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Some Remarks On Ghazâlî's Crisis İn The Rescuer From Error (Al-Munqıdh Mın Al-Dalâl)

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The great scholar and intellect *Huccetü'l-İslâm* Imam Ghazâlî presented his own intellectual and mental adventure in a life-story style that is rarely witnessed in classical Islamic history of thought in the work named *The Rescuer from Error* (*al-Munqidh min al-Dalâl*[1]). Being regarded as an outstanding scholar who has a voice in multiple disciplines, Ghazâlî produced and presented his work for evaluation through the methodology of classification, especially for those who are in pursuit of the sole truth. Upon considering the fact that the work was compiled three years prior to Ghazâlî's death, it can be readily accepted that the work crystallized Ghazâlî's intellectual adventure, which leaves no room for discussion over its authenticity[2]. It can be easily observed that Ghazâlî presented us an adequate bulk of information in terms of both content and purpose within a framework at the beginning of his work, a systematic approach that is generally seen in many of his works:

"You have asked me, my brother in religion, to convey to you the aim and secrets of the sciences, as well as the confusing intricacies of creeds, and to relate what I have endured in extricating truth from the mayhem of factions, with their differing approaches and methods, and how I have ventured to raise myself from the depths of conformity to the heights of insight. You

[1] Abu Hamid Ghazâlî, a*l-Munqidh min al-Dalâl*, (Edited Semih Değim), Beirut 1993, p. 61, 62.
[2] Abdurrahman Bedevî, *Müellifatu-Ghazâlî*, Kuwait, 1977.; F.Hourani, George, "The Chronology of Ghazâli's Writtings", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 79 No: 4, October-December, 1959, pp. 225-233, Hourani, "A Revised Chronology of Ghazâlî's Writings", *JAOS*, 104, New Haven, pp. 289-302.

have also asked me to relate, first, what I gleaned from theology; second, what I gathered from the methods of the Instructionists, who hold that truth, is apprehended solely by conforming to the instruction of the imam; third, what I criticized of the methods of philosophizing; and finally, what I endorsed of the method of mysticism..."[3]

Accordingly, it has been determined beforehand what is expected from author. That is, a comparative and in-depth research is to be done by intellects. That is why, it will be revealed what kind of approaches there are in which divisions of which discipline, and how the sole truth is extracted from all those. Relatedly, depending upon a hadith of Prophet Mohammed, it will be expressed that divisions will occur among Muslims, and only one of those divisions will be a division of salvation. It is stated by the author that those who are in pursuit of the sole truth will be analyzed in detail in the following sections, and this section will deal with the characteristics of relationship pertaining to Islamic theology, instruction, philosophy, and Sufism. There is yet another fact this section discloses, which is that Ghazâlî will deliberately present the two processes of depression/crisis he went through in his work. That is, first, the process of skeptical depression experienced by Ghazâlî in the age of 20's will be presented to bring forth the matter that there is a significant difference between affectation and discernment, that is knowing thyself and imitating thyself mentally and spiritually, and second, the spiritual depression he went through in the year h. 488 at the age of 38[4] will be described in detail along with its causes. Thus, it will be possible to preach the two phenomena as completely different from each other: the phenomena of the intellectual history/background passed from affection on to enquiry to escalate the level of consciousness in acknowledgments and beliefs, and the phenomena of a depression/crisis standing for a more metaphysical and spiritual inquiry of soul. Why it is called as preaching has a rationale: forasmuch as this autobiography has a systematic method of organizing and compiling all the experiences that were reflected onto a paper at the age of 50's. A wide range of discussions have been made around the authenticity of the inputs regarding the spiritual processes or depressions Ghazâlî is described to have gone through in this specific work. First of all, it should be indicated that as put forth by Muhammed Mahmoud Abu-Sway, some people regard the content and flow of the work as a mystical scene. Further than that, some people have stepped out to argue that this work is merely an artistic play[5]

[3] Ghazâlî, *The Rescuer from Error; in Medieval Islamic* Philosophical Writings Eng. translation Muhammad Ali Khalidi, Cambridge 2005, p. 59; al-Ghazâlî, *Deliverance from Error and Mystical Union with the Almighty*: *al-Munqidh min al-Dalâl* Eng. Translation, Muhammad Abulaylah, Washington, 2001.

[4] All of the date and age were elucidated by the author in the text.

