

Politics in the Works of Al-Ghazzālī

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Abstract: Al-Ghazzālī was a theologian and a prolific writer. Even though he wrote mainly on doctrines, there are many passages in his wide ranging works which treat politics. Indeed, there are certain treatises that are exclusively devoted to topics studied in political science. The four works analyzed here show that he was, among other things, a political thinker whose aim was to synthesize politics with Islam. He discussed extensively the concepts of *imāmah* and *khilāfah* detailing its prerequisites and the qualifications required of the office holders. Any attempts at understanding political thought of al-Ghazzālī must adopt a comprehensive approach by looking at all of his works and by situating the works within the specific context in which these were written.

Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Tā'ūs al-Ṭūsi al-Shāfi'ī, better known as al-Ghazzālī, was born in 450/1058 at Ṭabarān, in the neighbourhood of modern Meshhed in Khurāsān. Al-Ghazzālī started learning, first in his hometown of Tus in Persia, then in Jurjān and finally in Nishapur. After the death of his teacher, Imam al-Haramayn al-Juwaynī, al-Ghazzālī moved to the court of Nizām al-Mulk, the powerful vizir of the Seljuq Sultans, who eventually appointed him the head of the Nizāmiyyah College in Baghdad in AH 484/AD 1091. For about five years, he busied himself lecturing on Islamic jurisprudence and refuting heresies and responding to questions from all segments of the community. In the political confusion following the assassination of Nizām al-Mulk, al-Ghazzālī left Baghdad, renouncing his career and the world. He wandered as a Ṣūfī in Syria and Palestine before returning to Ṭus,

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where he was engaged in writing, ṣūfī practices and teaching his disciples until his death in 505A.H./1111AD.

Al-Ghazzālī is one of the greatest scholars of Islam and was known by the honorific title *ḥujjat al-Islām* (the proof of Islam). He was an extremely influential figure in philosophy and sūfism. He argued that the Neoplatonic philosophy, which had significant Muslim following, is flawed and was in conflict with some Islamic teachings. He, however, upheld the approach of mathematics and exact sciences as essentially correct. His was a critique of philosophy from an Islamic perspective with the intention to Islamize it.

Al-Ghazzālī was equally critical of the ṣūfī movement for neglecting obligatory prayers and duties of Islam. He sought to cleanse the approach of sūfism of its excesses and re-establish the authority of the orthodox religion. Yet, he stressed the importance of genuine spiritual quest, which he maintained was the path to attain the absolute truth. His theological doctrines influenced Jewish and Christian Scholarship and several of his arguments seem to have been adopted by St. Thomas Aquinas.

Al-Ghazzālī's Works on Politics

Al-Ghazzālī's works have been studied extensively by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. He wrote on a vast number of subjects ranging from jurisprudence, theology and philosophy to Bāṭinite thought and ṣūfism. He is usually perceived as a writer on doctrine, and is, therefore, less well-known as a political scientist. There are, however, many passages in his works which discuss politics, and there are certain treatises that are exclusively devoted to the topics studied in political science.

This study analyses Al-Ghazzālī's works to highlight his contributions to the world of politics and political science. Of the many works that al-Ghazzālī produced, *Faḍā'ih al-bāṭinīyah wa Faḍā'il al-Mustazhiriyyah*, *al-Iqtisād fī al-i'tiqād*, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* and *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* contain his views on politics. The political views expressed in these works with regard to the imamate and the sultanate, are the focus of this study.¹ It specifically analyzes the political contents of these works, the motives and the time of their composition and their respective audiences.

Faḍāʾih al-Bāṭiniyyah wa Faḍāʾil al-Mustazhiriyyah

The first work of Al-Ghazzālī discussed here is *Faḍāʾih al-bāṭiniyyah wa Faḍāʾil al-Mustazhiriyyah*. It is better known as *Kitāb al-Mustazhirī* as it was commissioned by the reigning ‘Abbāsīd caliph, al-Mustazhir Billāh (r. 478/1094 to 512/1118). The motive behind its composition lay in the caliph’s bid to legitimise his reign and to show the errors of the Ismā‘īlīs, who constituted a threat to the ‘Abbāsīd caliphate.²

Kitāb al-Mustazhirī is believed to have been composed in 487/1094, shortly before al-Ghazzālī’s departure from Baghdad in 488/1095 as a result of his spiritual crisis.³ In terms of its authenticity, no scholar doubts its ascription to al-Ghazzālī.⁴ The book was written for two target audiences: the masses, including scholars and lay persons, and the caliph al-Mustazhir himself, whom al-Ghazzālī counsels in Chapter Ten of the book.⁵

Al-Ghazzālī presents his political views in chapters nine and ten. In chapter nine, al-Ghazzālī intended to accomplish three things: to validate the imamate of al-Mustazhir; to acknowledge the validity of his appointments of governors and *qāḍīs* (judges); and to proclaim him as God’s vicegerent over men, thereby establishing obedience to him as a duty incumbent on all Muslims.⁶ To that end, he decried the “corrupt doctrine” of those writers which denied the existence of a caliph since no candidate possessed all the requisite qualities for holding the office of the *imām*. They argued that appointing an unqualified person to the imamate would be a violation of the conditions of the imamate.⁷

Al-Ghazzālī argues that this corrupt doctrine is an attack on law-based judgments (*aḥkām*, prescription) and an explicit confirmation of their inoperativeness (*taʿīl*) and neglect (*ihmāl*). It also negates the validity of all administrative posts, the soundness of *qāḍīs’* judgments and the weight of God’s rights and prescriptions in Muslim life, all on the grounds of the absence of the *imām*.⁸ Consequently, the affairs of the people would be left unadministered and God’s laws unexecuted. It becomes a religious duty, therefore, to right this state of corruption.⁹

Al-Ghazzālī argues that there must be an *imām* in every age and that all Muslims agree on the necessity of the imamate. He affirms

the principle of the necessity of this institution in every age as indisputable and based on the unanimous consensus (*ijmā'*). The only point open to dispute, he says, is the qualification of the individual.

However, there was one man, according to al-Ghazzālī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Kaysān also known as Abū Bakr al-Aṣam, who held that the imamate is void in the event of civil war (*fī ayyām al-fīnah*) or disagreement among the people (*ikhtilāf al-nās*).¹⁰ Without the general consensus of the *ummah*, 'Abd al-Raḥmān contended, the imamate is void.¹¹ However, al-Ghazzālī contended that the falsity of Kaysān's stand is agreed upon by all knowledgeable men.

