerning the relation of the essences of the realities (dhawat al-haqai'iq) some of them to the other some [whether] in terms of affirmation (hi al-ijab) or negation (al-salb); and not [even] every relational affirmation, but only the essentially true relational affirmation (al-tasdiqi al-sadiq fi nafsihi); and not even all truth but only the certain truth (al-sadiq al-yaqini). For it is possible that a matter [or thing] in itself is true according to God but it is not certain in the eye of the observer. Therefore, it is not allowable that that matter be, for him, the matter of the syllogism by which he seeks conclusive certainty (istintaj al-yaqin); and not even every certainty but only universal certainty (al-yaqini al-kulli), [and what] I mean [by this] is that it is so in every situation. Whenever we said that the matters of the syllogism are the premisses, from one aspect, this [statement or claim] is so [only] metaphorically (majazan). For the premiss is an expression of the speech (nutq) through the medium of the tongue [(bi'l-lisan): that is to say, the verbal speech] which covers [both] a predicate (mahmul) and a subject (mawdu'); and the matter of the syllogism is the knowledge (al-'ilm) to which the terms that constitute 'the subject' and the predicate' (lafz al-mawdu' wa'l-mahmul) point, and not to the terms [themselves]. On the contrary, the subject and the predicate are the affirmed [or the certain or fixed] knowledge (al-'ulum al-thabitah) in the soul (al-nafs) exclusive of the terms. Nevertheless, the understanding (al-tafhim) is not possible except through [verbal or written] terms.

And the real matter (al-maddah al-haqaiyyah) is that which is the point led to in the fourth level (al-darajah al-rabi'ah) [which is only attained] after three envelopes [or stages] (qushur):

The first envelope is the forms imprinted by means of the writing (al-suwar al-marqumah bi'l-kitabah)

The second is the speech (al-nutq), and is the sounds ordered [or arranged] which is [both] the object of writing (madlul al-kitabah) and the proof of the conversation or speech [occurring] in the soul. (dallah 'ala'l-hadith alladhi fi'l-nafs).

And the third [one] is the soul's conversation [or speech] (hadith alnafs) which is the knowledge of the ordering of letters and the arrangement of the speech, whether verbally or written, ('ilm bi tartib al-huruf wa nazm al-kalam imma mantuqan bihi wa imma maktuban)

And the fourth [one] is the mind (al-lubab) and it is the fixed knowledge in the soul (al-'ilm al-qa'im bi'l-nafs) whose reality [or essence] refers to the soul's extraction of the resemblance [or replica or image] that is in accordance with the known [i.e. the thing]. (intiqash al-nafs bi mithal mutabiq li'lma'lum). Thus this knowledge [or sciences] (al-'ulum) are the matters of the syllogism and it is difficult to single out (tajrid) them [i.e. their existence] in the soul without arranging [at the same time] the terms by means of the speech of the soul.

It must not come to your imagination the unity [or identity] (al-ittihad) of the knowledge (al-'ilm) and the speech (al-hadith) because even the writer [himself] faces difficulty in conceptualizing a meaning except by the resemblance of the imprints of the writing which point to the thing of it [that meaning] (tasawwur ma' na ilia an yatamaththal lahu ruqum al-kitabah al-dallah 'ala'l-shay'), so much so that if he thinks of the wall (al-jidar) the term 'al-jidar' appears [simultaneously] to him in a written form.

However, since the knowledge of 'al-jidar' is not dependent on the knowledge of the origin [or principle] of writing (ma' rifah ash al-kitabah), it will not be dubious for him [to understand] that this [i.e. the term 'jidar'] is necessary connection

(muqaran lazim) to the knowledge; and not essentially the knowledge itself (li'l' ilm al' aynihi). Similarly, he can conceptualize [a case in which] a human being knows many sciences but that person does not know the languages, therefore the soul's speech will not occur in him, I mean [by this]; occupation with the arrangement of the terms. Thus the affirmative-relational true [or real] knowledge (al-' ulum al-haqaiyyah al-tasdiqiyah) are the matters of the syllogism. If they are present in the mind (dhihn) according to a specific order, they help the soul because [already] inherent in them are the knowledge of the conclusion from God the Most High, and therefore whenever we say, "the matters of the syllogism are the certain premisses (al-muqaddamat al-yaqiniyyah)', you must not understand from such a saying except whatever that we have mentioned.³²⁴

From all the above-quoted portions of Mi'yar, we can at least identify three important aspects of the sense-mind relationship, namely, the levels of the process of abstraction-extraction, the stages of the development of human perceptive faculties, and the limitations or weaknesses of the non-intellectual judges in comparison with the intellectual perceptions. In the following lines of this paper, these three aspects will be elaborately analyzed and comparatively discussed relying mainly on al-Ghazali's other writings.