[5] Mustafa Mahmoud Abu-Sway, *ibid*. 82, 83.

around skepticism and certainty. Yet still, there are other people who take the opposite side, and suggest that the work displays the life of author with all its clarity. Mohammed Huseyin makes this situation more vivid in his essay called "al-Ghazâli's Turning point";

"However on the other hand MacDonald was firm in considering *al-Munqidh* as true state of al-Ghazālī's affairs. MacDonald says about *Munqidh*: '…The result of a careful study of it has been to convince me of the essential truth of the picture which al-Ghazālī there gives us of his life.' Watt however, disagrees with this position and is supported by Ferid Jabre and others. McCarthy provides support and goes into great detail to prove *al-Munqidh's* veracity in his book "Freedom and Fulfillment." He cites many arguments pro and against *al-Munqidh*. He states in his introduction, 'I see no reason why they [the biographical passages from *al-Munqidh*] should not be accepted literally, despite al-Baqri and … Jabre'."[6]

It is observed that Mohammed Huseyin exhibits an original and eclectic approach when the aspects of the first depression/crisis that are dealt with in the initial sections of the work are taken into account.

According to the writer; "one could possibly make a case that in his life he had many smaller crises that culminated in a major crisis. The earliest time possible that this crisis could have taken place is when he was a student of al-Jawayni and *Ilm al-Kalam* which was his first introduction to rational sciences. Next attack could be in the camp of al-Nizam al-Mulk in which he had to argue and discuss with many scholars that were present. The final attack would have been at Baghdad after making a methodical study of philosophy. Here I would like to make a distinction between the episodes of doubt that was the symptoms of these crises and the final crisis that led to his departure from Baghdad"[7]

Not sharing the same thought with the author, I would like to indicate the fact that Ghazâlî had a readily perceived sensitivity around differentiating between the two depressions/crises. Along with that, observing the first depression/crisis Ghazâlî went through in a detailed way, it is possible to contend that the skeptical thoughts Ghazâlî dived into in a specific time of his life were presented within a mise en scene. Yet, our intellect describes his youth from the early stages on, upon opening the subject to explain his transition from "affectation to discernment", which stands out as a concept in one of hadiths of Prophet Mohammed, and expresses the fact that his personality embodies such an interrogative and courageous entrepreneurship.

[6] Muhammad Hozien, *Al-Ghazālī's Turning point. http://www.ghazali.org/articles/crisis.htm*
[7] Muhammad Hozien, *Al-Ghazālī's Turning point. http://www.ghazali.org/articles/crisis.htm*

When he said that "I have persisted, ever since the prime of my youth and my tender years -all the way from my adolescence, before reaching the age of 20, until the present day, when I am over 50 - to plumb the depths of this ocean and to plunge into it boldly, not with diffident cowardice" he was not denoting his first crises' time accurately. On the contrary he was intending to indicate the disposition and temper of his own.

Consequently, he endeavors to display how to acquire the sole truth and of course the certain knowledge through a skeptical way of thought that is already present in his mind and carries the hints of sophisticated philosophical convention. The goal in here is to show how to acquire the truth of an object by inquiry and deduction, rather than by acknowledging the concept of affectation. In this sense, following Aristotelian philosophical convention closely, Ghazâlî[8] stands out as a great scholar that is able to discern to what extent a reality of an object can be proved by sensual receptors and perceptions. Having already dealt with the inquiry of causality[9] in the 17th section of his work *Incoherence of Philosophers* (*Tahâfut al-Falâsifa*) deep and hot enough to be regarded as the peak point for