Al-Ghazzālī put forward two points to justify the necessity of the imamate. First, the example of the early companions who acted hastily to set about appointing an *imām* immediately after the death of the Prophet Muḥammad (SAS).¹² Although their action could have had a negative impact, their urgent attention to appointing an *imām* showed the importance and necessity of the office.¹³ Second, he argues that the duty of defending and championing the faith is necessary and incumbent upon Muslims. In order to preserve order, he continues, there must be a responsible individual to guide men and to thwart danger, including anarchy.¹⁴ For this reason, al-Ghazzālī feels that the imamate is an indispensable office for Muslim society.

Having established the necessity of the imamate, he proceeded with an argument justifying al-Mustazhir's claims to the imamate. Syllogistically, he argues:

There must be an *imām* in every age.

But only he (al-Mustazhir) is qualified for the office.

Therefore, he is the rightful *imām*.¹⁵

In proclaiming al-Mustazhir as the qualified *imām*, al-Ghazzālī points to two facts which discredit the Bāṭinites, thereby disqualifying them from eligibility of the imamate.¹⁶ First, their doctrines and their *imāms* are guilty of innovation and deviation (*bid'ah*) at the very least, and unbelief (*kufr*) at the most. This includes their affirmation of two pre-eternal Gods, a concept to which, according to al-Ghazzālī, all the Bāṭinite sects agreed. This falsehood disqualifies them from the imamate by virtue of their not meeting the key conditions of the office: correctness of belief and soundness of religion. Second, the Bāṭinites are at fault for rejecting, by false interpretation, many of

the eschatological details revealed in the Qur'ān.¹⁷ How then can a person whose falsehood in religion is clear, asks al-Ghazzālī, be fit for the imamate? Given these falsifications, the only eligible candidate is al-Mustazhir, because his views on dogma are sound.

Moreover, al-Ghazzālī employs the idea of “might makes right” (*Imāmat taqūm bi al-shawkah*)¹⁸ in strengthening his argument against the Bāṭinites. He states that if, for the sake of argument, the leader of the Bāṭinites was fit for the imamate, his claims would still lack support from the people. By contrast, obedience and submission to al-Mustazhir were demonstrated by all leaders and ‘ulamā’ of the age and the general public with the exception only of the Bāṭinites. Thus, he argues that if might is another yardstick for the right to the imamate, then the Bāṭinites’ claims must be rejected.¹⁹ It was al-Mustazhir who enjoyed the support and allegiance of the majority.

It is also noteworthy that al-Ghazzālī repudiated the very source of the Bāṭinites’ claims to the imamate. In chapter seven of this book he argued that the source of the imamate is not a textual designation (*naṣ*)²⁰ as contended by the Bāṭinites. The only valid source, he contended, is the choice (*ikhtiyār*) of the people of Islam and consensus in submission.²¹ This is precisely the criterion he employed to justify the imamate of al-Mustazhir. If the credentials of the Bāṭinites are proven false, he maintained, the only criterion left is “election.”

Realizing that it is impossible to obtain the consensus of all men, al-Ghazzālī reasoned that the support of one person can suffice if he is on the side of the multitude, as his consent would represent theirs. He defended this view by referring to the manner in which the first caliph, Abū Bakr, was appointed. He says that when ‘Umar swore fealty to Abū Bakr, the latter’s imamate was established by the succession of those who followed ‘Umar’s lead. This process, he argued, was not disputed by any, for the aim of an *imām* is the uniting of views (*jam‘shitāt ārā’*). However, the one whose allegiance is followed by the rest must also exercise authority and influence which are recognized and revered by the populace. This he termed *al-shawkah*, which signifies personal power, military power and influence. By asserting this point, he determined that there can be no doubt about al-Mustazhir’s imamate.²² Apparently

al-Ghazzālī, through his influence, saw himself as performing the role of ‘Umar in acknowledging the imamate of al-Mustazhir. Because of his influence, the ‘*ulamā*’ and the masses followed suit.

Al-Ghazzālī admitted that the specification of the imamate is reduced to the choice of a single person, and to God’s choice and appointment. If God was not satisfied with it, He would not make it workable. Although the *imām* of the Fātimids (the Bāṭinītes) had also been successful, it had been proven that they held false beliefs which automatically, according to al-Ghazzālī, disqualified them from office. The real justification for the choice is in the allegiance and obedience that the *imām* inspires (a grace and gift of God), unattainable by any human contrivance.²³ This did not happen to the Bāṭinītes because they did not appoint their *imām* by election but by textual designation which has nothing to do with the consent of the masses.

Al-Ghazzālī listed ten qualities and conditions that an *imām* must meet, six of them innate and the remainder acquired (*kasb*). The six innate qualities are: (1) *al-bulūgh*, maturity, (2) *al-‘aql* (intelligence), (3) *al-ḥurriyyah* (freedom), (4) of the male sex, (5) *nasab Quraysh* (Qurayshite descent), and (6) *salāmah ḥassat al-sam‘ wa al-baṣar*, (soundness of hearing and sight). The four acquired qualities are: (i) *al-najdah*, intrepidity (bravery, courage; fitness for combat, war or fighting), (ii) *al-kifāyah*, competence, (iii) *al-‘ilm*, knowledge, and (iv) *al-wara’* piety. Al-Ghazzālī claimed that the first six qualities were present in al-Mustazhir.²⁴

For the four acquired qualities, al-Ghazzālī easily showed that al-Mustazhir fulfilled all the requisites.²⁵ However, the third quality, i.e., knowledge (*al-‘ilm*) was redefined by al-Ghazzālī as “private personal effort in legal reasoning” (*al-ijtihād*), which while indispensable to the *imām*²⁶ can be met by consultation with the learned. The *imām* can “know” by his own reasoning or by that of others. In principle, one ought to prefer a person of independent personal judgment over one who follows others. But if the latter is chosen, and has the support and the submission of all and there is no Qurayshite *mujtahid* who possesses all the qualities, the choice is valid. However, if there were a qualified Qurayshite, and the deposition of the other would lead to various exigencies, insurrection and disturbances, it would not be prudent to depose the incumbent

and replace him with the qualified Qurayshite. He admitted that knowledge adds lustre to the imamate, but argued that the result sought from the office is to extinguish dissension. This function, he warned, is not to be sacrificed for more precision in differentiating between arguments or in conforming to the views of others.²⁷ Two conclusions can be derived from this argument of al-Ghazzālī's: first, the need for the imamate is paramount in view of the need for an ordered society, and second, personal knowledge (*al-ijtihād*) is not something indispensable to the *imām*.

