

**AL-GHAZALI'S ATTACK ON PHILOSOPHERS
AND
IBN RUSHD'S RESPONSE**

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by

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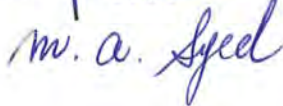
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FINAL APPROVAL OF THESIS

This is to certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Kausar Parveen and it is our judgement that this thesis is of sufficient standard to warrant its acceptance by the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad for the award of degree of Master of Science in History.

COMMITTEE.

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DEDICATED

TO MY

TEACHERS

Who have always been a source of

inspiration and encouragement for me

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INTRODUCTION

AL-GHAZALI:-

Al-Ghazali is one of the greatest and most enigmatic figures of Islam. He occupies a position unique in the history of Muslim religious and philosophical thought by whatsoever standard we may judge him: breadth of learning, originality or influence on later generations. He has been acclaimed as "the proof of Islam," the "ornament of Faith" and the "renewer of religion"¹.

Al-Ghazali was a politic writer. An Egyptian scholar in 1961 listed 457 titles which are generally attributed to al-Ghazali.² Al-Ghazali's autobiography al-Munqidh min al-dalal provides a lucid account of the ups and downs in al-Ghazali's spiritual life. It gives a graphic picture of his struggle to get at the truth.³ Ihya' 'ulum al-Din is his most popular book. It is a compendium of al-Ghazali's whole system.⁴ Maqasid al-Falasifah is an exposition of the views of the philosophers. In this he heavily depended on the studies of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina. He tried to elucidate the fundamentals of Neoplatonism in order to refute them in his Tahafut al-Falasifah⁵. Mishkat al-Anwar is on mysticism. Kimiya i-Sa'adat is in the Persian language and is a summary of the Ihya.⁶ Tahafut al Falasifah is a minutely argued

work. It was meant to uncover the basic "incoherence of the philosophers." Al-Ghazali's arguments against the philosophers are based on seventeen points on which he attacks their views as heretical and on three others on which he regards them as infidels.⁷ In another work, Nasihah al-Muluk al-Ghazali develops his political theory and analyses the position and qualities of the caliph-Imam.⁸

Al-Ghazali's influence within Islam has been both profound and most widespread. His works are studied all over the Muslim world. Majority of the Muslims accepted his teachings and made them a rule of life. His influence on the Muslim community has been greater than that of any other scholastic theologian.⁹

Al-Ghazali revitalized Muslim theology by combining spiritualism and the fundamental teachings of Islam. Besides this, we find Ghazali anticipating Descartes method of doubt, Hume's skepticism, Kant's criticism of pure reason and the spiritual empiricism of some of the philosophers of religion of our own times.¹⁰

But al-Ghazali did not go without his share of criticism. *"The unprecedented attempt on his part to make orthodoxy mystical and mysticism orthodox and both philosophical, naturally incurred suspicion and criticism from all schools of thought both before and after his death.*

Liberals have criticized him for his conservatism and conservatives for his liberalism; philosophers for his orthodoxy and the orthodox for his philosophy".¹¹

Al-Ghazali's constant use of philosophical language, his mode of argument, and preoccupation with sufism led Tartushi (d.520/1126), Ibn Qayyim (d.751/1350) and other famous theologians of the orthodox school to denounce him publicly as "one of the misguided"¹² Ibn al-Jauzi is reported to have once exclaimed, "How cheaply has al-Ghazali traded theology for sufism".¹³ Ibn Taimiyyah on the other hand has accused him of having traded "theology" for philosophy.¹⁴ Qazi Abu Abdullah Muhammad of Cordova went so far as to issue a decree (fatwa) against al-Ghazali's works, with the result that all his books, including the *Ihya*, were burnt and destroyed throughout Spain and the possession of them was forbidden on the threat of confiscation of property or even that of death.¹⁵ The theological and philosophical writings of al-Ghazali were also destroyed in North Africa during the reign of Sultan 'Ali ibn Yusuf ibn Tashfin, (477/1084--537/1142), who was fanatic in his religious views.¹⁶

IBN RUSHD:

Ibn Rushd was without question one of the greatest

scholars and philosophers the Arab world has produced and one of the profoundest commentators of Aristotle's works. Ibn Rushd's philosophy marked the climax of Muslim Aristotelianism. It is the philosophy which represents the culmination of Muslim thought in one essential direction, namely in the understanding of Aristotle's system.¹⁷

Ibn Rushd's world wide reputation is due to his masterly commentary on Aristotle's works. Among his other works, the following three are the most important. The Fasl al-maqal is an authoritative treatise. It demonstrates the convergence which exists between religious law and philosophy.¹⁸ The Kitab al-Kashif discusses the methods of demonstration and interpretation of dogmas of religion, which lead to error and misinterpretation.¹⁹ Tahafut al-Tahafut is another of his major works. It was written in response to al-Ghazali's Tahafut al-Falasifah.²⁰

Ibn Rushd won a high place among the intellectuals of medieval Europe. His works were used in Latin translations in the curriculum of the universities of Naples, Paris, and Bologna.²¹ No where did Averroes (the philosophy of Ibn Rushd) strike deeper roots than in the universities of Bologna and Padua. Averroes became rapidly the ruling mode of thought in the West. Scholars of medieval Europe were agitated by Ibn Rushd's Aristotle as by no other

philosopher.²² His philosophy helped in the development of rational and scientific thought in Europe, while in the Muslim world he remained an outcast and failed to make any significant impact on the Muslim society.²³

Ibn Rushd's philosophy is considered an important factor which led to the European Renaissance. Following are the main themes for which he was vehemently opposed by the scholastics of the East and the West and most enthusiastically welcomed by the radicals in thought:-

- (i) Allegorical interpretation of the scriptures.
- (ii) The theory of two truths, which in the words of Macdonald, "ran like wild fire through the schools of Europe".
- (iii) Immortality of the universal soul of humanity and mortality of the individual soul.
- (iv) Eternity and potentiality of matter.
- (v) liberty of women.

Due to these radical views of Ibn Rushd de Wolf calls him "Doctor of the anti-scholastics."²⁴

CHAPTER 1

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUSLIM PHILOSOPHY

instrument of knowledge and the other relying on revelation coming directly through Ilham or through the agency of prophets.⁵

MU' TAZILISM

According to the traditional account, someone asked Hasan al Basri, whether the grave sinner is a believer or a non-believer. Hasan al-Basri hesitated, but Wasil ibn 'Ata, one of his pupils, replied that the grave sinner must be placed in an intermediary position between infidelity and faith.⁶ He then withdrew to another pillar of the mosque with some of the people present there, whereupon Hasan remarked, 'Wasil has withdrawn (itazala) from us'. From this remark came the name Mutazilah.⁷

Wasil Ibn 'Ata and 'Amr ibn Ubayd were mainly responsible for the early development of Mu'tazilism. But the real breakthrough came during the reign of al-Mamun and his two successors, al Wathiq and al-Mutasim. These caliphs tried to impose Mu'tazilite doctrines on the people. But they had to face severe opposition from Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal and his followers. The Imam and his followers were persecuted but despite severe punishments they did not accept Mu'tazilism. The movement declined when the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil, the third successor of Al-Mamun, prohibited the preaching of Mu'tazilism. During this period the Mu'tazilites lost their

acts of men by creating in men the power to do each act.¹⁸

(vi) The Mutazilah held that any Muslim guilty of a serious sin was neither a believer nor an unbeliever while al-Ashari insisted that he remained a believer but was liable to punishment in the Hereafter.¹⁹

(vii) Al-Ashari maintained the reality of various eschatological features, the Basin, the Bridge, the Balance and intercession by Muhammad, which were denied or rationally interpreted by the Mutazilah.²⁰

ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy means "love of wisdom". It is derived from a Greek work "philosophia". Philosophy aims at discovering truths regarding the fundamental problems of the universe, soul and God by rational methods and arguments, irrespective of their conformity or non-conformity to religious dogma. In medieval Islam, a series of brilliant and original men had built, on the basis of Greek philosophical thought, a comprehensive and systematic view of the universe and of man which they were able to synthesize with certain key concepts and doctrines of Islam.²¹

The development of philosophy in Islam is bound up with the advent of the 'Abbasid dynasty in the middle of eighth century. A vigorous translation movement started

during al-Mamun's times (813-833). He established the Bayt al Hikimah (House of wisdom) in Baghdad, which was a centre for scientific activity and translations. This translation movement was continued by his successors and by the families attached to the royal court.²²

Al-Kindi was the first genuine philosopher. He was also interested in theology. Therefore, he did not totally subordinate the light of faith to the light of reason.²³

Al-Razi (d. 926) was another great philosopher. He was influenced by Plato's Timaeus. According to him, the world was created at a finite moment in time, but not out of nothing, and salvation is possible only through philosophy. He thus maintains that there is no need for prophets. All men are capable of discovering the truth. The fact that many do not pursue this rational course is not due to their inability but because they are not willing to adopt a rational course.²⁴

Both al-Kindi and al-Razi showed in their respective ways how philosophizing is possible within medieval Islam and thus they prepared the ground for the flowering of Philosophy in medieval Islam.²⁵