Section B: ANALYSIS OF AL-GHAZALI'S CONCEPTION OF SENSE-MIND RELATIONSHIP

Al-Ghazali, as the other traditional Muslim scholars, holds the view that there are numerous paths in the search for knowledge which, in fact has many divisions.³²⁵ Generally speaking, there are two methods in acquiring knowledge; the intuitive channel and the way of abstraction-extraction.³²⁶ Although these two

³²⁴ Hereinafter cited as Q3.

³²⁵ See al-Ghazali, *Al-Risalah al-Laduniyyah* translated into English by Margaret Smith in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*. (London: RAS, 1938) Part II, p. 193; Hereinafter cited as RL.

methods are not totally disconnected, in this section we are mainly focussing on that latter aspect.

In accordance with such a discussion, it is deemed necessary to also deal with the levels of existence from among which the knowledge is derived or abstracted or to which the knowledge is related or referred, either directly or indirectly. With regard to the degrees of existence, al-Ghazali's explanation is not always the same though this difference need not be interpreted as reflecting his incoherency and inconsistency. Rather, it is more because of the contextual determinants underlying and framing- such elaborations. In Mi'yar, as appears in the above second translated quotation (Q2), al-Ghazali seems to classify existence into four categories, namely, real-external existence, mental existence, terminological or verbal existence and the writer' existence. This view seems to be the result of a linguistic-epistemological analysis focussing mainly on the relation of the term to the object of knowledge. Similarly, the same outlook is adopted in the fourth quotation (Q4) though the resulting classification is somewhat different from the former. Here the focus is no more on the object of knowledge and its relation to the term, instead, it is more of the term-knowledge relationship, resulting in four categories, i.e. the written existence, the external verbal existence, the internal verbal existence and the mental existence. Two of the latter are the hidden operation occuring in the soul.

He has also discussed the same subject-matter in his Faysal. There, he identifies five types or degrees of existence, namely, the essential (dhati,, the sensible (hissi), the imaginary (khayali), the analogous (shibhi) existences.³²⁷ Even though this

³²⁶ There are altogether four different but interrelated methods of classifying knowledge as adopted by this particular scholar. For a detailed analysis on al-Ghazali's classification of knowledge, refer to Osman Bakar, *Classification of Knowledge in Islam*, Kuala Lumpur: Institute for Policy Research, 1992, pp. 194-196 and Chapter 9; henceforth cited as CKI. What is referred to here is his classification of knowledge into "presential" (huduri) and "attained" (husuli). Nevertheless, I have decided to change slightly the term used for the latter in order to suit the terminology used throughout this essay.

³²⁷ AL-Ghazali, *Faysal al-Tafriqah Bayna'l-Islam wa'l-Zandaqah* translated into English by R.J. McCarthy as Appendix I in his *Freedom and Fulfillment: An Annotated Translation of al-Ghazali's al-Munqidh snina'l-Dalal and other Relevant Works of al-Ghazali*, Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980 pp. 151-152; hereinafter cited as AL. For the Arabic text, see *Faysal al-Tafirqah in al Quare al-Awali rain Rasa'il al-Imam al-Ghazali*, edited by al-Shaykh Muhammad Mustata Abu al Ala, Cairo: Maktabah al-Jundi, n.d., p. 129; hereinafter abbreviated as FT.

last approach is still carried out within the linguistic-epistemological analysis, it lays more emphasis on the modes or points of reference of existence. Furthermore, in his *Maqṣad*, when elaborating on the definition and reality of the name [or the term], he only enumerates three types of existence, namely, the individual-essential-external existence (*wujūd fi'l a'yan*), the linguistic-verbal existence (*wujūd fi'l lisan*) and the mental existence (*wujūd fi'l adhhan*).³²⁸ On another occasion, namely in *Sharḥ Kitāb 'ajā'ib al-Qalb* of his celebrated *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* he lists down four levels of existence, that is to say, the existence in the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lawḥ al-Mahfuz*), the physical existence (*wujūduhu al-jismani* or *wujūduhu al-haqi'ai*), the imaginative [or imaginary] existence and the mental existence.³²⁹ From the above-mentioned varieties of exposition, we can possibly conclude that in al-Ghazali's understanding, when the total picture of degrees of existence³³⁰ is formulated, there are altogether nine levels of existence, namely:

1. Existence in *al-Lawḥ al-Mahfuz*;
2. Real-external-individual-physical existence;
3. Sensible existence;
4. Imaginary existence;

³²⁸ See al-Ghazali's *al-Maqṣa al-Asna fi Sharḥ Ma'ani Asma Allah al-Husan*; partially translated as Appendix IV in the above-mentioned McCarthy's *Freedom and Fulfillment*, p. 336; hereinafter designated as A4. For the Arabic text, see the one published in (Limassol: al-Jaffan and al-Jabi, 1987), p. 25; will be after this cited as MQA. It should also be noted here that a full English annotated translation of this book is now made available for the first time under the title *The Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names of God*, trans. David B. Burrell and Nazih Daher, Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1992.

³²⁹ Refer to al-Ghazali's *Sharḥ Kitāb 'ajā'ib al-Qalb*, translated into Malay-Indonesian by Nurhickmah under the heading of *Keajaiban Hati*. (Singapore: Pustaka Nasional, 1991) p. 48, hereinafter cited as KH. For the Arabic text, see *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* with Zayn al-Din 'Iraqi's *al-Mughni'an Haml al-Asfar fi'l-Asfar fi'l-Asfar fi Takhrij ma fi'l-Ihya' mina'l-Akhbar*, Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1986, 3, pp. 22-23; henceforth abbreviated as SAO.

³³⁰ For another reasonably detailed study of al-Ghazali's conception of reality, see Abdul Haq Ansari, *The Doctrine of Divine Command: A Study in the Development of Ghazali's view of reality* in *Islamic Studies*, Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1982, XXI, no 3, pp. 1.47; hereinafter abbreviated as DDC.

5. Mental existence;
6. Internal verbal existence;
7. External-linguistic-verbal existence;
8. Written existence, and;
9. Analogous existence

Insofar as this particular aspect of his epistemological outlook is concerned, only levels 1 to 5 are directly related, whereas levels 6 to 9 are only mere products or consequences of the preceding degrees. It is the time now to consider briefly each level of existence in order to elucidate its relation with the subsequent discussion of al-Ghazali's conception of sense-mind relationship.

1. Existence in al-Lawh al-Mahfuz

According to al-Ghazali, the essences or realities of things (haqaiq al-ashya) are imprinted in the al-Lawh al-Mahfuz this is also known as the heart of the Closest Angels (al-mala'ikah al-muqarrabun), and sometimes as the Universal Soul.³³¹ He gives the analogy of an engineer or an architect who first of all draws his plan on a sheet of white paper before transferring it into construction, namely, the concrete external existence. Similarly, the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth draws the plan of the Universe from its beginning to its end on that Preserved Tablet and after that externalized it into concrete physical sensible existence according to that plan.³³²

2. Realexternal•individual physical existence

For him, this level of existence is modelled according to the previous level.³³³ This existence is real and stable, that is to say, the existence outsi of

³³¹ See RL, p. 197 and p. 367.

³³² KH, p. 48; SAQ, pp. 22-23.

sensation and intellection (al-wujud al-haqiai al-thabit kharij al-hiss wa'l- 'aql). Nevertheless sensation and intellection take from it an image (surah) and this "taking" is called "perception" (idrak).³³⁴ This kind of existence is al characterized by individuality and particularity. In Maqсад, he considers ti level as the basic-real existence (al-wujud al-asli al-haqiqi). For an example, cites the existence of the heavens and the earth.³³⁵ The relation between 1 and 2 is further clarified in his Mushkat al-Anwar, where he conveys to us the fact that,

“... the world of sense is one of the effects (athr min athar) of yonder world of cause, resulting from it just as the shadow results from a body, or as fruit from that which fructuates, or as the effect from a cause (al-musabbab bil-idafah ila'l sabab). Now the key to this knowledge of the effects is sought and found in the cause (wa mafatih malrifat al- musabbabat la tujad ilia mina'l-asbab). And for this reason the World of Sense is a type of the World of the Realm Celestial (kana 'alam al-shahadah mithalan li 'a/am al-malakut)...³³⁶

Moreover, in al-Ghazali's understanding, there are different though interrelated expressions—merely because of the viewpoints—attributed to these two worlds and their relation to each other;

(1) Regarding the two worlds in themselves (anfusihima), one is a Spiritual World (Ruhani) and the other is a Material World (Jismani);

³³³ KH, p. 48.