Thus al-Ghazzālī's proviso that an unqualified *imām* could be removed was only theoretical in nature. In practical terms, he simply could not be deposed. Al-Ghazzālī was the first to state this conclusion in such clear terms.²⁸ Dissension against al-Mustazhir was therefore unlawful, and the '*ulamā*' were bound to acknowledge the formal validity and legality of his imamate. All that remained for al-Mustazhir was to settle problems through consultation with the '*ulamā*'. In fact, al-Ghazzālī allowed for the possibility that the *imām* who is young might attain a rank of independence in the science of the law later on.²⁹

Chapter Ten contains al-Ghazzālī's advice to al-Mustazhir. Al-Ghazzālī counselled the *imām* on his twofold duties. The first is connected with knowledge and is theoretical in nature, the second is connected with action (*'amal*) and is practical. Al-Ghazzālī said that the commander of the faithful (*imām*, caliph) is religiously bound to read and reflect on this chapter continually. If God aids him in striving towards mastery of at least one of these sets of duties, even though it should take a year, it would signify success and ultimate bliss (*sa'ādah quṣwā*).

The duties that are connected with knowledge are four: (a) the *imām* must know why man was created and for what purpose; (b) he must recognize that it is imperative for his happiness in the next life that he has piety (*taqwā*), and that the place of this piety is located in the heart; (c) the *imām* should know that being God's vicegerent (*khalīfah*) over men carries responsibilities for the betterment of those men; and that only he has the capability to better the people of the world, his town, his household, and himself; and finally, (d) he must recognize that man comprised angelic and bestial qualities.³⁰

The duties which are connected with *action* demonstrate al-Ghazzālī's conception of a truly Islamic ideal for politics and government.³¹ First, the *imām* is advised to be just in dealing with his subjects. If he deviates from the path of justice (*ʿadl*), his subjects may regard him as a ruler who has usurped power. His aim should be to gain the approval and love of men in a way which conforms to the law. Obedience to him is incumbent only when he has brought men into conformity with the law. Moreover, he should solicit and be grateful for the counsel of the *ʿulamāʾ*, as well as profit from the admonitions of the rightly guided caliphs and those of religious elders (*mawāʿiz mashāʾikh al-dīn*) to bygone princes.³²

The *imām* is also counselled to live in piety. He is advised to forfeit comfort, luxury and indulgence in food and clothing. He should ensure that his office facilitates worship and seize every opportunity to serve God through humility, justice, empathy and sincere counsel to Muslims.

The *imām* is reminded that the imamate is a formidable post. It can lead to good or unsurpassed misery. Kindness in all matters should be more predominant in the *imām* than harshness. While he is in power he must temper his actions with mercy, clemency, good conduct and restraint.³³ Al-Ghazzālī's approach, in this chapter, is similar to that of his other works in that he quoted from the Qurʾān, the *ḥadīth* and the sayings of the rightly guided caliphs to substantiate his arguments.

Al-Iqtisād fī al-Iʿtiqād

The second work of note is *Al-Iqtisād fī al-Iʿtiqād* which was written in 488/1095 while al-Ghazzālī was still teaching in Baghdad. It was compiled just after *al-Mustazhiri* and before *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*. This book is said to have been called al-Ghazzālī's "chief theological work" and has received considerable scholarly attention, forming the basis of many of the generalizations made about his political theory.³⁴ The political content of this book is found mainly in Chapter Three entitled "On the imamate." Only the first two sections of this chapter are relevant to this discussion while the third section explains the belief of the *ahl al-Sunnah* [the People of the (established) Custom, the Sunnis] in the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad (SAS) and the Rightly Guided Caliphs.

In section one, al-Ghazzālī discussed the need for an *imām*. He argued that this need is not dictated by reason but by revelation,³⁵ the same argument as forwarded by al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058).³⁶ Al-Ghazzālī employed syllogism to support his argument. In his words:

Good ordering of religion was an aim of the Prophet.

Good ordering of religion is brought about only by an *imām* who is obeyed.

Therefore, the setting up of an *imām*, who is obeyed, is necessary (obligatory).

Al-Ghazzālī realized that the middle premise, i.e., that the good ordering of religion is incumbent upon the presence of an imam who is obeyed, might be disputed as unIslamic. Al-Ghazzālī defended it with another syllogism as follows:

Good ordering of religion (*al-dīn*) is brought about only by good ordering of this world (*al-dunyā*).

Good ordering of this world is brought about only by an *imām* who is obeyed.

Therefore, good ordering of religion is brought about only by an *imām* who is obeyed.³⁷

Al-Ghazzālī provided a clear indication of what he meant by the term “*al-dunyā*” in this syllogism. His definition is uncommon. It implied basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter and health. These, he maintained, are the preconditions of life.³⁸

Moreover, al-Ghazzālī argued that worldly security is essential. If one is busy defending oneself and one’s family against tyranny or in search of a livelihood, no time can be devoted to the quest for knowledge or worship, which is the only means of attaining true felicity in the hereafter.³⁹ In other words, if there is no security in this world which can, in turn, guarantee a commitment to knowledge and worship, one cannot gain bliss in the next. This argument, i.e., the need for an ordered society, is the same as in the *al-Mustazhiri*.⁴⁰

As an example of “disorder,” al-Ghazzālī pointed to the climate of strife which erupts on the death of sultans (*salāṭīn*) and imams. If no immediate appointment is made to replace him with another sultan who is obeyed (*sultān muṭa ʿ*), then, discord will prevail and

the sword will take precedence. The masses will face a great ordeal. Such a situation would not permit anyone to devote himself exclusively to the acquisition of knowledge and worship. To al-Ghazzālī, “Religion (*al-dīn*) and authority (*sultānah*) are twins” and “Religion is a foundation and the *sultān* its guardian (*hāris*), a thing which has no foundation will fall and that which has no guardian will be lost.”⁴¹ Al-Ghazzālī concluded his argument by maintaining that a reasonable man cannot dispute the fact that human beings, because of their different natures, the inherent diversity of their passions and the divergence of their opinions, would engage in quarrels and wars, and that the victor would destroy the loser if left to his own devices. From this stems the necessity of appointing an imam.