In the tenth and eleventh centuries, Islamic philosophical thought was dominated by two intellectual giants, al-Farabi (d.950) and Ibn Sina (d.1037). Their

philosophies have much in common but remain quite distinct.²⁶

Al-Farabi wrote commentaries on Aristotle's works, and other Greek writers. According to him, the world is an eternal emanation from God. There is a hierarchical series of existents in which the closest to Him is the highest in rank. The highest existent is the first intelligence overflowing directly from God. The intelligence undergoes two acts of cognition, an act of knowing God and an act of self-knowledge, from which in turn proceed two existents, a second intelligence and a body, which is the outermost body of the universe. The second intelligence undergoes a similar act of knowing God and knowing itself, resulting in the emanation of a third intelligence and the sphere of the planets, the sun and the moon. The last of the intelligences is the Active Intellect, which is the source of our world.²⁷

It was on the foundations laid down by al-Farabi in metaphysics that his successor Ibn Sina built his philosophical system. He was one of medieval Islam's leading physicians, astronomers and scientists. Of his numerous writings two, in particular, were influential in Europe, namely the encyclopedia, Al-Qaunun fi al-tibb (canon of Medicine), and his major philosophical work, the voluminous Al-Shifa' (Healing).²⁸

Ibn Sina maintains that there are self-evident

intuitive concepts, not dependent on sense perception these intuitive concepts include the "existent", "the thing" and the "necessary". The necessary is related to the "possible" and the "impossible". Through the rational consideration of these concepts, God's existence can easily be demonstrated. In itself an "existent" is either necessary or only possible. If it is necessary in itself then it must be the only such existent, uncaused and devoid of multiplicity. If it is only possible in itself, it must be necessitated by another existent, the latter by yet another and so on, ending at the existent necessary in itself, which is God.²⁹

Ibn Sina transformed the dyadic emanative scheme into a triadic system. God, the existent necessary in Himself, undergoes an eternal act of self-knowledge that results in the existence of the first intelligence, which is possible in itself but necessary through another this intelligence then undergoes three acts of cognition. Knowledge of God, knowledge of itself as a necessitated being, knowledge of itself as a possible being. These three acts produce three other existents respectively, another intelligence, a soul, and a body (the outer most body of the universe). This process is repeated by each successive intellect, giving existence to the various heavenly spheres each with its soul and intelligence, until from the last celestial intelligence

the Active Intellect emanates.³⁰

The human rational soul emanates from the Active Intellect. It is immaterial. It retains its individuality when it joins and then separates from the body. After departing from the body, good souls are blessed and bad souls are punished by being deprived from the contemplation of God and celestial intelligences, yet for ever seeking it. All theoretical knowledge is received from the Active Intellect. This knowledge consists of primary intelligibles, which are self-evident by all people without the need of experience and learning. It also consists of the secondary intelligibles (received only by those capable of abstract thinking). The reception of these intelligibles from the Active Intellect requires preparatory activities of the soul. They receive all or most of the secondary intelligibles directly. This theoretical knowledge is then translated through the prophet's imaginative faculty into symbols and images which the common people can understand. These constitute the revealed word which is in total harmony with philosophy.³¹

After al-Farabi and Ibn Sina the philosophical tradition carried on with great vigour in Muslim Spain. It produced many great philosophers, but the most important of them was Ibn Rushd. He was the only philosopher who tried to refute the accusations of al-Ghazali against the philosophers.

His response to al-Ghazali's attack represents a monumental effort to re-establish philosophy on firm and true grounds.

CHAPTER II

AL-GHAZALI'S ATTACK ON THE PHILOSOPHERS

Al-Ghazali's critical examination of the methods and doctrines of the philosophers in one of the most exciting and intellectually significant intellectual undertaking in the history of philosophy¹. Before starting to write against the philosophers, he attained a firm grasp of philosophy, its methods and its problems. Then he attacked the philosophers on their own ground, arguing philosophically that their main theses were inconsistent on logical grounds.²

Al-Ghazali's Tahafut al Falasifah is essentially a polemical work. In this book, he tried to destroy the philosophical edifice constructed by the Muslim philosophers. Especially, he was of the view that philosophy is not a good yardstick to measure the basis of religion, as religion is derived from revelation, intuition and inner experiences of human beings.³ He lists twenty points in his book on which Islam and philosophy cannot get along well. On the following of these points, al-Ghazali charges the philosophers with infidelity:⁴

- (i) eternity of the world.
- (ii) denial of God's knowledge of particulars.
- (iii) denial of bodily resurrection.

I have divided these twenty points into seven categories in order to make the study of these philosophical doctrines easier. All the related discussions are put into the same category.

ETERNITY OF THE WORLD

The Muslim philosophers al-Farabi and Ibn Sina did affirm that God created the world but they also maintained that it has no beginning. It is eternal. They based their arguments for the eternity of the world on the following assumptions:-

- (i) Every effect has a cause.
- (ii) The cause must be the action of some external force other than the effect.
- (iii) The cause or an act of will when executed must immediately lead to the effect.⁵

According to these assumptions, the world must have a cause. This cause cannot be a physical cause because none yet existed. According to religious belief this cause is the will of God. But divine will must have been moved by some other cause, which is external to God. But nothing outside God yet existed. Therefore, the world must have existed from all eternity.⁶

Al-Ghazali refutes this argument by questioning the philosophers' assumptions. He says that none of their assumptions has any logical necessity. Logical necessity means what is impossible to think otherwise. He says that it is possible that God's will has no external cause. Then it is also possible that God's will has a 'delayed effect'. It is

also possible that God eternally willed that the world should come into existence at some specific period in time. There is no violation of any logic in believing this. The philosophers' thesis of an eternal creation is a self-contradictory notion. Does it make sense to speak of the creation of that which exists eternally?⁷

The second argument of the philosophers revolves around time. It is an Aristotelian assumption that the existence of time depends on the existence of movement and thus a moving being. Aristotle says that time is the measure of movement. So if it can be proved that time is eternal it would follow that the moving being, the world is also eternal.⁸

Al-Ghazali apparently accepts the Aristotelian assumption and says that the existence of time is taken to be only co-extensive with the existence of a moving world. There is no evidence that our moving world is infinite. Therefore, any extension of time beyond this world is imaginary.⁹ Al-Ghazali refutes the arguments regarding time in another way as well. He says that space is finite, because it is an attribute of body which is finite. Therefore, time is also finite because it is an attribute of finite movement.¹⁰

The philosophers' third and fourth proofs of the eternity of the world are both based on the concept of

possibility. The philosophers say that the existence of the world must have always been possible in itself, otherwise it would never have come to be. But al-Ghazali rejects this argument because possibility is merely a concept and the argument from eternal possibility cannot itself prove that the world is eternal actually.¹¹

The fourth argument concerns the relation of possibility to matter inside the world. The philosophers say that the world is continually changing. Change means the combination of fresh forms in matter. Now every new combination was eternally possible. But possibility requires a substratum, matter, in which the changes take place. Therefore, this substratum, matter must be eternal.¹²

Al-Ghazali says that if possibility requires substratum to correspond to it, so would impossibility require something to correspond to it. But there is no existing thing in concrete reality in which impossibility may be referred. The assumption of an existing substratum to which this concept may be related is a metaphysical jump from mere thought to actual existence, which is an ontological fallacy.¹³

Regarding the incorruptibility of the world, the philosophers say that if cause does not change, it follows that the world is also without change and thus is

The philosophers say that an act must be the annihilation of the world is nothing. Therefore, there is no object for God's act not perform anything (for annihilation is nothing). Would there be an agent?¹⁵

Al-Ghazali says that what proceeds from Him is a new act is non-existence. If philosophers say that nothing, how does it then proceed from Him? 'Coming from Him' means that its happening is necessary. However,¹⁶

Al-Ghazali shows the incorruptibility of the world by the example of the sun. He says that after thousands of years there is no sign of decay in it. That means it does not undergo corruption.¹⁷

Al-Ghazali refutes this argument by saying that it is not true that what suffers corruption should become corrupt. That is what we cannot rely on our observation because we cannot determine the size only by approximation. If the size of the sun is said to be approximately a hundred and fifty times that of the earth, decreased, for instance by a few mountains, the difference would not be perceptible in the sense.¹⁸

The philosophers say that the possibility of the annihilation of the world never ceases. But this argument is not valid according to Al-Ghazali. He says that the world's

corruptibility and incorruptibility are equally possible. We know only through the Divine Law which of the two possibilities will be realized. Thus we cannot solve this problem by mere reason.¹⁹

Ghazali says that creation and annihilation take place through the will of God; if God wills, He creates and if He wills, He annihilates. It means that he is absolutely powerful and can do whatever He wishes.²⁰

THE CREATOR OF THE WORLD

In the third discussion of Tahafut al-Falasifah the fundamental issue is whether God can be rightly described as the creator of the world.