³³⁴ Al, p. 151; FT, p. 129.

³³⁵ A4, p. 336; MQA, p. 25.

³³⁶ See al-Ghazali's Mishkat al-Anwar translated into English by W. H. T. Gairdner under the title of The Niche of Lights, Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1952, p. 96; hereinafter cited ul MA. For the Arabic text, see the one edited by Abu 'Ala 'Afifi, Cairo: al-Dar al-Qawmiyyah 1964, p. 51, and cf. p. 67; will be after this abbreviated as AR..

(2) Regarding the organ which apprehends them (al-idafah ila'l ayn al-Mudrikah lahum), the former is known as a World Intellectual ('Aqli) and the latter as a World Sensual (Hiss);

(3) Regarding their mutual relationship (idafah ahadihima ila'l-akhar), the first is considered as a World Supernal ('Ulwi) and the second as a World Inferior (Sufli).³³⁷

He goes further to elaborate that the visible world or the World Sensual is the starting-point of ascension (mirqah) to the world of the Realm Supernal.³³⁸ He also emphasizes the point that he should not be misunderstood and misinterpreted—from such a belief in symbolism—as promoting ignorance and annullment of the outward and visible forms for, for him, the extreme of ignoring the outward-visible sign is the tenet of the Batiniyyah and, similarly, the rejection of the inward and invisible meaning is the very rudiment of the Materialists (Hashawiyyah). Both groups are considered by him as having a one-sided view of the world and being grossly ignorant of the balance between the two worlds.³³⁹ In his further explanation of the verse "The Putting-off of the Shoes" (hadith al-na'layn), he states that for every real thing, there is its corresponding real truth. The outward symbol is, for him, a real thing and its application to the inward meaning is a real truth (Fa 'l-mithal fi'l-zahir haqq wa ada 'uhu ila'l-sirr al-batin haqiqah).³⁴⁰

3. Sensible existence

This is already a stage in the process of knowledge abstraction-accumulation. This level, if taken as a whole, might refer to the existence as perceived by the external senses. Nevertheless, al-Ghazali only limits himself to the visual power in explaining this particular level of existence. In his view, as for the existence in the

³³⁷ MA, pp. 122-123; AR, p. 65. There are also other names for these two worlds: if the former is known as 'alam al-ghayb wa'l-malakut, the latter, alam al-mulk wa'l-shahadab (p. 65); and if the former, al-alam al-nurani, the latter, al-alam al-zulmani (p 50). In addition, the former is alit called alam al-quds (p.66).

³³⁸ Ibid., pp. 66-67; and MA, pp. 123-126

³³⁹ Ibid., pp. 136-137; AR, p. 73.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 74; and MA, pp. 140-141.

external world, each is so only at a point of time whereas the perception of senses apprehends such an existence as continuing throughout a period of time. The existence at this level is also marked by its subjectivity for nobody can share exactly the same image perceived by the sensing subject. Al-Ghazali says in a direct and clear manner that,

Sensible existence is that which is imaged [represented yatamaththal] in the visual power of the eye and which has no [such] existence outside the eye. Thus it is existent in the sensing [sensation], and it is peculiar to the man sensing and unshared by any other. An example of that is what the dreamer sees, or even what the waking sick man sees. For there may be represented to him a form [an image] which has no existence outside his sensing in such fashion that he sees it just as he sees all the other things existing outside his sensing.... If you do not believe it, then believe your own eye. For if you take from a fire a live coal like a single point, then you move it rapidly with a straight motion, you see it as a line of fire; and if you move it with a circular motion you see it as a circle of fire. The circle and the line are seen and are existing in your sensing, not outside of your sensing, because what exists outside is at every moment a point. It becomes a line only in points of time succeeding one another. So the line is not existing at one moment, yet in your vision it is stationary at one moment.³⁴¹

Only in his *Faysal* does he consider it as an independent level of existence. Otherwise, he merely treats it either when explaining the external existence from which the process of abstraction of data starts or while elaborating on the imaginary existence which is a subsequent higher level of abstraction.