The second part of chapter three deals with the way in which a person may be appointed an *imām*. Al-Ghazzālī stressed certain qualities (*khāṣ*) which a person must possess and which differentiate him from the rest, prior to his appointment as *imām*. These qualities are of two kinds, those that relate to one’s self (*fī nafsihī*) and those that are connected with other people (*min jihat ghayrihī*). The qualities he mentioned first are *al-kifāyah* (competence), *al-‘ilm* (knowledge), *al-wara’* (piety), and descent from the Quraysh. These properties are the same as the qualities cited in *al-Mustazhiri*.⁴²

Al-Ghazzālī maintained that if there is more than one Qurayshite descendant who possesses the first set of qualities, then the need arises to evaluate them against the second set, namely: being appointed to govern (*tawliyah*) or being entrusted with authority (*tafwīd*) by other people. The way in which a person is given this authority are, he continued, threefold: through designation (*naṣ*) by the Prophet Muḥammad (SAS); through appointment by the ruling imam of a suitable successor from among his sons or from among the Quraysh; or through entrusting authority (*tafwīd*) in a suitable individual by a person vested with military power (*dhū shawkah*) whose lead is followed by others such that they participate in giving fealty to the appointed *imām*.⁴³

Of the three methods of conferring appointment, only the last method interested al-Ghazzālī. The first two methods are not given the same weight and are only alluded to in brief.⁴⁴ The last method, an act of allegiance by one man with military power (*dhū shawkah*),

is considered sufficient to appoint a person to the imamate.⁴⁵ This is due to the support and respect which the former enjoys among the people. Moreover, his actions meet the demands of the imamate itself, that is, to unite the divergent views and interests of men. The *imām* is obeyed because allegiance is, in turn, given by the man who is obeyed (*shakhṣ muṭā'*). Furthermore, if more than one man is vested with such military power, they must agree with one another and pay allegiance to the appointed *imām*, for only then the obedience can be secured.⁴⁶

In case there exists only one Quraysh, who is obeyed and followed (*wuṭā' muttabi'*), and who appoints himself as *imām* and has *shawkah* (military power), *kifāyah* (competence) and the necessary attributes of an *imām*, his candidacy is valid and it is incumbent upon people to swear obedience to him. He will be able to win the allegiance of the important men (*akābir*) of the age, and of those who loose and bind (*ahl al-ḥall wa al-'aqd*). The latter are those who are qualified to act on behalf of the *jamā'ah* (community of believers), as they form an *ijmā'* (consensus) in electing a caliph or *imām*. In medieval political theory, their main function was contractual, namely, to offer the office of caliphate to the most qualified person and, upon his acceptance, to administer to him an oath of allegiance (*bay'ah*). They were also entrusted with deposing him should he fail to fulfil his duties. The members of the *ahl al-ḥall wa al-'aqd* must be Muslim, adult, just, free and capable of exercising *ijtihād* and be a jurist of the highest caliber.⁴⁷ On the number of members making up this body, scholars disagree because there is no evidence (Qur'ānic verses or *ḥādīth*) to that effect. Al-Māwardī, for instance, was of the view that one person is enough because this reflects the historical reality in which a caliph or an imam normally designated his successor.⁴⁸

Al-Ghazzālī was asked whether a man who becomes an *imām* and possesses all the conditions (*shurūṭ*) of the imamate, except knowledge, be deposed even if he regularly consults the '*ulamā'*' and follows their advice? He held that the man must be replaced by someone who fulfils all the necessary conditions, provided that his deposition and replacement will not engender battle (*qitāl*). Otherwise, he must be obeyed and his imamate validated. He reasoned that the disadvantages of having an *imām* who cannot give

render legal decisions but whose entry to the office would spark civil war.⁴⁹

In order to protect him from the accusation of compromising the legal position on the deposition of an unqualified *imām*, al-Ghazzālī provides an analogy in support of his view: the consumption of carrion is prohibited, but death (from starvation) is a worse proposition.⁵⁰ He likens this analogy to a situation where one is faced with two possibilities. If there is no *imām* for the lack of a qualified person, then all efforts at administration will be invalid and ordinary people will be doing what is wrong because the legal underpinnings of their actions would be void. Conversely, if there is an *imām* who is validated by the necessity of the situation (though he might lack one of the requisites), then there will be administration and validity in action, and the interest (*maṣlahah*) of the *ummah* will be preserved. Therefore, he said, the people should opt for the latter choice. Clearly, al-Ghazzālī supported a view that defended an imperfect *imām*.

*Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*⁵¹

This book is believed to have been written and completed in 489-90/1096-97.⁵² It is acclaimed as al-Ghazzālī's most valuable and comprehensive work. It outlines, for the devout Muslim, every aspect of worship (*'ibādah*), conduct in daily life, purification of heart, and progress along the mystic path.⁵³ In part, its popularity may be attributed to its easy accessibility even to those with basic knowledge of Arabic literature. It is free from linguistic ambiguity, idiomatic expression, and technical terminology.⁵⁴ The authenticity of *Ihyā'* is beyond doubt.⁵⁵

Al-Ghazzālī's political ideas are found in Chapter Five of book Fourteen, entitled "the Book of what is licit and what is illicit" (*Kitāb al-ḥalāl wa al-ḥarām*). In brief, he discussed the imamate and its relationship to the military warlords. At the same time, he developed his views on the sultanate. An unjust, ignorant sultan (*al-ṣulṭān al-zālim al-jāhil*), who is sustained by military power (*shwakah*) and whose deposition would engender civil war (*fitnah thā'irah*) should be left in power, for obedience is due to him as it is due to an *amīr*.⁵⁶

Al-Ghazzālī maintained that the caliphate (*khilāfah*) is given contractually to the member of the 'Abbāsīd family who is charged

with its functions, and that authority (*wilāyah*) in the various lands is legally exercised (*nāfidhah*) by sultans who pay allegiance to the caliph.⁵⁷ This simply means that any sultan who holds power, regardless of whether he meets all the requirements, is considered legitimate as long as he pays allegiance to the caliph.

In defining the relationship between sultans and the caliph, al-Ghazzālī said that the attributes and conditions of sultans are meant to safeguard the public welfare. Consequently, if the rulers are decreed as null and void, the interests of public welfare would also be null and void. How then could the source of power be lost in the quest for profit?