According to the philosophers, the world emanates from God (the first Principle) necessarily, just as the effect emanates from the cause or light from the sun.²¹ Al-Ghazali argues that an agent must have the attribute of 'will', 'free choice' and 'knowledge.' Therefore, al-Ghazali refers to God as the agent who has both the will and the knowledge of all that He creates. Thus al-Ghazali rejects the philosophers' principle of necessity in relation to the action of the First Cause. In opposition to them, he affirms the reality of the Divine attributes. God has multiplicity of attributes without compromising his eternal unity.²²

The philosophers say that 'the Necessary Being' (the first) necessitates the existence of the possible Being. That means that 'every cause is an agent and every effect is an agendum'.²³

Al-Ghazali argues that if we accept this proposition there would be no difference between the action of in-animate beings and that of animate beings. He says that inorganic matter cannot be considered as an agent since it has neither 'will' nor 'knowledge'.²⁴

The philosophers say that it is not merely metaphorical to say that every cause is an 'agent', whether the cause is animate or inanimate. The philosophers bring forth the example of the applicability of the word 'action' in the ordinary usage of the Arabic language. For example, 'fire does burn'.²⁵

Al-Ghazali says that all these actions are correct only in a metaphorical sense to support his claim he differentiates between volitional and non-volitional events. The philosophers' division is in terms of willing and unwilling. Al-Ghazali explains his proposition by the example of a man who throws his victim into the fire and the fire burns the victim. The act of the man in throwing the victim into the fire is categorized as volitional, whereas the act of the fire burning the victim is non-volitional. but it is

clear that the man is the murderer, not the fire.²⁶ Now it is clear that an 'Agent' in al-Ghazali's example is an animate being i.e. man, while to the philosophers, it is, in this example, an inanimate being

The philosophers say that the First Principle, which is the emanative cause of the First intelligence, does not know anything other than itself, whereas the first intelligence knows not only its cause but further knows itself and the three effects which proceed from it: The second intelligence, the soul of the highest sphere and the body of that sphere. In this way, the philosophers make the first intelligence superior to the First Principle, Because from the First Principle only one proceeds and from the first intelligence three proceed. Further, the First Principle does not know what proceeds from it, while the first intelligence knows itself, its cause and its three effects. Al-Ghazali says that by limiting God's knowledge to the sphere of self-knowledge, the philosophers' virtually reduce Him to the status of the dead.²⁷

Al-Ghazali says that the philosophers are unable to prove the existence of the creator. The philosophers' main argument is that the infinite regress of causes is impossible. There must be an uncaused cause of the series of effects. Al-Ghazali points out however that the philosophers

say that the bodies of the world are eternal which means that they have no cause. Moreover an infinite regress of causes is not impossible and the philosophers cannot prove it with an argument. Some of the philosophers, for instance Ibn Sina, even admit that an infinite number of souls can exist in a disembodied condition. This shows that the philosophers are unable to affirm the creator.²⁸

THE UNITY OF GOD

The philosopher say that if there were two gods, each would be called necessary. A necessary being is called necessary, if the necessity of its existence is essential to it.

Al-Ghazali argues that necessity means absence of a cause. If it is said that a certain being is necessary and uncaused in itself, the statement will not imply that nothing else can possibly possess the attribute of necessity.²⁹

The philosophers deny the divine attributes which are additional to the Divine essence because they are accidents of the essence and thus involve plurality and contingency in the subject. The philosophers argue that either the existence of the subject and its attributes will be independent of each other or both need each other, or one will be independent and other is not. If only one of the two depends on the other,

then that which depends will be a caused being.³⁰

Ghazali says that the essence does not depend on the attributes, while divine attributes depend on their subject. He further says that like the necessary being itself, its attributes are eternal and independent of an efficient cause. Ghazali says that rational arguments only prove that a series must stop. Nothing beyond this can be proven. He says that Divine things cannot be discovered through intellectual investigations. For this reason the Law-giver has said:

*" Think over the product of God's creative activity, do not think over His essence."*³¹

The philosophers argue that if He had a quiddity, His existence would be subordinate to it. But subordination is only an effect. Consequently necessary existence would be an effect.

Ghazali says that God has an essence or quiddity and existence is related to the essence. Such existence had no agent, but continued from eternity without any efficient cause. Rational demonstration has proved termination of the series of causes and effects. It is possible to terminate the series by an existent essence.³²

Ghazali further says that existence without quiddity

or essence is unintelligible. Ghazali says that the ultimate result of the philosophers' investigation is pure negation. The denial of quiddity is denial of reality. When reality is denied, nothing remains but the word 'existence' to which no object corresponds, unless it be related to quiddity.³³

The philosophers raise another issue regarding the unity of God viz. that God cannot be a body. The body is bound to be composed. It can be divided (a) quantitatively into parts (b) conceptually into form and matter (c) into those qualities which specially belong to a body. But Necessary Being is one and indivisible with respect to all these things.

According to Ghazali, all that can be proved is that if some parts of an aggregate need others, then an aggregate must be a caused thing. The philosophers base their denial of number and duality on the denial of composition; and the denial of composition is based on the denial of quiddity, which he has already refuted.³⁴

The philosophers say that if the body is connected with the soul, then the soul will be its cause. Therefore, the body cannot be the First Cause. Ghazali answers that our soul is not the cause of our body. It is produced by an external cause.³⁵

The philosophers say that the soul connected with the

body acts only through the intermediacy of body. The body cannot be an intermediary for the soul for the purpose of (a) the creation of other bodies, (b) the production of other souls, (c) the production of things uncogential to bodies.³⁶

Ghazali answers that it is possible that among the souls, there be a soul which is enabled by some special property possessed by it to be the source of the production of bodies and other things from it.³⁷

The philosophers say that the body of the highest sphere or the sun must possess a certain quantity, the increase or decrease of which must be possible. Hence the special choice of a contingent quantity for the body will require a cause. Therefore, the body will not be the First Cause.³⁸

Ghazali answers that it is necessary due to the universal system that a body possess a certain quantity. He further says that just as the philosophers consider the causes as eternal. So did the body (which, in order to refute the philosophers, Ghazali has assumed to be the First Cause) is eternal also.³⁹

DIVINE KNOWLEDGE

Ibn sina says that the universe is the action of God. Therefore, God is the Agent and an agent must have knowledge

of his action. Ghazali, in order to refute this argument, points out that knowledge of the action is necessary in the case of voluntary action only. It is not necessary in the case of natural action. On the other hand, the philosophers are of the view that the universe necessarily proceeds from His essence as light necessarily proceeds from the sun. Here al-Ghazali shows the inconsistency in the doctrine of the philosophers that they regard the creation of the world as a natural action and are still insisting that God knows about it. Natural action is involuntary and the agent does not know its action.⁴⁰

Here Ghazali imagines a counter-argument which the philosophers might produce to overturn his attack. He says that the philosophers might say that the universe proceeds from His essence because of his knowledge of the universe. Therefore, His knowledge of the universe is identical with Himself. If he did not have the knowledge of the universe, the universe could not be produced - which is not true of the emanation of light from the sun.⁴¹

In order to refute the above argument, Ghazali has another counter argument. He says that according to the philosophers the universe has not been produced by God all at once. On the contrary, it came through the intermediaries and indirectly connected developments and consequences. Here

Ghazali points out that on the basis of what the philosophers hold, it is not necessary that which proceeds from Him must be known to Him.⁴²

Having recognised the origin of the world because of God's will, Ghazali proceeds to infer knowledge from will and life from knowledge and power. From life the philosophers further infer that since all living beings are self-conscious, God who is living, must also know Himself. This is intelligible. But the philosophers deny the will and the creation and assert that whatever emanates from Him emanates of necessity and by way of nature. Therefore, according to Ghazali, the philosophers should believe that the First Cause does not know itself as fire and the sun do not know themselves or anything else.⁴³

Ibn Sina says that God knows everthing *"Nothing, not even as much as a particle of dust in the heavens or on the earth, remains hidden from His knowledge."* But God does not have the perceptual knowledge of the particular things, but knows them by way of a universal knowledge.⁴⁴ Ibn Sina further says that a particular event occurs at a particular moment of time and suffers change with the passage of time. Change in the object of perception leads to change in the subject of perception. But we know that God is changless. Therefore, perception of a particular event is not possible

for Him. Similarly to distinguish between one particular object and another in space is possible only through the senses. Hence, perceptual knowledge of the particulars is not possible for God. God's knowledge is of conceptual or universal nature.⁴⁵

In refuting this view, Ghazali asks how can God's knowledge remain unaffected by the multiplicity and diversity of the objects that He knows? If the change in the objects necessarily presupposes change in the subject then multiplicity and difference in the objects pre-supposes the same in the subject also.⁴⁶

According to al-Ghazali, the philosophers' thesis creates a gulf between God and man. In this way the philosophers denied a relation between God and man, which is the very essence of religion. It means that all the prayers and praises of the people are of no use to them, because God does not know them. It gives a bleak and cold picture of God which is against the true spirit of religion.⁴⁷ Further, God's eternal knowledge of all the particular events in one single manifestation means that the events reflect a pattern of sequence which is fixed and unalterable. This leads a closed and absolutely deterministic system of reality in which no possibility is left for the existence of the will and creative action, not even for God Himself. There is no

scope for the happening of miracles in such a system. Here it is evident that the intellectualistic deterministic world view of the philosophers is in sharp contrast with the voluntaristic occasionalistic world view of the Asharites.⁴⁸ Ghazali is only demonstrating the logical inconsistency of the philosophers' position. His own position is different from what appears in the above arguments.