[8] Just in this context its inevitable and plausible to compare Ghazâli's method and sophisticated/skeptical inquiry which can be called "seeking for the sole truth" with Aristotle's approach in the Metaphysics 1010-b; 1-10. These are the Aristotle's statements which especially directed to the Prothagoras; "Regarding the nature of truth, we must maintain that not everything which appears is true. Firstly even if sensation –at least of the object special to the sense in question- is not false; still appearance is not the same as sensation Again, it is fair to express surprise at our opponents' raising the question whether magnitudes are as great, and colors are of such a nature, as they appear to people at a distance, or as they appear to those close at hand, and whether they are such as they appear to the healthy or to the sick, and whether those things are heavy which appear so to the weak or those which appear so to the strong, and those things true which appear to the sleeping or to the waking." *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Edit by Jonathan Barnes, v.1, p. 1595. In addition to this, one can also compare the same approach with Avicenna's statements; also cf., "When the sophist denies this [primary statement], he either denies it only with his tongue, obdurately, or [denies it] because of a doubt in matters where, for example, he fails to see the contradictory extremes due to his being overcome by an error (because of his not having attained knowledge of the [true] state of the contradictory and its conditions). Moreover, censoring the sophist and ever alerting the perplexed [against error] is incumbent at all times on the philosopher- [a task he undertakes] inescapably through some type of dialogue. There is no doubt that this dialogue would be a type of syllogism whose required [conclusion] is necessary (unless it would no in itself be a sllogism whose required [conclusion] was necessary but would [instead] be a syllogism in terms of [simply] being a syllogism [in form])."., Avicenna, *The Metaphysics of The Healing*, Eng. Translation: Michael E. Marmura, p. 39, see. also, "In addition to all this, the investigation of the principles of conception and definition is not itself definition and conception; nor is the investigation of the principles of demonstration itself a demonstration, for the two distinct investigations become one [and the same].", Avicenna, *Ibid*., p. 44, Brigham Young University Press, Provo, Utah, 2005.

[9] Muhittin Macit, "İmkân Metafiziği Üzerine; Gazzâli'nin Felsefî Determinizmi Eleştirisi", *Divan* 1997/1, p. 97-120.

sophisticated and skeptical inquiry, it is not at all a difficult mission for such an intellect to display in a well-put theory to what extent the simple sensual perceptions can be false. Given this, setting out to interrogate the information gained through senses and exigency, Ghazâlî found out that the information did not satisfy his own intellect, and from then on, passed on to the interrogation of the a priori information known as peculiar to the past, which consists of the principles that need no proof and that can derive from themselves according to the Aristotelian philosophy. With regards to that, Ghazâlî says;

"Perhaps one can only trust the rational beliefs which are among the first principles, such as the statements, 'Ten is greater than three,' 'Negation and affirmation cannot coexist in the same thing,' and 'The same thing cannot be both originated and eternal, or existent and nonexistent, or necessary and impossible"[10]

The utterances made by Ghazâlî refer to the inquiry of truths that have no cause at all, which is according to Aristotle the principle of the demonstration is not the demonstration itself.

"There are, both among those who have these convictions and among those who merely profess these views, some who raise a difficulty by asking, who is to be the judge of the healthy man, and in general who is likely to judge rightly on each class of questions. But such inquiries are like puzzling over the question whether we are now *asleep* or *awake*. And all such questions have the same meaning. These people demand that a reason shall be given for everything; for they seek a starting-point, and they seek to get this by demonstration, while it is obvious from their actions that they have no conviction. But their mistake is what we have stated it to be; they seek a reason for things for which no reason can be given; for the starting-point of demonstration is not demonstration."[11]

It is needed to us to think from this passage of Aristotle that he put all these down on paper to show Sophists in general, assuming that the chain of causality can be brought back to eternal, seek to devastate the conditions which are the demonstrative results could be obtained. I mean the point of the impossibility of the sequenced which is the necessity is coming from by questioning the causes of the primary principles which can't be questioned at all.

If there is a need to mention once more what is meant in here precisely, it can be said; Ghazâlî's beginning to inquire about the principles of Demonstration/Burhan and trying to display this inquiry through a metaphor

[10] al-Ghazâlî, *The Rescuer from Error, p. 62.*
[11] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1011a; 2-11.

of dream is an adaptation of that displayed by Aristotle in relation to Libya and Athens[12]. Furthermore, it is observed that Ghazâlî provides evidence through a hadith in a style that manifests in the form of rationalization of religious thoughts displayed in his work named *al-Qıstâs*. Our intellect actually exhibits rationalization of this kind; we are able to control and revise the sensual inputs by mental inputs; are we then able to control and judge our mental inputs as well as the sensual ones? If another judge comes up and tells we are able to judge our mental inputs as well, what can be said as a response? Yet, the phenomenon of dream that we all experience is a phenomenon that can back up this situation. We have no skepticism over the authenticity of things we see in our dreams while sleeping. However, we can easily understand that all is merely a product of imagination after we wake up. So, how can we know that the things we comprehend when we are awake are not a product of imagination peculiar to state of being awake? That is, it is possible that the state of being awake is similar to that of being asleep, and that all our senses can be merely imaginary after coming out of either state. Sufis do also experience some specific states, and afterwards liken the difference in between to that of between state of being asleep and being awake. If paid attention, the link formed here between the state of being asleep and being awake is similar to that of "puzzling over the question whether we are now asleep or awake" expressed by Aristotle. So, how can the state be like in which we can acknowledge the intelligibles as imaginations? For sure, death is the phenomenon that can play the role of a referee in here, by coming right after this life. To highlight this situation, the author mentions a hadith and says:

"Or perhaps that state is death, for the Prophet of God (blessings be upon him) said: 'People are asleep, and when they die they wake up.' Thus, perhaps the temporal life is slumber by comparison with the afterlife, and when you die things will appear differently to you from the way they do now. At that point, you will be told: 'We have removed your veil and your vision is now acute' (Qur'an 50-22)"[13]

The points Ghazâlî makes regarding his first depression/crisis clearly displays that the first depression/crisis is a kind of mise en scene. Vocalizing the expressions such as "I am sophistically mad from now on" word by word, our intellect Ghazâlî shows that he modifies the expression that the pioneers of demonstration/burhan cannot be demonstration as quoted from Aristotle; "When these notions occurred to me and made an impression on

[12] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1010b, 10-14. "And those things true which appear to the sleeping or to the waking. For obviously they do not think these to be open questions; no one, at least, if when he is in Libya he has fancied one night that he is in Athens, starts for the concert hall".

[13] Ghazâlî, *The Rescuer from Error, p. 63.*

my mind, I sought a cure but found none. For they could only be rebutted with a proof, and ***a proof can only be constructed by combining the first [principles of] knowledge. If these are not given, then it is impossible to arrange a proof (****as Aristotle said above that they seek a reason for things for which no reason can be given; for the starting-point of demonstration is not demonstration*[14]). ***This disease*** defied all cure and lasted for almost two months, during which I embraced ***the sophistical creed in actual fact***, though not in speech nor expression. Eventually, God cured me of ***this disease*** and my mind was restored to health and balance. ***The rational necessary beliefs***[15] ***were once again accepted and trusted, both securely and certainly***. This did not come about by composing a proof or by an arrangement of words, but rather by a light that God Almighty cast into my breast, which is the key to the greater part of cognizance. Whoever supposes that enlightenment depends upon explicit proofs has narrowed the expanse of God's mercy. The Prophet of God was asked about the meaning of "opening" in the Qur'anic verse: "Whomever God desires to guide, He opens his heart to Islam" (Qur'an 6-125). He said: "It is a light that God Almighty casts into the heart."[16]

One of most popular and disputable expressions by Ghazâlî regarding *al-Munqidh* is as given above "but rather by a light that God Almighty cast into my breast". As a result of the inquiries made over the concept of "light" here, it is possible to argue that the author has implicitly meant multiple different things. Anyways, when the introduction of the work named *Criterion of Knowledge in the Art of Logic* (*Mi'yar al-İlm fi fanni'l-mantıq*) by Ghazâlî is read, we can comprehend that by "light" he means intellect and burhan light.[17] Although the introduction of the work in question was written

[14] In this context we would like to remind that Ghazâlî was aware of principles that are clear and not in need of demonstration when he was writing this mise en scene; because he was saying that; "For first principles are not sought but are present, and if what is present is sought it will be lost and will disappear. Moreover, whoever seeks what cannot be sought cannot be accused of falling short in seeking what can.*" The Rescuer from Error*, p. 63.

[15] These ***necessary beliefs*** are principles that Aristotle's mentioned for sophists who deny and destruct a priory necessary principles; "Yet all these views destroy this necessity, leaving nothing to be of necessity, as they leave no essence of anything; for the necessary cannot be in this way and also in that, so that if anything is of necessity, it will not be 'both so and not so" *Metaphysics*, 1010b, 25-30.