To al-Ghazzālī, the only means of bringing the imamate into being is through the efforts of a sultan who has military power, a condition which was also met by the Fāṭimids. Admitting the sultans' legitimacy is, therefore, a necessity. In his days, authority was only possible through military power. Anybody to whom the holder of military power might give his allegiance would become caliph, a view that is open to dispute for its over-simplification. In return, whosoever has military power and pays tribute to the caliph, in the form of mentioning the caliph's name during Friday sermons and inscribing his name on the coinage (*sikkah*), he will be considered the sultan and his orders and judgment would be valid and enforceable.⁵⁸ Due to its simplicity, this view is even less persuasive.

In this book, al-Ghazzālī maintained that only sultans can appoint the caliph because they have the sole military means of amassing real power. From this premise, he expounded the belief that even if the sultan is unjust and ignorant but difficult to depose except through civil war, obedience is his due. Such a view, Hillenbrand rightly remarks, is more pessimistic than any expressed before.⁵⁹

*Naṣīhat al-Mulūk*⁶⁰

This book is believed to have been written in Ṭūs, either immediately before 499/1106 or soon after 502/1109, and is in keeping with the views expressed during the intervening period in Nīshāpūr, when the author was working in a more urban, political environment.⁶¹ There are two theories as to whom this book was intended for. In its Arabic manuscript form, the book is addressed to the sultan Muḥammad ibn Malik Shāh as "King of the East and West," whereas

in the Persian manuscript, as edited by Professor Humā'ī, it is addressed to Sanjar, "King of the East," Muḥammad's full brother and ally.⁶² Whoever the addressee may have been, it is explicitly intended as a counsel to a sultan. As a result of the doubt which has been cast on the authorship of the second part of this book,⁶³ this study limits itself to an analysis of part one.

The first section of this book is not a theory of politics, but a set of instructions given to a sultan on how he should conduct his relations with God as his Creator and his dealings with men as his subjects. The basic teaching contained herein is that rulership is a gift bestowed by God and that the ruler will be accountable for his actions to God on the Day of Judgment.⁶⁴

As a ruler who is directly accountable to God, al-Ghazzālī holds that the sultan must possess a correct faith which is perceived as "God's gift" and as "eternal wealth" (*al-sa'ādah al-mu'abbadah wa al-ni'mah al-mukhalladah*). He likens the gift to a seed of faith which may be nourished with the water of justice and piety until it grows into a tree whose roots reach the bowels of the earth and whose branches touch the clouds of the sky.⁶⁵ He sets forth ten principles of the creed which are the roots of the tree of faith.⁶⁶ The strength of these roots signifies the strength of the sultan's vertical relationship to God.

As regard his horizontal relationship (i.e., his dealings with the subjects), al-Ghazzālī outlines ten principles which are likened to the branches of the tree of faith. These ten principles, admits R.J. McCarthy, provide insight into al-Ghazzālī's thought and spirituality which may truly be called an Islamic ideal of politics and government.⁶⁷

The first principle expounded by al-Ghazzālī is justice. In explaining this, he says that authority (*wilāyah*) is a great blessing, since he who exercises it righteously obtains unsurpassed happiness but if any ruler fails to do so, he incurs torment surpassed only by the torment of unbelief. This is proven by the tradition of the Prophet of Islam (SAS) who said: "One day of just rule by an equitable sultan is more meritorious than sixty years of continual worship." He quotes another tradition which relates that on the day of resurrection no shade or shelter shall remain except of God on High, in which seven persons shall be found. At the head of them would

be the sultan who had treated his subjects with justice.⁶⁸ Apart from being just, the sultan is also reminded that he must discipline his slave-troops (*ghulamān*), companions, servants (*‘ummāl*) and officers and never tolerate unjust conduct from them, for he is not only accountable for his own unjust deeds but also for those of his staff.⁶⁹

The second principle, mentioned by al-Ghazzālī is that the ruler should always be compelled to seek out devout *‘ulamā’* (*‘ulamā’ al-dīn*) and ask for their advice. However, the ruler is warned not to meet with *‘ulamā’* of worldly ambitions (*‘ulamā’ al-sū’*) who might inveigle, flatter and seek to please him in order to gain control over his terrestrial body by stealth and deceit (*al-makr wa al-ḥīlah*). Al-Ghazzālī maintains that the devout *‘ālim* is not one who has covetous designs on the treasury, but who gives his knowledge in just measure.⁷⁰ This principle accords with al-Ghazzālī’s compromise over the condition of knowledge for a ruler,⁷¹ as the latter is advised to turn to devout *‘ulamā’* for counsel.

The rest of the principles are the qualities and actions which al-Ghazzālī demands of the sultan and are, generally, of an ethical nature. These include the advice to the king to overcome pride, to imagine himself in the position of the subjects, not to do things which he would not wish to be done to himself, not to treat with contempt those who come to him in need, to avoid luxury, to act in conformity with the *sharī‘ah* in striving to satisfy his subjects.⁷²

Having mentioned the roots and the branches of the tree of faith for the sultan, al-Ghazzālī then explains the two springs (*‘aynayn*) which water (*mashrab*) it. The first spring is knowledge of this lower world which, he says, is not a fixed abode, for the ultimate home of man transcends it in the hereafter. He then includes ten analogies to describe the ugliness of this world. The second spring is knowledge of the last breath (*al-nafs al-ākhir*) which is illustrated through five anecdotes.⁷³

This book contains many references to the Prophets, and anecdotes and sayings from the earliest caliphs, such as ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Umar ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, ‘Alī, Hārūn al-Rashīd and al-Manṣūr as well as sayings attributed to Jesus. As its title suggests, the thrust of this book has nothing to do with the caliphate or the imamate. However, one still finds echoes of his earlier concerns, such as in his insistence

upon the importance of knowledge and upon a new institution, namely, the '*ulamā*'. Al-Ghazzālī places the latter above the imamate and the sultanate that must in turn rely on the '*ulamā*' counsel. This makes the '*ulamā*' very influential in society and it is to this group of '*ulamā*' that al-Ghazzālī and his colleagues belonged.