THE HEAVEN AND ITS MOTIVE POWER

According to the philosophers the Heaven is living and has a soul which is related to the heavenly body in the same way as our souls are related to our bodies. The Heaven moves and the purpose of its rotatory motion is the worship of the Lord of the universe. its movement is volitional movement.⁴⁹

Ghazali puts forward the following hypothesis which, he claims, the philosophers will find no argument to refute:

- (i) The movement of the heaven may be the result of the constraint exercised by another body, which wills its movement and causes it to revolve perpetually. This refutes the philosophers' dictum that heavenly movement is volitional and that the heaven is living.
- (ii) It is possible that heavenly movement is constrained and God's will is its principle.⁵⁰

Ghazali says that if the philosophers believe that

every movement is made either because a place is sought or another avoided, then they make the "seeking after" the end of nature and make movement itself a secondary factor which is desired not in itself but as a means to "seeking after." It is probable for movement itself to be the end and not merely a means to the place supposed to be sought. It follows that their assertion that heaven is living is as arbitrary and groundless assumption.⁵¹

The philosophers say that the heaven obeys God through its movement and seeks to be nearer to Him in respect of God's attributes. This nearness is achieved in two ways:

- (i) By complete occupation of all the positions which are possible for it.⁵²
- (ii) The cumulative effect of the movement of the heaven (which includes difference of relations e.g. three sided or four sided formations or conjunction or opposition and the difference of celestial aspects in relation to the earth) is the overflow of good towards things under the sphere of moon. Therefore originate all the temporal events. So in this way heavenly souls derives perfection.⁵³

Ghazali disproves the above assumptions in two ways:

- (i) The desire to gain perfection by being in all the places may be regarded as an indication of stupidity rather than devotion. For one may compare the above

action to the behaviour of a man who stands up and begins to turn round and round, thinking that this will bring him nearer to God. "Will he be on the way to perfection, since he is trying to be in all the places possible for him?"⁵⁴

- (ii) If the eastward movement were westward and vice versa, the reversal could still produce all those effects which have been mentioned by the philosophers - namely the phenomena resulting from the difference of movements, such as three sided or four sided formations, etc. The same applies to the complete occupation of all the places and positions. For all that is possible for the heaven is that it should move from one place to another. "what, then has happened to it to prevent it from moving now from one side, now from another. So it could utilize all that, it could utilize all that is possible - if the utilization of all that is possible were an index of perception".⁵⁵

Ghazali concludes that these theories are mere speculations, which lead nowhere. The secrets of the kingdom of heaven cannot be discovered through such speculations. Only the prophets and saints discover these secrets by inspired wisdom, not by rational methods. That's why the philosophers, who take up the discussion where the prophets

left it, have been unable to explain the directions of movement and to show the cause of choice of particular directions of movement and to show the cause of choice of particular directions.⁵⁶

In the sixteenth discussion of the Tahafut al Falasifah, the philosophers' theory that the souls of the heaven observe all the particular events of this world, is refuted by Ghazali.

The philosophers say that the "Preserved Tablet" means the souls of the heaven. The impression of the particulars of the world upon the souls of the heaven is like the impression of the memorables upon the faculty of memory, which is located inside the brain of man. The heavenly angels are the souls of the heaven. (God's favourite) Angels are the immaterial intelligences, self-subsisting substances, which do not exist in space and which do not act upon bodies. It is from these intelligences that particular forms descend upon the heavenly souls. The intelligences are nobler than the heavenly souls because the former give and the latter receive. Therefore, the nobler of the two is symbolically called the "Pen". Therefore, God says *"He taught by the Pen"*. The pen is like an engraver which gives, like a teacher whereas he who receives is comparable to a tablet. The souls of the heaven know what will happen in the future, as they

know the primary causes, their effects, the necessary effects of those effects and so on to the end of the series.⁵⁷

The philosophers further say that in our-waking life, we are preoccupied with what the senses and the passions bring to us. Our interest in sensuous things prevents us from achieving that contact. But when in sleep our preoccupations are partially abated, and the capacity for contact with the souls of the heaven is restored to us. In this way a prophet has a glimpse into the Hidden World. The psychic powers of a prophet are so high that the outward senses do not submerge them. It is for this reason that he sees in waking life what others see only in dreams.⁵⁸

Al-Ghazali answers that the philosophers cannot prove things like the "Preserved Tablet" and the "Pen" through their reasoning, which have been mentioned in the Quran. The source of the knowledge of these things is the sacred law not reason. He further says that it can be said that God enables the prophet to know the hidden things; therefore he knows them without any preparation having been made by him. Similarly it may be said that one who has a dream comes to know the hidden things because God or one of the angels enables him to know them.⁵⁹

The philosophers also argue that the celestial souls are free from the qualities of desire, anger, greed, malice, envy, hunger, pain etc. Therefore, no distraction befalls

them, and no care or sensation can engross them. Therefore, they know all things.⁶⁰ Ghazali answers that the worship and the longing for God can also prevent the heavenly souls from the knowledge of particular events. Worship of God can be a hinderance in their way which can distract^c their attention and they are not able to know the particulars of this world.⁶¹

NECESSITY OF A CAUSAL NEXUS

The seventeenth discussion of the Tahafut al-Falasifah revolves around the concept of a necessary causal nexus. The philosophers ascribe to "secondary causes" a certain degree of efficacy in the natural order, which is refuted by al-Ghazali on the ground that such a view militates against the Qur'anic concept of omnipotent Diety, who carries out His grand cosmic designs directly and without any mediator.⁶²

Ghazali asserts that the relation between the cause and effect is not that of logical necessity. The affirmation of the one does not imply the other. Therefore, the relation between quenching the thirst and drinking, satiety and eating, burning and fire or light and sunrise etc. is not a necessary relation.⁶³ Ghazali says that we observe that objects succeed one another. Now this proves succession not causation and conjunction not connection. The fire which is

an inanimate object has no power to produce the effect of burning. Observation shows only that one is with the other. The effect happens with the cause and not through it.⁶⁴

Ghazali further says that objects as such are not connected with one another, only the ideas of them get connected in our mind by association. The relation between fire and burning belongs to the realm of possibility : it may or may not happen, depending on the will of God. It is only when something possible is repeated over and over again that its pursuance of a uniform course in accordance with the norm in the past is impressed upon our minds. Causal necessity is just the habit of our mind. The philosophers do not believe in miracles. But al-Ghazali insists that ~~the~~ denail of miracles can be justified only when it is proved that they are logically impossible.⁶⁵

To further elaborate his orgument that cause is the sum total of many causes, al-Ghazali gives the example of man seeing a colour red object : he should posses sound vision, he should open his eyes, there sould be no obstruction between the eyes and the object of vision, the object should have sufficient light. Any one condition by itself cannot be taken to be a cause and a single negative condition such as the blindness of the person or the darkness of atomsphere may make the cause non-operative, though logically of impossible.

Even where we recognise that there are many causes for the same effect, we cannot limit the number of causes for the same effect, we cannot limit the number of causes just to those which we ourselves have observed. Therefore it is not possible to negate an effect on the negation of one particular cause, for we cannot possess exhaustive knowledge of all the causes. Moreover, causes by themselves are inert entities, will and action cannot be attributed to them. They act only through the power and agency of God. The only will is the absolute free will of God which works unconstrained⁶⁶

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL

According to the philosophers, rational cognitions subsist in the human soul. These cognitions are finite and have indivisible units. Therefore one substratum of these cognitions must also be indivisible. But bodies are divisible, which leads to the conclusion that the rational cognition is not body.⁶⁷

Al-Ghazali answers by saying that the philosophers describe the faculty by which a goat perceives a wolf's enmity. This perception is indivisible because enmity has no parts, some of which might be supposed to perceive, while others do not. But the philosophers say that the perception does reside in a bodily faculty. This perception which is indivisible resides in a bodily faculty which is divisible.

In this way the philosophers' argument is rendered invalid.⁶⁸

The philosophers present another argument viz. That if knowledge were to subsist in a part of the heart or the brain, then its contrary, ignorance, could exist in another part of the heart or the brain. This means that a person might be a knower and ignorant person at the same time, and in relation to the same thing. But that is impossible and therefore knowledge is also the substratum of ignorance.⁶⁹

In the next argument the philosophers say that the bodies are constantly subject to dissolution. The dead tissues are replaced by new tissues which are made by food. For example, a new born baby grows and becomes stronger with the passage of time. He does not retain any of the part of his childhood, But we say that this man is the same as that child. His cognitions of childhood remains with him inspite of the replacement of his physical parts. It shows that soul is independent of body and body is its instrument.⁷⁰

Al-Ghazali says that just like man, of animal or plant is said to be the same as it was in the past. But this does not prove that the animal or the plant has being other than the physical one. So inspite of many dissolutions and replacements, parts of the sperm do remain⁷¹.