4. Imaginary existence

In his *Maqṣad*, he does not clearly distinguish between the imaginary existence and the fifth level of existence, namely, the mental existence. Without taking into

³⁴¹ Al, 151-152; and FT, pp. 130-131.

consideration his other works, readers might mistake understand him to refer as knowledge to those images represented in t imaginary existence for he says,

The heaven [as-sama] has an existence in its essence and itself; then it has an existence in our minds (adhhan) and our souls (nufus), because the representation [form] (surab) of the heaven is impressed in our eyes [sights] and then in our imagination [khayal], so that, were the heaven to cease to exist and we were to continue [existing], the representation of the heaven would be present in our imagination. And representation is what we express by 'knowledge' [cognition] (al-'ilm), and it is the likeness of the cognoscible (al-ma'lum), for it imitates the cognoscible and corresponds to it, and it is like the form impressed in the mirror, for it imitates the form outside and confronting it.³⁴²

Nevertheless, in Faysal, he makes it clearer when he explains to us that,

Imaginative existence is the image [form] of such sensible objects when the latter are absent from [not present to] your sensing. For you can originate in your imagination an image of an elephant and of a horse, even though you have your eyes shut, so that you see it and it exists with the perfection of its form in your brain, not outside."³⁴³

Thus, the distinctive point regarding this specific level of existence is that it is the representation or the image of the object after it is already out of our sensory perception, especially the sight.³⁴⁴

5. Mental existence

³⁴² A4, p. 336; and MQA, p. 25.

³⁴³ Al, p. 152; and FT, p. 131.

³⁴⁴ cf. KH, p. 49.

Here, only the meaning of the thing remains. It is considered by him as the reality or spirit of the object. In other words, the material form or materiality of the thing as it appears in sensible, imaginary and external existences has already been abstracted and put aside. In Faysal, he says,

Mental existence consists in the thing's having a 'spirit' (rub) and a reality (haqiqah: essence) and a meaning: then the intellect acquires its abstract meaning without its image remaining in imagination or sensing or outside, as, for example, 'the hand.' For the latter has a sensible and imaginable form, and it also has a meaning which is its reality, viz. 'the power to strike'—and 'the power to strike' is the mental [intellectual, intelligible] hand. The pen also has an image [form], but its reality is 'that by which cognitions are written,' and it is this which the mind receives without its being linked with a form of cane and wood and other imaginative and sensible forms.³⁴⁵

In short, it is the cognitional, formal existence (al-wujud al-'ilmi al-suri).³⁴⁶

6. Internal verbal existence

This is the speech of the soul as explained by al-Ghazali. It seems to be more of the mental pre-arrangement of the verbal and written forms denoting those in the fifth level of existence.³⁴⁷

7. External verbal existence

For him, this is the ordinary level of speech, namely, linguistics and languages.³⁴⁸ In al-Maqṣad, it is termed the verbal, indicative existence (al-wujud al-lafzi al-dalili).³⁴⁹

³⁴⁵ Al, p. 152.

³⁴⁶ A4, p. 336; and MQA, p. 25.

³⁴⁷ 04.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., and also 02.

8. *Written existence*

This clearly refers to any ordinary writings.³⁵⁰

It is thus clear that the sixth, seventh and eight degrees of existence are merely the degrees of "human" communication whose existence is made possible only when the preceding five degrees exist. This fact has been repeatedly emphasized by al-Ghazali. For instance, he conveys to us in his *Maqсад* that,

The existence in the tongue is ... an indication of what is in the mind, and what is in the mind is a representation of what is in [individual] existence and is conformed to it. If there were no existence in individuals, no form [image, representation] would be impressed in minds, and if it were not impressed in the form [image] of the minds and a man were una³⁵¹ware of it, he would not express it by the tongue. So the word and the cognition and the cognoscible are three different things. but they are mutually corresponding and comparable...³⁵²

But what about the analogous existence which is also indicated by him at least in *Faysal*? This existence, as explained by him, is the one in which the thing itself does not exist in the previous levels of existence, namely, levels 2 up to 5, on the contrary, only the resemblance of it in one of its qualities or properties exists and this resemblance in itself is something else other than that thing. It appears that the one under consideration in this level of existence, is a thing by itself, and that it has at least a level of existence in the above range of levels 2 to 5, but it is in some aspects compared with another thing which also has an existence at least in one of the range of levels stated above. Therefore, when considered in itself, it can be included in the degrees 2 to 5.

³⁴⁹ MQA, p. 25; and A4, p. 336.

³⁵⁰ 02, and also 04.

³⁵¹ A4, pp. 336-337; cf. 02 and 04

³⁵² A1, p. 152

(To be continued)

Book Review

Estimate of Iqbal as a Philosopher
in

Majid Fakhry's