The Differences in Al-Ghazzālī's Works

The works of al-Ghazzālī contain discourses on politics (e.g., discussion on the imamate and the sultanate); they differ, however, in many respects. The differences are manifested where audience and motive of composition are concerned. The *al-mustazhirī*, for example, is aimed at the caliph and the '*ulamā*' who had the intellectual and linguistic ability to understand the author's argumentation and his elegant Arabic style. Therefore, its audience was small and selective. It was written at the command of the 'Abbāsīd caliph al-Mustazhir, to highlight the errors of the Bāḫīnites, and to justify the rule of its patron. *Al-Iqtisād*, however, was targeted for a larger audience than *al-mustazhirī*. This is because the author did not write this work with any particular patron in mind,⁷⁴ as he had *al-mustazhirī*, and could, therefore, freely air his views. With such freedom, al-Ghazzālī was not confined to discussing the Bāḫīnites or to justifying al-Mustazhir's imamate. It was composed, as the author himself said, more as preparation for the gnosis (*ma'rifah*) of the ṣūfī than the usual dogmatic works.⁷⁵

Iḥyā' '*ulūm al-dīn*'s audience, as Lazarus Yafeh points out, constituted three possible groups: the masses, those who could not understand the esoteric hints contained in the *Iḥyā'*, the ṣūfīs who did not need these hints, and the '*ulamā*' whom these hints might direct to the right path and for whom they were added to the *Iḥyā'*.⁷⁶ However, Lazarus maintains that this book is more suited to the last category, since, according to her, they have the ability to understand and are worthy of this knowledge.

Moreover, the *Iḥyā'* was written, according to Montgomery Watt, as a guide for the devout Muslim on every aspect of religious worship and devotional practice, conduct in daily life, purification of the heart, and advance along the mystic way.⁷⁷ Lazarus concurs with this view, noting that al-Ghazzālī wanted to point some of its readers towards the light of true knowledge. However, he did it in a gradual

way, hoping to “heal” the spiritual maladies of many of his contemporaries.⁷⁸ Moreover, she considers the *Ihyā’* to be the author’s “map” for the gradual education of his worthier readers, designed to impart to them some of the divine secrets so that they may know the truth and sharpen their intellect, thereby allowing them to lead a pious life as taught by Islam.

The chronology of composition also contributed to the differences between these books. *Al-Mustazhirī*, for instance, was composed at a time (487/1094) when the threat of the Bāṭinites who were led by Ḥasan ibn Ṣabbāḥ (d. 518/1124), was so palpable in Baghdad.⁷⁹ The composition of the book was directly linked to the political climate. Even though *al-Iqtisād* was composed slightly later than *al-Mustazhirī*, i.e., in 488/1095, one can still classify them both as belonging to the same period, i.e., at the end of the author’s professorship in Baghdad. However, *al-Iqtisād* differs from the latter in target audience, content and cause of writing.

Furthermore, *Ihyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn* was written during the period of al-Ghazzālī’s strict seclusion in Syria. There, the author led a ṣūfī life, through which, according to him, one finds truth. In this book he tries to hint to his readers (especially contemporary scholars who were not devoted to the ṣūfī life) that their lives would only lead them to eternal perdition (*muhlikāt*).⁸⁰ The *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, on the other hand, was written during the time of the author’s second teaching post, at the Niẓāmiyyah College of Nīshaāpūr, after he was summoned there by Fakhr al-Mulūk in 499/1066. Even though its audience differs from that of *al-Mustazhirī*, its content is similar to chapter ten of the latter. This similarity across time demonstrates the author’s consistency of counsel.⁸¹ Nevertheless, all demonstrate different emphases on the part of al-Ghazzālī. *Al-Mustazhirī* is polemical, *al-Iqtisād* theological, *Ihyā’* is somewhat mystical and *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* is a mirror for princes. Regardless of their differences, the political views contained in these books constitute the author’s thought on the imamate and the sultanate.

Conclusion

Even though *Hujjat al-Islām*, Imām al-Ghazzālī was perceived as a writer on doctrine, this study has shown that he has his own germane contribution to political science. He has discussed extensively the

need for and the pre-requisites of an *imām*. In this, he did not deviate much from the standard theological texts as he confirms that the basis and need of an imam is to uphold the religion. His emphasis on Qurayshite descent apparently was to repudiate the Bāṭinites' claim to the imamate.

From the four works analysed here, it appears that al-Ghazzālī repeated certain points in many places. This is due to the fact that the motives and audience of al-Ghazzālī were different for each work. Islam being universal contains universal guidance for all. Al-Ghazzālī, therefore, is forced to mention the same value to the King as well as to the general public.

Al-Ghazzālī occasionally seems to compromise Islamic principles and justifies an unjust imam. This can be explained by the fact that he was writing during a difficult historical phase. A dogmatic emphasis on ideal principles of Islam without recourse to reality would have weakened the resolve of the rulers to implement the *sharī'ah*. In other words, al-Ghazzālī's seeming compromise was motivated by the desire to keep the rulers within the fold of *sharī'ah* so that the interest of the ummah are better served. In any case, an understanding of al-Ghazzālī's political thought would therefore be impossible without analysing all of his works, their commonalities, their differences and the environment in which he lived and wrote.

Notes

1. A-Ghazzālī also gives his view on the development of the idea of the state in his *magnum opus*, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*; see in the latter work, vol. 3, bk. 6, chap. 5, ed. Zayn al-Dīn Abī Faḍl 'Abd al-Raḥīm ibn Ḥusayn (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tijāriyah al-Kubrā, n.d.), 224-230.
2. See Richard Joseph McCarthy, *Freedom and Fulfilment* (Boston: Twayne Publisher, 1980), 175. See also Hillenbrand, Carole. "Islamic Orthodoxy or Real Politik? Al-Ghazzālī's Views on Government." *Iran*, 26 (1988), 81-87.
3. Duncan B. Macdonald, "The Life of al-Ghazzālī, with special Reference to His Religious Experiences and Opinions," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 20 (1899), 87. See also George F. Hourani, "The Chronology of Ghazālī's Writings," *Journal of American Oriental Society*, 79 (1959), 227; W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962), 119.

4. W. Montgomery Watt, for instance, in his "The Authenticity of the Works Attributed to al-Ghazālī," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1952, 25-45, raises no doubts as to its authorship Cf. Hourani, "A Revised Chronology of al-Ghazālī's Writings," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 104, nos. 1-2 (1984), 293; Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Studies in al-Ghazzali*, (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1975), 46. Lazarus groups this work with those written by al-Ghazzālī during his stay in Baghdad, i.e., from 1091-1095.