The philosophers say there are two methods of perishing a soul.

- i. The death of the body
- ii. The occurrence of the contrary of the soul which replace it.

But the philosophers argue¹ that soul cannot perish with the death of the body because body is not the substratum of the soul. The souls are substances and substances have not contraries. Therefore the souls are immortal.⁷²

Al-Ghazali points out that there is a connection between the soul and body wherefore a soul comes into existence with the existence of a body. If the soul is impressed upon body then the elimination of the body will eliminate the soul as well. Then the soul can reappear with the will of God as religion teaches in the doctrine of resurrection.⁷³

THE RESURRECTION OF BODIES

The philosophers are sceptical about the physical resurrection in the hereafter; consequently, they deny the revivification of bodies, physical pain and pleasure and the existence of paradise and hell in the physical sense. They insist that life hereafter is purely spiritual and that paradise and hell are the states of one's soul and not localities. They do acknowledge that many passages of the Qur'an speak of the life hereafter in the physical sense, but maintain that the language of these passages is symbolic and

metaphorical. According to them, the vivid imagery used in these passages is merely to appeal to the mind of ordinary men who cannot understand everything. It is the work of the philosophers to seek a clearer and purer meaning of the scripture .⁷⁴

Ghazali says that all this is mere deception on the part of the philosophers. They have selected such verses of the Quran which can serve their purpose and they have put their own interpretations upon them. Ghazali says that their belief is in accordance with the plotinian dichotomy of soul and body. According to this concept body is merely a hindrance and impediment in the Soul's attainment of its perfection. Body is a tomb of the soul and the release from it at death is indeed the first resurrection of the soul. The philosophers have put forward many verses of the Quran and several traditions of the prophet as evidence in support of their position the Quran says:

" No soul knows what is hidden for it?

And the prophet had said about things in paradise that *"which no eye has seen and no ear has heard and which the heart of man cannot conceive "*.⁷⁵

The philosophers say that the body of man in the grave is reduced to dust or eaten by worms and birds and then

mixed up with all the things in the world. Therefore it is not possible for this body to be resurrected in the sense that all its original parts be gathered into it once again, what has passed away is never reborn in an identical form.⁷⁶

Al-Ghazali argues in his response that the real problem of the philosophers is that they seek naturalistic explanation for all things, more precisely, explanation in terms of cause and effect, and do not at all admit the possibility of the occurrence of the extraordinary and the supernatural. He further says that all the arguments of the philosophers fail to prove the logical impossibility of physical resurrection. All their arguments also stand openly refuted by the Quran which states

” وَقَالُوا إِذَا كُنَّا عِظَامًا وَرَفَاتًا إِنْ أُنْمِئْتُمْ لَنْ نُخْلَقَ جَدِيدًا ۝
 قُلْ كُونُوا حِجَارَةً أَوْ حَدِيدًا ۝ أَوْ خُلُقًا مِمَّا يَكْبُرُ فِي صُدُورِكُمْ ۝
 فَسِقُولُونَ مَنْ يُعِيدُنَا ۝ قُلِ الَّذِي فَطَرَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۝ ”

(xvii, 49-50)

” They also say ‘When we are turned bones and dust, shall we be restored as a new creation? Say.’ you shall, whesher you turn to stone or iron, or any other substance

which you may think unlikely to be given life' they will ask:
'who will restore us ? Say : 'He that created you at first'.⁷⁷

”أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ قَادِرٌ
عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ“
(XVII, 99)

“ Do they not consider that God who created the
heavens and the earth, is able to create their likes ? ⁷⁸

Ghazali says that the reunion of the soul with its new body
would be no more wonderful than its first union with the
earthly body here, The association between the soul and the
body is so deep a mystery that the philosophers have not been
able to fathom it out.⁷⁹

Al-Ghazali has attacked philosophers most vigorously.
His arguments are strong and convincing. Ghazali also
rehearses some of the counter arguments which the
philosophers might produce to overturn his attack. And indeed
they are not dissimilar in many cases from the arguments
which Averroes does produce. But Van Den Bergh points out
that Ghazali's book is badly constructed, it is unsystematic
and repetitive. If Ghazali had processed systematically he
would have attacked first the philosophical basis of the
system of the philosophers namely their proof for the

existence of God, the Highest Principle, from which everything else is deduced . But the first problem Ghazali mentions is the philosophers' proof for the eternity of the world. He starts by saying rather arbitrarily that the philosophers have four arguments, but in discussing them, he mixes them up and the whole disscussion is complicated by the fact that he gives the philosophical arguments in such an involved way that the trend is sometimes hard to follow.⁸⁰

CHAPTER III

IBN RUSHD'S DEFENCE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

Al-Ghazali's attack on philosophy was counter attacked by Ibn Rushd (Averroes). He defended philosophy against the charges of Ghazali, who had sought to demonstrate that Islam and philosophy were incompatible¹. Ibn Rushd's book Tahafut al-Tahafut was written sometime after 1180. In this book " Ibn Rushd quotes almost all of al-Ghazali's Tahafut, commenting on it paragraph by paragraph. Although his main criticism is directed against al-Ghazali, at times he criticizes Ibn Sina, particularly for his Neoplatonism. Ibn Rushd's Tahafut is a sober work of criticism that tracks down ambiguities, draws distinctions, reformulates positions, corrects misunderstandings and offers analyses " ²

ETERNITY OF THE WORLD

According to Ibn Rushd, Divine will is not like human will. God must have created the world from eternity, because he saw from eternity that the existence of a world was better than its non-existence. He further says that the question of the eternity of the world cannot be solved from consideration of the divine will, for we do not know enough about the nature of that will, though we may guess a great deal³.

Ibn Rushd repeats the Aristotelian dictum that what has no beginning has no end and that therefore there is never an end of time, and one can never say that any moment an infinite time, is ended. He denies that an infinite time involves an infinite causal series and the negation of a First Cause. The causal series is a temporal series, since it is God who is the essential cause. Ibn Rushd also bases his answer on the Aristotelian theory that in line there is only a succession. A simultaneous infinite whole is denied by Aristotle and therefore according to Aristotle the world must be limited in space, but in time there is never a whole, since the past no longer exists and the future does not yet exist.⁴

Ibn Rushd does not deny the principle of creation but offers an explanation of it which is different from that given by the theologians. Ibn Rushd apparently seems to submit that the world is eternal but at the same time makes the important distinction between eternity of God and the eternity of the world. He says that there are two kinds of eternities : eternity with cause and eternity without cause. The world is eternal because of a creative and moving agent eternally working upon it. God on the other hand is eternal without a cause. The priority of God to the world does not consist with reference to time. God's existence does not imply time.⁵

For Ibn Rushd there is no creation ex nihilo once for all, but rather a creation renewed from moment to moment. According to this view, a creative power is perpetually at work in the world, moving it and maintaining it.⁶

Ibn Rushd say that an eternal creation is not in contradiction to the Qur'anic view and that the verbs to produce ' to cause ' ' to happen ', which occur in the Qur'an, do not necessarily imply a time factor. He believes, therefore that al-Ghazali gave a wrong interpretation of the true conception of the Qur'an. The verb ' to produce', ahdatha Arabic, is a causative form of the verb ' to become '. Ibn Rushd say that the philosophical view is in fact the common view of Muslims. When they say that the world is not eternal, they really mean that the world has a cause so that the difference is only verbal and no factual.⁷

Ibn Rushd says that when it is assumed tat the corruption takes place in a natural way and that the celestial body is like on animal, it necessarily decays as all animals suffer corruption only in a natural way. He further says that if Heaven should suffer corruption, it would either disintegrate into the elements of which it is composed, as losing the from its possesses receive another as happens with the four elements when they change into one another. If however, heaven passed away into the elements, those elements would have to be part of another world, for

heaven could not have come into being from the elements contained in this with the size of the heaven. If heaven loses its form and receives another, there would exist a sixth element opposed to all other, being neither heaven nor earth, nor water, nor air, nor fire. But all this is impossible.⁸

Ibn Rushd further says that if the sun had decayed and the parts of it which had disintegrated during the period of its observation were imperceptible because of the size of its body, the effect of its decay on bodies in the sublunary world would still be perceptible in a definite degree. For every thing that decays does so through the corruption and disintegration of its parts and those parts which disconnect themselves from the decaying mass must necessarily remain in the world in their totality or change into other parts. In either case, change must occur in the world, either in the number so in the character of its parts. And if the size of the bodies could change their actions and affections, and especially those of the heavenly bodies could change, changes would arise in the sublunary world. To imagine a dissipation of the heavenly bodies is to admit a disarrangement in the divine order, which according to the philosophers, prevails in this world.⁹

Ibn Rushd is of the view that extinction and

annihilation are synonymous and if God cannot create annihilation He can't create extinction either. Ibn Rushd says that the philosophers do not deny that a thing becomes non-existent when a destroying agent destroys it they only say that the destroying act does not attach itself to it is so far as the thing becomes non-existent but in so far as it changes from actual being to potential being, non-existence results from this change and it is in this way that non-existence is related to the agent.¹⁰

THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE

In this presentation, our concern is to discuss Ibn Rushd's response to al-Ghazali's refutation of the philosophers' position on the nature of the Agent, i.e God, in bringing the universe into existence.¹¹

In response to al-Ghazali's statement that an agent is one from whom action proceeds by virtue of "the will for action " and by way of free choice, together with knowledge of what is willed. Ibn Rushd offers a basic clarification by advancing two main points. First he defines the agent in the simple terms of one who brings something to pass from potency to actuality and from non-existence to existence. Secondly, he insists that an agent is separated from an action caused on the basis of the common philosophical consensus that an

agent can be separated from its objects.¹²

Ibn Rushd explains that the act of bringing something forth from potentiality to actuality and non existence to existence, may take place in either of two ways: by deliberation and choice or by nature. However, something, which proceeds by nature like ' the shadow of a man' cannot be treated as an action of an agent since the shadow of man cannot be separated from the man himself therefore it is philosophically untenable to classify God as a natural cause, for as the Divine Agent his action must always be marked, by the qualities of agency. ¹³

Ibn Rushd further explains that God's act proceeds from Him through knowledge. It proceeds from Him not through any necessity which calls for it, either in His essence or outside His essence, but through His grace and His bounty. He is necessarily endowed with will and choice in their highest form. ¹⁴

From the above notion, Ibn Rushd is in a position to maintain that the Agent (God) possesses the Divine "attributes of perfection " i.e. 'knowledge' 'will', 'life', 'power', 'speech,' 'hearing' and 'seeing'. Over against al-Ghazali, he insists that the philosophers do not deny these Divine attributes of perfection to God. He asserts that their sole concern is that these attributes should not be

applied to God and the creature univocally or in any sense which implies proportion between them in their Divine and empirical existence.¹⁵

Ibn Rushd argues that the nature of agency in the empirical world is qualitatively different from the Divine and cannot therefore be used as a basis for analogical reasoning. The duality of agencies in the empirical world is illustrated by Ibn Rushd as follows:

" In the empirical world there are two kinds of agents, one which performs exclusively one thing and this essentially, for instance warmth which causes heat and coldness which causes cold, are called by the philosophers natural agents. The second kind of agents are those that perform a certain act at one time and its opposite at another; these acting only out of knowledge and deliberation are called by the philosophers voluntary and selective agents ¹⁶

Neither of these two kinds of agents can be attributed to the Divine. The Divine Agent cannot be thought of as a natural agent, operating without deliberation or choice of action, due to the fact that the natural action does not proceed from knowledge.¹⁷

Ibn Rushd says that the knowledge of the Divine Agent is the cause of the object known and this in turn entails

that human knowledge of the empirical agent is the effect of the Divine. The mode of the Divine knowledge is entirely transcendent and can only be known by God as the Divine Agent Himself.¹⁸

Ibn Rushd then proceeds to develop the same argument in respect of al Ghazali's contention that the action of the agent proceeds in a selective and voluntary manner. Agency in this generalized sense would involve God in the willing and the choosing of the transitory thing of the empirical phenomena in which case. He would be attributed with deficiency and change.¹⁹

In response to al-Ghazali's claim that an 'agent, to be willing and knowing, must be animate, that inanimate things cannot by definition be agent, Ibs Rushd takes the example of fire which, he claims, though an inanimate being has one power in itself to actualize when anything warm and dry are put together²⁰

Ibn Rushd, therefore, concludes that what is inanimate can still be regarded as an agent' No body doubts that in the bodies of animals there are natural powers which make the food a part of the animal. He further says that if by an 'agent' or 'tendency' or 'willing' is meant the performance of an act of a willer' it is a metaphor, but when by these expressions is meant that it actualizes another's

potency, it is really an agent in the full meaning of the world²¹

Further more, Ibn Rushd claims that the division of 'will' into rational and non-rational is non-sense, since in the definition of 'will' knowledge is included. Homer, the philosophers' contention that the 'agent' is true, In the definition of an 'act' knowledge is not included, because actualization of another thing is possible without knowing it. Therefore knowledge does not play a necessary role in the act of actualizing potency into actuality. Thus a voluntary agent' and non-voluntary agent or 'natural agent' can be regarded as 'the agent' of an act, not in a metaphorical sense but in a real sense. Therefore al-Ghazali's argument that an inanimate being cannot be called an 'agent' is refuted.²²

Al-Ghazali had argued that the philosophers' theory regarding eternity of the world was self-contradiction as the philosophers believe the world to be eternal and still attribute a creator to it.²³ Ibn Rushd says in response that there are two kinds of agent:

i). The agent to which the object (which proceeds from it) is only attached during the process of its becoming; once this process is finished the object is not any more in need of it for instance the coming into existence of a house through the builders.

ii) The agent from which proceeds an act which is entirely dependent on the agent, is superior to the former agent and is more truly an agent.

For this agent brings its objects into being and conserves it, whereas the other agent only brings its objects to being but requires another agent for its further conservation. The mover is such a superior agent in relation to the moved and to the things whose existence consists only in the movement. The philosophers, believing that movement is the act of a mover and that the existence of the world is only perfected through motion, say that the agent of motion refrained for only one movement from its action, the world would be annihilated. The world has come into being from an eternal agent having an eternal act, i.e. an act without beginning or end, which does not, however mean that the world is eternal by itself.²⁴

UNITY AND SIMPLICITY OF GOD

Ibn Rushd says that if there were two necessary existents, the difference between them must consist either in a numerical difference or in a specific difference or in a rank. In the first case they would agree in species, in the second case in genus, and in both cases the necessary existent would have to be composite. In the third case, necessary existent will have to be one and will be the cause

of all the separate existents. The necessary existent is one, two of which are false and therefore the third case, which necessitates the absolute uniqueness of the necessary existent, is the true one.²⁵

Body is composed of matter and form, and the First Principle cannot be divided. Therefore the first Principle is not body. Ibn Rushd also denies the plurality of attributes in the necessary existent. If these attributes were of a necessary existence, the necessary existent would be more than one, since the essence is also a necessary existent. If the attributes were caused by the essence, they could not be necessary existents otherwise the term "necessary existent" would comprise the essence (a necessary existent) and the attributes (which are not a necessary existent). This is impossible and absurd. Therefore Ibn Rushd concludes that in such existents which subsist by themselves without being bodies the essential attributes of essence are not additional to their essence.²⁶

Ibn Rushd says that al-Ghazali based his discussion on the doctrine of Avicenna. The latter is rejected by Ibn Rushd because Avicenna believed that existence is something additional to the essence outside the soul and is like an accident of the essence. And if existence were a condition for the being of the essence and a condition for the essence

of the necessary existent, the necessary existent would be of a possible existence. Avicenna also affirms that what exists as an addition to its essence has a cause. Now existence for Avicenna is an accident which supervenes on the essence.²⁷

Al Ghazali criticizes Ibn Sina and the Neoplatonists for having divested God of any positive attributes. According to them, in God, who is absolutely simple, the composition of essence and attribute is logically impossible.²⁸ In his rebuttal, Ibn Rushd accuses al-Ghazali of misunderstanding the nature of perfection as it applies to God and the creature respectively. The philosophers do not deny the divine "attributes of Perfection" i.e., knowledge, will, life, power, speech, hearing and seeing. They only deny that any proportion between the creature and God exists. Knowledge belongs to God eternally but the modes of its bearing on created entities is unknown to us. Therefore it is not justified to assert that God knows the coming to be of created entities or their passing away either through an eternal or through a temporal mode of knowledge. Between the divine and the human (created or temporal) modes of knowledge there is no proportion, since, where as God's knowledge is the cause of the object, the known human knowledge is the effect. Consequently the Avicennian thesis that God has a universal knowledge of particulars must be rejected on the ground that "universal" and "particular" are categories

of human and not of divine knowledge. Infact the mode of God's knowledge, being entirely transcendent, can only be known by God Himself.²⁹

Another attribute which is a concomitant of knowledge is life. In the creature, knowledge is always accompanied by life and with that observation as a basis we assert that the creature must have will, power and speech. For the characteristic of a conscious act of an agent is that he willed it, it is simply the out word sign, verbal or other, expressing the agent's knowledge of the deed done. Finally, hearing and sight must be predicated of God as corollaries of the all-embracing knowledge which He has of all possible objects of cognition, both rational and perceptual.³⁰ Therefore, Ibn Rushd refrains from affirming or negating the attributes and holds that one must follow the apparent meaning mentioned in the Qur'an and the philosophical interpretation must be kept esoteric.³¹

Ibn Rushd agrees with al-Ghazali that no other thing can share with the First its genus and be distinguished from it through a specific difference. He further says that in a simple First Principle no duality can be imagined, for if a second were assumed, it must be of the same level of existence and of the same nature as the First. They would have no nature in Common in which they would participate by

generic participation and would have to be distinguished through specific difference additional to the genus. Both would be composed of genus and specific difference and everything which is in the extreme degree cannot have two extreme points at the same end.³²

Ibn Rushed says that according to Avicenna everything which has an existence additional to its essence has an efficient cause and since, according to Avicenna, the First has no agent, it follows necessarily that its existence is identical with its essence. Therefore, Ghazali's objection that Avicenna assimilates existence to a necessary attribute of the essence is not true, because the essence of a thing is the cause of its necessary attribute and it is not possible that a thing should be prior to its quiddity. To identify the quiddity and the existence of a thing is to do away with its quiddity, but is only the affirmation of the unity of quiddity and existence.³³

Ibn Rushd further clarifies that the philosophers do not assume that the First has an existence without a quiddity and a quiddity with existence. They believe only that the existence in the compound is an additional attribute to its essence and it only acquires this attribute through the agent and they believe that, in that which is simple and causeless, this attribute is not additional to the quiddity and that it

DIVINE KNOWLEDGE

Ibn Rushd says that the First is of the highest perfection, the First must know everything that proceeds from it either mediately or immediately, and its knowledge need not be of the same kind as man's knowledge, for man's knowledge is impressed and posterior to the thing known.³⁷

Ibn Rushd further says that God's knowledge is timeless and eternal but the mode of God's knowledge whether rational or perceptual is unknowable because it is infinite and transcendent. It is universal in the sense that it does not bring about change in God, since God is a unity without multiplicity, in spite of the multiplicity of the objects of his knowledge. Ibn Rushd, however, does not give up the attempt to rationalize the divine knowledge and in particular to show its relation to the divine essence as self thinking thought. He says that in knowing Himself, God knows all things which exist due to Him.³⁸

He further says that since God is not body, he cannot have senses or any sense knowledge. The Holy Law ascribes hearing and seeing to God to remind us that God is not deprived of any kind of knowledge and understanding, and the masses cannot be made to grasp this meaning except by the use of the terms 'hearing' and 'seeing' and for this reason this exegesis is limited to the learned and therefore cannot be

taken as one of the dogmas of the Holy Law common to the masses.³⁹

Ibn Rushd rejects al-Ghazali's argument that if an act proceeds from God just as light proceeds from the sun in a natural way, it follows that God does not know Himself just as the sun does not know itself. Ibn Rushd explains that the philosophers' real belief is that existents proceed from Him in a way superior to nature and to the human will because both these ways are imperfect.⁴⁰

Ibn Rushd does not circumscribe God's knowledge to particular or universal, because this distinction is of human origin and does not apply to God. God's knowledge can be called neither particular nor universal. In fact the mode of God's knowledge being entirely transcendent, it can only be known by God Himself.⁴¹

THE HEAVEN AND ITS MOTIVE POWER

Ibn Rushd says that a stone moves downwards through a quality which has been created in it, and fire upwards. This is a self-evident fact and to contradict it is pure folly. He rejects al-Ghazali's claim that the eternal will causes the movement in these things everlastingly, and that this movement is not implanted in the nature of the thing. Ibn Rushd says that if this were true, things would have no nature, no real essence, no definition at all.⁴²

Ibn Rushd further clarifies that the true assumption of the philosophers is that through the circular movement the thing moved is not in search of a place but only seeks the circular movement itself, and the things which behave in this way have of necessity as their mover a soul and not nature. Heavenly bodies are provided with intellect and desire, because circular bodies move with two contrary movements at the same time towards east and towards west. This can not happen through nature for that which moves through nature moves in one direction alone. Thus Ibn Rushd proves in this way that Heaven is living and moving.⁴³

Ibn Rushd says that according to the philosophers it is the movement itself which is aimed at by Heaven because the perfection of an animal is movement. Secondly its movement imparts life to what exists in this sublunary world.⁴⁴

In the sixteenth discussion of the Tahafut, the Heavenly bodies' knowledge of particulars is discussed. Ibn Rushd says that al-Ghazali has presented only the view point of Ibn Sina which is different from that of the other philosophers. Therefore, Ibn Rushd agrees with al-Ghazali when the latter refutes Ibn Sina. Ibn Rushd says that the doctrine of the philosophers that the heavenly bodies think the sublunary world as something different from themselves is

very difficult to explain.⁴⁵

Ibn Rushd says that the two kinds of knowledge, the universal and the particular are unified in the knowledge which is separated from matter. When this knowledge emanates in the sublunary world it divides itself into universal and particular, although this knowledge itself is neither the one nor the other.⁴⁶

THE NECESSITY OF A CAUSAL NEXUS

According to Ibn Rushd it is self evident that things have essences and attributes which determine the special functions of each thing and through which the essences and names of things are differentiated. If a thing did not have its specific nature, it would not have a special name nor a definition, and all things would be one. If it is said that it had a special act, then there would indeed exist special acts proceeding from special natures, but if it had no single special act, then the one would not be one. But if the nature of oneness is denial, the nature of being is denial and the consequence of the denial of being is nothingness.⁴⁷

Ibn Rushd further says that intelligence is the perception of things with their causes, and in this it distinguishes itself from all the other intellects. Logic implies the existence of cause, and effects can be studied more accurate through knowledge of their causes. Denial of

cause implies denial of knowledge and the denial of knowledge implies that nothing in this world can be really known. What is supposed to be known is nothing but opinion, that neither proof nor definition exist, and that the essential attributes which compose definitions are void. The man who denies the necessity of any item of knowledge must admit that even this, his own affirmation, is not necessary knowledge.⁴⁸

According to Ibn Rushd, true knowledge is the knowledge of a thing as it is in reality. The knowledge created in man is always in conformity with the nature of the real thing, since the definition of truth is that a thing is believed to be such as it is in reality.⁴⁹

In short, Ibn Rushd is trying to convey that if everything happens in the world due to the absolute will of God, no rational pattern can be traced in the creation. This would also deny the very existence of a wise creator. On this view it is no longer possible to prove the existence of God from the beauty of order which we observe in the world or to refute the arguments of the Materialists who refer all happenings in the world to the blind forces of chance. Such a thesis is incompatible with the teaching of the philosophers, and is also contrary to the expressive pronouncements of the Qur'an, which describes the world as the perfect workmanship of God.⁵⁰

Ibn Rushd makes it clear that the ancient philosophers have not discussed miracles, although they were known and had appeared all over the world, because they are the principles of religion. He admits that it is necessary for man to concede the principles of religion. Religious principles are divine things which surpass human understanding; they must be acknowledged although their causes are unknown.⁵¹

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL

The soul is distinguished from the intellect not only in the system of Ibn Rushd but also in the systems of other Muslim philosophers. Intellect in man is the faculty through which he knows the eternal truths without the media of sense - organs, e.g. the axioms of mathematics, fundamental laws of thought ultimate values, etc. these come from the Active Intelligence, which is their real source and origin. During its temporary abode in the body the intellect of man suffers separation from Active Intellect, but after the body has perished at death, it goes back to be merged once again into the active Intellect to live there in eternity along with other intellects. Thus the immortality of the intellect is not individual but collective, it is not personal immortality but corporate immortality.⁵²

This, however, is not the case with human soul. Soul is a driving force, almost an elan vital, which sustains life and effects the growth of organic bodies. It is a kind of energy which gives life to matter. Ibn Rushd says that the soul forms the body and since it forms it, it does not entirely depend upon it. We cannot, therefore, establish the destruction of the soul from that of the body. The soul of the body can yet be conceptually abstracted from it and conceived independently of it. Thus the soul is independent of the body in an individual capacity. Ibn Rushd, however, adds judiciously that a convincing proof for the immortality of human soul cannot be given merely through philosophical argument.⁵³

RESURRECTION OF BODIES

Ibn Rushd does not deny the resurrection of bodies but he gives an interpretation and exposition of the dogma in a manner different from that of the theologians. According to him, the body we shall have in the next world will not be the same as our body now, for what has passed away is not reborn in its identity; it can at best appear as something similar. Life hereafter is not mere endlessness but a perpetual growth and development and a continuation of this very life. Just as the soul is to grow and evolve from one stage to another, so has the body to grow and acquire new attributes.⁵⁴ The life

hereafter will be of a higher kind than this life, and bodies there will be more perfect than they are in their earthly form. Ibn Rushd quotes in this connection a tradition of the Prophet on the authority of Ibn Abbas : " *there is of the other world nothing but names in this world.*" What exactly the more perfected form of the body would be he leaves unexplained as anybody's guess. He carefully avoids all mythopoetic account of the life hereafter and disapproves of all popular eschatological representations made merely to feed the imagination.⁵⁵

In response to Ghazali's attack, Ibn Rushd mostly repeated the Aristotelian principles and arguments. Although his book is well argued but his arguments are less forceful and less convincing than Ghazali's arguments. His arguments are not direct and he often involves himself into long discussions, which are not directly related to the main argument.