5. This is confirmed by Hillenbrand who says: "It is not surprising, therefore, that one of the first actions of al-Mustaẓhir after becoming caliph was to commission from al-Ghazālī, as one of the leading theologians of the age, a polemic work against these Ismā'īlīs whose sophisticated propaganda was exerting growing appeal amongst the intelligentsia and the common People alike." See Hillenbrand, "Islamic Orthodoxy or Real Politik?," 82.

6. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī (Cairo: Dār al-Qaumiyyah li al-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Nashr, 1964), 169.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., 170.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid. Cf. McCarthy, *ibid.*, 275. Cf. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Iqtisād fī al-i'tiqād*, ed. by I. A. Çubukçu and H. Atay (Ankara: Nur Matbaasi, 1962), 234, n. 1.

11. Shahrastānī's commentary on the margins of Ibn Hazm's *al-Faṣl fī al-milal wa al-ahwā' wa al-nihal* vol. 1-2 (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1986), 93. Abū Bakr al-'Aṣam also holds that the Qur'ān is a created thing (*jism makhluq*) and denies the accidents (*'arād aṣlan*) and the attributes of God originally. See al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 170, no. 4.

12. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 171.

13. See Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); Al-Muẓaffar, Muḥammad Riḍā, *The Faith of Shī'ah Islam* (Qumm: Ansariyan Publications, 1982); and 'Allāmah S. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'i, *Shī'ite Islam*, tr., and ed. S. Hossein Nasr (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1975).

14. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 171.

15. Ibid.

16. The Bāṭinites claimed that only their master was qualified to be the imam who was infallible and qualified to interpret the *sharī'ah*. See al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 46, 73; McCarthy, *Freedom and Fulfilment*, 202, 218.

17. Ibid., 173.

18. This idea was used by the enemies of the Prophet Shu'aib, who was told by the former that they had all power and influence, whereas he was only a poor teacher. See *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*, tr. & comm. A. Yusuf 'Ali (Maryland: Amana Corp, 1983), verse 11:91, 539. See Arthur J. Arberry, tr., *The Koran* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 222.

19. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 173;

20. According to *Shi'ah* thought, an imam is appointed through the explicit designation (*naṣṣ*) of a preceding *imām*. The process of designation is sometimes referred to as a covenant (*'ahd*) from one to the next. See Farhad Daftary, *The Ismā'īlīs: Their History and Doctrines* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 61, 69 and 84; Moojan Momen, *An Introduction to Shi'ī Islam* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), xxi, 37, 39 and 154.

21. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 175;

22. *Ibid.*, 178.

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.*, 180.

25. *Ibid.*, 182-194.

26. Al-Ghazzālī says that the *'ulamā'* agreed that the imamate is only for one who has attained the rank of a *mujtahid*. He, however, maintained that the requisites of the imamate must be proved either by *Hadīth* or by reasoning based on the community's welfare (*maṣlaḥah*). In the absence of such a text requiring knowledge as a requisite, al-Ghazzālī saw no problem in compromising on this requisite for the imamate of al-Mustazhir.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Deposing an imam is impossible during this time because it would cause various vexations, insurrections and disturbances, resulting in chaos and disharmony in the society. See McCarthy, *ibid.*, 279.

29. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 195;

30. *Ibid.*, 201.

31. According to McCarthy, this portion of duty (action: *'amal*) is similar to that found in another work of al-Ghazzālī's, i.e., *Naṣīhat al-mulūk*, which has been translated by F.R.C. Bagley into English. See al-Ghazzālī, *al-Tibr al-masbūk fī naṣīhat al-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Damaj (Beirut: al-Mu'asassah al-Jāmi'iyyah li al-Dirāsāt wa al-Nashr wa al-Tauzī', 1987), 109-140. See also, al-Ghazzālī, *Ghazālī's Book Of Counsel for Kings (Naṣīhat al-mulūk)*, tr. F.R.C. Bagley (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 12-31.

32. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 212.

33. Ibid.

34. Hourani, "A Revised Chronology," 294.

35. Al-Ghazzālī, *al-Iqtisād fī al-i 'tiqād*, 234.

36. Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb al-Baṣrī al-Baghdādī al-Māwardī was one of the greatest and most learned jurists of his time and is considered as the first Muslim to have developed Islamic political science in the modern sense of the term. He was a Shafī'ite, like al-Ghazzālī. See Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭānīyah wa al-wilāyāh al-dīniyyah*, ed. Khālīd 'Abd al-Laṭīf (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al- 'Arabī, 1990).

37. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Iqtisād fī al-i 'tiqād*, 234-235.

38. Al-Ghazzālī says that to most people the world (*al-dunyā*) denotes the opposite of religion (*dīn*), and that the preoccupation with promoting it will lead to the destruction of religion. This meaning includes excessive enjoyment of this world's pleasures.

39. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Iqtisād fī al-i 'tiqād*, 236.

40. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā 'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 193.

41. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Iqtisād fī al-i 'tiqād*, 236.

42. The first three properties are found among the acquired qualities, while the last property, i.e., descent from Quraysh, is found among the innate qualities. See al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā 'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 180.

43. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Iqtisād fī al-i 'tiqād*, 238.

44. As regard to the first method, al-Ghazzālī mentions that the Prophet had never designated (*lam yanush huwa*) his successor nor had the four rightly guided caliphs, thereby refuting the theory of designation, see al-Ghazzālī, *ibid.*, 241. W. Montgomery Watt comments that the first two methods are simply mentioned for the sake of completeness, and then dismissed. See W. M. Watt, "Reflection on al-Ghazzālī's Political Theory." *Glasgow University Oriental Society Transactions*, vol. 21 (1965-66), 19.

46. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Iqtisād fī al-i 'tiqād*, 238.

47 See Wael Hallaq, "Ahl al-Hall wa al-'Aqd" in John L. Esposito, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World*, vol. 1, 53-54. See also, E.I.J. Rosenthal, "The Role of the State in Islam: Theory and the Medieval practice," *Der Islam*, 50, no. 1 (April 1973), 7.

48 Al-Māwardī maintains that since the caliph is appointed by the *ahl al-hall wa al-'aqd*, he must enjoy the same qualifications required of the members of the appointing body; therefore, he himself must be deemed its most qualified member, who alone might designate a successor. Due to this fact, he maintains

that the allegiance of the *ahl al-ḥall wa al-ʿaqd* was a subsidiary process, and resorted to only in cases where the caliph failed to appoint an heir. See Hallaq, "Ahl al-Ḥall," 53-54.

49. Al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Iqtisād fī al-iʿtiqād*, 239.

50. Ibid., 240.

51. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, ed. Zayn al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl ʿAbd al-Rahīm ibn Ḥusayn, vol. 2 (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Ṭijāriyyah al-Kubrā, n.d.). There are numerous English translations of this work. Only two translations claim to cover the entire forty books of the *Ihyāʾ*. Fazul-ul-Karīm's translation entitled *Imam Gazzali's Ihyāʾ ʿulūm-al-dīn* (Lahore: Sind Sagar Academy, 1971) is in four volumes. Bankey Behari's translation titled *The Revival of Religious Sciences by al-Ghazālī* (Surrey: Sufi Publishing Co. Ltd., 1972) is in one volume and seems to be more a summary of the *Ihyāʾ*. The rest of the translations are of individual books.

52. This was during the early period of al-Ghazzālī's retirement from teaching in Baghdad. The book was written in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus and at the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. See Hourani, "A Revised Chronology," 297.

53. See Hassan Muhammad, *The Influence of al-Ghazālī on Islamic Jurisprudence and Philosophy* (Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1993), 42.

54. See A. H. Muhiyuddin, "Al-Ghazali: Recollection of his Works," *Islamic Literature*, vol. 6, no. 1 (1954), 58.

55. See Hillenbrand, "Islamic Orthodoxy or Real Politik?," 90.

56. Al-Ghazzālī, *Ihyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, 140.

57. Ibid., 141.

58. Ibid.

59. Hillenbrand, "Islamic Orthodoxy or Real Politik?," 90.

60. This book was originally written in Persian. It was later translated into Arabic and English.

61. George F. Hourani, "A Revised Chronology," 301. However, there is no standard date given by authors for the composition of this book. Hillenbrand for example, says that it was probably written before the author's death, namely, in the years 503-5/1109-11; See Hillenbrand, "Islamic Orthodoxy or Real Politik?," 91. Meanwhile, Lambton mentions that it was written some time between 498/1105 and 505/1111. See Lambton, *State and Government*, 117. Nevertheless, what can be inferred here is that it was composed during the last years of the author's life.

62. See al-Ghazzālī, *Book of Counsel*, xvii.

63. This book contains two parts. The second part raises doubts as to the genuineness of the work as al-Ghazzālī's due to its approach, which is at variance with the rest of al-Ghazzālī's writings, both in Arabic and Persian, not to mention the fact that it even clashes with part one of the same work. For details, see Patricia Crone, "Did al-Ghazālī Write a Mirror for Princes? On the Authorship of *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk*," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, vol. 10 (1987), 167-191. See also Carole Hillenbrand, "Islamic Orthodoxy or Real Politik?," 92. Due to its dubious authenticity, this writing focuses only on part one of this book.

64. Al-Ghazzālī, *Book of Counsel*, xxxix.

65. See al-Ghazzālī, *al-Tibr al-masbūk fī naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 94; *Book of Counsel*, 4. Where the text states that the seed may be nourished with the water of obedience (*mā 'al-Ṭā'ah*).

66. Ibid., 97-105. This correct belief has been taken from section I of the first 'Pillar' of his *Kīmiyā-i-sa'ādat*, and agrees in content with book II of his *Iḥyā'*, on the Articles of Faith.

67. See McCarthy, *Freedom and Fulfillment*, 285. This principle is also found in al-Ghazzālī, *Al-Faḍā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah*, 285-286, and in his *Kīmiyā-i-Sa'ādat*.

68. Al-Ghazzālī, *al-Tibr al-masbūk fī naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 109. The other six persons are: (i) the young man who grows up in the worship of God; (ii) the man who lives in the bazaar but whose heart is in the mosque; (iii) two men who make friends with each other for God's sake; (iv) the man from whose eyes tears roll down when he remembers God and is alone; (v) the man who is sought after by a beautiful and wealthy woman but tells (her) 'I fear God'; and (vi) the man who gives charity with his right hand in such a way that his left hand does not know of it.

69. Ibid., 127.

70. Ibid., 118.

71. The compromise made by al-Ghazzālī on the requirement of knowledge as a quality of the ruler is evident in several of his works.

72. Al-Ghazzālī, *al-Tibr al-masbūk fī naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, 131-140.

73. Ibid., 32-44.

74. See Hillenbrand, "Islamic Orthodoxy or Real Politik?," 82-87.

75. See W. Montgomery Watt, "Al-Ghazzālī," in H.A.R. Gibb et al., eds., *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 2, second ed. (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1994), 1040.

76. See Lazarus-Yefeh, *Studies in Al-Ghazzālī*, 363-373.

77. See Watt, "Al-Ghazzālī," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1040.

78. This condition describes the 'ulamā' during al-Ghazzālī's professorship in Baghdad, whom he saw as corrupt and exploitative of their position for fame and money as a reward for their scholarly studies. He describes them as ambitious and mercenary, serving the rulers with their knowledge, but not contemplating truth. This realization compelled him to correct and help, or as he puts it, heal them. See Lazarus-Yefeh, *Studies in Al-Ghazzālī*, 373. It is said that this corrupt condition was also the cause of his spiritual crisis. *Ibid.*, 365.

79. Ḥasan al-Ṣabbāḥ was previously a representative of the Fāṭimid *da'wah* in Rayy, who then broke from it due to the dispute over the succession following the death of the Fāṭimid caliph al-Mustansīr (d. 487/1094). Ḥasan led the Nizārī Ismā'īlī movement, known as the *da'wah al-jadīdah*, as against the *da'wah al-qadīmah* in Egypt. Ḥasan's activities in Khurasan, which posed a menace to Seljūk power, was seen by al-Ghazzālī as being an extension of the larger Fāṭimid rivalry with the Seljūqs. For details, see Carole Hillenbrand, "The Power Struggle between the Seljūqs and the Ismā'īlī Movement of Alamūt, 487-518/1094-1124: The Seljuq perspective," in Farhad Daftary, ed., *Medieval Ismā'īlī History and Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 205-220, and Farouk Mitha, "Re-reading of al-Ghazzālī: Orthodoxy, Reason and Authority in the *Kitāb al-mustazhiri*" (M. A. Thesis, McGill University), 1993, 31-43.

80. Examples of *muhlikāt* (eternal perdition) include jealousy, hatred, conceit, vanity, hypocrisy and ambition.

81. Even though its content is similar to that *al-Mustazhiri*'s, the *Naṣīḥat*'s views are not in keeping with those found in the former.