C O N C L U S I O N

Conflicts between philosophy and theology continued to surface throughout Islamic history. The battle between Ghazali and Ibn Rushd was a part of that conflict. Ghazali was impressed by the passion and vigour of the faith of sufis, therefore he tried to reconcile orthodox Islam with mystical teachings and succeeded in giving sufism an assured place within orthodox Islam(1) Ibn Rushd, on other hand, tried to reconcile philosophy with Islamic teachings. He says that philosophy is recommended by religion because the function of philosophy is nothing more than speculating on the beings and considering them in so far as they lead to the knowledge of the creator. (2) the Qur'an exhorts man to this kind of rational consideration (i'tibar) in many a verse, such as : " *consider, you who have vision.*" Al-i'tabar is a Qur'anic term which means something more than pure speculation or reflection.⁹

After considering the long discussion of al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd, we may come to the conclusion that it is sometimes more the formula than the essence of things, which divides them. Both believe that the Qur'an contains the highest truth. Both of them affirm that God creates or has created this world. Both apply to God the theory that His will and knowledge differ from human will and knowledge in

that they are creative principles and essentially beyond understanding; both admit that the Divine cannot be measured by the standards of man. For both parties God has chosen the best of all possible worlds; for although the philosophers affirm also that God acts only by natural necessity, their system is essentially teleological. Both believe in God's ultimate unity. ⁴

If we consider the other works of Ghazali, the resemblance between him and Ibn Rushd becomes still greater. For instance, he too believes in the spirituality of the soul. Not with standing the arguments he gives against it in the Tahafut al-Falasifah, he too sometimes teaches the fundamental theory of the philosophers, which he tries to refute in Tahafut, the theory that from the one Supreme Agent as the ultimate source all things ultimately derive. He himself expresses this idea, in his kimiya i-Sa'adat and slightly differently in his Ihya'ulum al-din by a charming similie of an ant which thinks that the black tracing on the sheet of paper is due to the pen, while it is the hand that moves the pen by the power of will which derives from the heart and the will itself is inspired by the God. Therefore Van Den Bergh concludes that the resemblances seem to be sometimes greater than the differences between al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd ⁵

Emotionally the differences between the two are very deep. Ibn Rushd is a philosopher and a proud believer in reason there is much wavering and hesitation in his ideas. Still his faith in reason remains, unshaken. He reproaches the theologians for having made God an immortal man but God for him is a dehumanized principle⁶

Ibn Rushd accuses al-Ghazali of hypocrisy and insincerity by saying that his polemics against the philosophers were merely to win the favor of the orthodox. Al-Ghazali's teachings, according to him, is sometimes detrimental to religion and sometimes to philosophy and sometimes to both. It is said that Ibn Rushd was so struck by the duplicity of al-Ghazali's thought that he would often quote the following verse with reference to him:

"one day you are a yamenite when you meet a man from yemen. But when you see someone from Ma'add you assert you are from 'Adnan" ?

Ibn Rushd further points out, with a certain bitterness, the inadmissibility of al-Ghazali's approach:

"Hurling two contradictory theses at each other does not necessarily result in destruction; all that this produces is confusion. Most of the evidence brought forward by this Ghazali consists of nothing more than doubts which arise when isolated parts of philosophy are taken out of context, so that they appear to contradict

the remainder. But this is an unsatisfactory way of refuting an argument. The only acceptable way being one that successfully shows that the entire system in question contradicts reality"⁸. On the other hand, al-Ghazali is a mu'min. According to Van Den Bergh;

*" His heart has reasons his reason does not know. His theology is the philosophy of the heart in which there is expressed man's fear and loneliness and his feelings of dependence on an understanding and loving Being to whom he can cry out from the depths of his despair and whose mercy is infinite. he does not strive for an abstract truth but his search is for God"*⁹

Al-Ghazali was the first ever theologian who attacked the entire system of philosophy after thorough going study. His attack on falsafah put it on the defensive more than it had hitherto been, and helped theology to come out triumphant of the controversy between theology and philosophy ¹⁰ At the same time, his attack made falsafah better known than hitherto, for in order to refute the falsafah, he had to explain their doctrines to the non-philosophers. In this way he made philosophy easy and intelligible for the common people, using simple language to explain the complicated problems of philosophy. ¹¹ Therefore he legitimized and popularized the study of Ibn Sina's logic and this had the effect of making Greek modes of thinking accessible to the more traditional Muslims ¹²

Ibn Rushd's reply to al Ghazali's attack made little impact on the Muslim world as a whole, but it completes the picture of the full range of contemporary thought with its extreme opposites of theology and philosophy¹³ According to Majid Fakhry:

*" Ibn Rushd's defense of philosophers is as subtle and vigorous as is al-Ghazali's attack on them Ibn Rushd indeed handles his arguments with accomplished understanding and ingenious skill, yet in the considered opinion of those who are competent to judge, al-Ghazali's arguments are in the final analysis more telling than those of his adversary."*¹⁴

Several critics have accused al Ghazali of being responsible for the decline of muslim interest in philosophy and science. it is alleged that his emphasis on spiritualism initiated a movement in Muslim thought that killed all zest for philosophic inquiry and scientific reflection. Therefore when the Muslims followed al-Ghazali and neglected little by little the study of philosophy and science, their once great civilization faded. On the other hand, Ibn Rushd defended philosophy and science and medieval Europe followed the way prescribed by him, which led to the rise of European science.¹⁵

The anti-intellectualism and anti-liberalism of the Muslim community is a highly complex sociological phenomena

and its causes must be explored in a great many areas. It would be a simplification of facts to ascribe it to a single name, however great that name may be. Al-Ghazali never left philosophy altogether and he himself was very well acquainted with the scientific knowledge of this day, most of which he accepted as true.¹⁶

Philosophy was generally considered an enemy to Islam and was hated by the people. So the majority of the rulers preferred to win the favour of the ulama and the people by suppressing it. Therefore, privately in the courts, the few who were considered capable were patronized but publicly intellectual speculation was discouraged. Thus falsafah never gained much popular acceptance in the Muslim world.¹⁷

By the end of the twelfth century the movement against philosophy took momentum in the Muslim world and in Baghdad all the books of philosophy were burned because of the fear of the clergy. Philosophy as a subject ceased to be taught and the philosophers kept their views secret. Ibn Rushd survived as long as his royal patrons protected him but as soon as his views were known and opposed by the orthodox, he was disgraced and exiled. All his books were burnt. Renan laments that there was the end of philosophy in the Muslim world after Ib Rushd.¹⁸ Some other western writers ascribe the decline of philosophy to the destruction of Baghdad in 1258, which cast a gloom of night on the Muslim

world and stopped all kinds of progress of the Muslims. But Marshall Hodgson does not agree with these scholars. he has argued that the destruction of Baghdad does not mean that Islamic civilization faded. Islamic Civilization does not consist of Arabic civilization only. In fact, at that time, there were three centers of civilization, Iran, India and Baghdad. Although Baghdad was destroyed but Iran and India were still to flourish as great centers of civilizations.¹⁹ In fact Persia played an important role in the development of Islamic civilization not only at its genesis but also throughout its later history and they are the authors of most Islamic philosophical works, even in the Arabic language. Throughout Islamic history they have used Arabic as a vehicle for their thoughts. Only after the 4th/10th century did they begin to develop Persian as a language for traditional philosophical discourse. The persians played a central role in the elaboration of Islamic philosophy from the very beginning and persia was destined to become the main home and theater of activity of this aspect of Islamic culture throughout history.²⁰

To some extent, the explanation of the lack of interest of the Muslims in philosophy lies rather in the extraordinary burgeoning of mysticism in twelfth century which reached its peak with Ibn Arabi. Philosophy was not

defeated but it drowned in the ocean of sufi contemplation of God.²¹

In the final analysis, it is clear that al-Ghazali is conservative and Ibn Rushd is a more broad minded and liberal person, than Ghazali. Although Ghazali is a far more vigorous and attractive personality but Ibn Rushd's approach seems to be more compatible with the new age than Ghazali's. Ibn Rushd regards philosophy as scientific thinking which is recommended by God and which is used for humanity. He also favours the freedom of women which means he is in favor of women working shoulder to shoulder with men. This kind of approach needs to be stressed today, if the Muslims want to progress and want to achieve a status equal to what they have in the modern developed nations.²²

The function of philosophy is to analyse. The object of Islamic theology is to build a world view on the basis of the Qur'an with the help of intellectual tools, in other words with the assistance of philosophy. Therefore philosophy is not a rival of theology. Certain philosophical views may create tensions with certain theological doctrines but that is not an excuse for banning philosophy. Differences of opinion have to be assigned a highly positive value, for it is only through confrontation of different and opposing views that truth gradually emerges. As the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had said " *difference of opinion is blessing for our*

community,' for the Qur'an, knowledge, that is the creation of ideas, is an activity of the highest possible value. The prophet was asked to pray for "an increase in knowledge" and man is asked to delve into the universe, into history and into man's inner life.²³

Philosophy, therefore, is a perennial intellectual need and has to be allowed to flourish both for its own sake and for the sake of other disciplines. It inculcates a much needed analytical critical spirit and generates new ideas that become important intellectual tools for other sciences, not least for religion and theology,. As Fazlur Rehuman has warned, a people who deprive themselves of philosophy commit intellectual suicide²⁴

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