[16] Ghazâlî, *The Rescuer from Error*, p. 63. One must be careful about these statement which related necessary beliefs; "For first principles are not sought but are present, and if what is present is sought it will be lost and will disappear. Moreover, whoever seeks what cannot be sought cannot be accused of falling short in seeking what can*." The Rescuer from Error, p. 63.*

[17] For further information on identification of light and intellect in Ghazali's book of *al-Qıstas al-Mustaqim* also, see Gürbüz Deniz, *The method of understanding Ghazali; Journal of İslamic Research,vol:2,Nu:2, 2010, P.17.,* "Ghazali's account of 'the light' is identical with what the The Philosophers called 'intellect' *(aql)*, to wit, Ghazali conveys the content and the function of intellect to the word 'light'. In *Mishkat*, Ghazali attaches the philosophical

long before *al-Munqidh*, it includes many strong details that may support our argument as to the fact that the first depression/crisis is a mise en scene. Ghazâlî, there, explains what kind of relationship there is in the mental senses and judgments, just like in the examples provided in al-Munqidh (perception of celestial bodies as metal coins from far away, the motion of shadows etc.[18]), how senses and apprehension can deceive people, and therefore, how the dominance of mentality can reveal the sole truth. In this sense, Ghazâlî says the following in his work named *Mi'yar al-İlm.*

"We are thankful to God for giving us the intellect which guides us from error/dalal to (hidâye), rescues us from darkness of ignorance and protect us from seductions of devil by the light of demonstration … naming of light of intellect guidence/hidâyet and light/nur "[19]

When we read the introduction of Ghazâlî's *Mi'yar al-İlm*, we can easily see that, similar to his bringing evidence in favor of the statements of "light" in *al-Munqidh*, he tries to bring evidence in favor of the relation between the "intellect" and the "light" by using numerous verses from Quran, and as we stated earlier, this is an effort which does not go beyond the general style of the author. Especially in this context, I would like to state one last thought which is that the method of inquiry that Ghazali uses in his sophistic skepticism and quest for certainty partially reminds prophet Ibrahim's method of reasoning and inquiry mentioned in Q*ıstas al-Mustaqim*. Ibrahim's quest for certainty and his reaching satisfaction through evidence show us that this approach, which Ghazâlî uses as the main theme in his previous work, is being utilized by him later on[20] as well.

"From this, then, I knew that the argument and apodictic proof/burhan were in the utterance and the balance of Abraham. So I considered how it weighs as you considered the balance[21] for gold and silver. And I saw in this argument two principles which were coupled, and from them was engendered a conclusion which was the knowledge (cognition), since the Qur'ân is built on ellipsis and concinnity. The full form of the balance is that we say: Whoever can make the sun rise is God (one principle); But my God

reasoning to Abraham and the Sufis' account of the metaphysical light to Mohammed (as the Muhammedan Light).

[18] Ghazâlî, *Miyar al-ilm fi fenn al-mantiq*, edit, Muhyiddin Kürdi, Egypt, p. 28-30. Also cf. *Miyar al-ilm fi fann al-mantiq, nşr. Suleyman Dunya,* Egypt *1961, p 62-63*.

[19] Gazzâlî, *Miyar al-ilm fi fenn al-mantiq*, p. 31.

[20] We would like to especially mention that Ghazâlî states that he goes to Kudus as well and visits Prophet Ibrahim specifically after he leaves Baghdad. It is meaningful that he clearly expresses this in *al-Munqidh*.

[21] Like "criterion" in logic he uses his work of ethics "balance" that is balance in ethics.

can make the sun rise (a second principle) (Therefore) my God İs God–and not you, Nimrod"[22]

About the second (the only, according to me) spiritual crisis which, by his own statement in *al-Munqidh*, Ghazâlî endures while he teaches many students at Nizamiya Madrasah in Baghdad, there is much to say. As we know, in this work, Ghazâlî divides the searchers of truth into four groups and he describes them in detail. What we see as important in this context is that although Ghazâlî previously criticizes the philosophers in general and especially Farabi and Ibn Sina who were the most prominent followers of Aristotle in the Islamic world, he examines these issues once again in *al-Munqih*. We can even say that except for the author's choosing Sufism and his regarding living as a sufi higher than anything else, the most important part of the work is the one where the examination of philosophers is repeated. We would like to put forth this argument because denouncing the philosophers as infidels is an important factor in the spiritual crisis of Ghazâlî. To be more clear and honest, our main thesis is that Ghazâlî's being affected in general by the reason, ethics, ego and in a narrow sense, unity-based God concept[23] of Aristotelian philosophy and also by the aforementioned elements of the philosophy of Ibn Sina can be regarded as an important factor that triggers the crisis, because lack of ambivalence in his spiritual world does not seem possible while his denouncing Farabi and Ibn Sina, both Muslims, as infidels on one hand and forming the most fundamental elements of their philosophies into the backbone of his various works on the other is not an easily deniable fact. I would like to specifically draw attention to the timing of the Ghazâlî's spiritual crisis in this context. The year h.488/1095, which by his own statement is the year that he goes into the crisis, is also the date that his work *Incoherence of The Philosophers* is completed. As known, at the end of the work, in response to a theoretical question on whether or not it was religiously permissible to kill the philosophers and thus whether or not their belongings were halal, Ghazâlî states only three matters that require denouncing one as an infidel but he does not clarify either the point about the killing of the philosophers or the situations that would be implied by such a judgment[24]. Yet, he clearly states the legal consequences of infidelity in his *al-Faysal al-Tafriqa* as follows:

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[22] Ghazâlî, *al-Qıstas al-Mustaqîm*, Eng. translation and annotation. By Richard J. McCarthy Library of Classical Arabic Literature Twayne Publishers 1980, p. 293.

[23] Despite his critics of metaphysics in *Tahafut*, the following statements on metaphysics and Aristotle made in *al-Munqidh* is especially interesting: "Aristotle's position in metaphysics is close to that of the Islamic sects, as transmitted by al-Farabı and Ibn Sına." Ibid. p.71.

[24] al-Ghazâlî, *İncoherence of The Philosophers*, Eng. Translation: Sabih Ahmed Kamali, Lahore 1963, p. 249, 250.

"Denouncing as an infidel is a judgment of *Sharia* that would result in important legal consequences like confiscation of the properties and killing of the denounced and his being condemned to eternal hell." [25]

Then, why does Ghazali refrain from clearly discussing the judgments that would result from denunciation in *Incoherence of The Philosophers* (*Tahafut al-Falasifa*) and why does not he include the answer to his question although he makes a one-page explanation, or rather a summary, at the end of the work? This question can be implicitly answered by taking into account the parameters on the methodology of the work given at the introductory parts of *Incoherence of the Philosophers*. According to this, the author announces that, by bringing all the sects onto his side, he will be facing the philosophers as a united front and his goal is not to state his ideas but to attack philosophers.

"Since I have undertaken to expose the incoherence and contradiction involved in philosophical thought, I will approach them in order to attack them, not to defend something of mine..."[26]

Namely, although the only goal of the work is attacking the philosophers, at the end, he cannot make himself go further on the issues like the killing and confiscation of the properties of philosophers like Ibn Sina whom he refers to as "muhaqqiqun" ("the people of truth"). Besides, in *al-Faysal al-Tafriqa* which he writes later on, at the end of the quotation we made above, he states: "This is known as all other judgments of Sharia are known. Namely, it is occasionally known with certainty and occasionally with a prevailing impression. Also, sometimes hesitation may occur. In that case, one should not choose the way of denouncing but rather pause and contemplate before a judgment."[27] Thus, it is almost like Ghazâlî pauses and contemplates before judging in favor of killing.

The fact that a spiritual ambivalence was unavoidable after attacking a great authority like Ibn Sina (both Ghazâlî's statements about him in al-*Munqidh* and by careful examinations[28] on how much he makes use of Ibn Sina's

[25] Ghazâlî, *Faysal al-Tafriqa bayn al-islam wa'l-Zandaqa*, Translated into Turkish by Süleyman Uludağ, (*İslamda Müsamaha*) İstanbul 1972, p. 46.
[26] Ghazâlî*, İncoherence, p. 8.*
[27] Ghazâlî, *al-Faysal al-Tafriqa, p. 47.*
[28] For instance, a through comparison between *al-Maqâsid al-Falâsifa* and *Dânishnâma* would make our point clear. Also, see. Gurbuz Deniz. *The method of understanding Ghazali p.28*; "For instance, Avicenna says 'God knows particulars as universals' but Ghazali paraphrases it as 'God knows universals but does not know particulars' and adds a verse from the Qur'an that 'Not an atom's weight, or less than that or greater, escaped Him in the heavens or in the earth, but it is in a clear Record' (Qur'an 34:3). Ghazali states that God's word is correct while Avicenna's not. However, this kind of argument sounds strange for someone who knows Avicenna's philosophy well since Avicenna uses this verse in his *an-Nacat* for the same purpose with Ghazali."

works proves his authority), can be seen as an element that should be added to the causes of the crisis given by the researchers mentioned below.

In his article, Al-Ghazali's Turning Point, Muhammed Huseyin states that according to Ferid Cebr and MacDonald, the reason of the crisis was the assassination of Nizam al-Mulk and additionally the author's fear of a possible assassination because of his works on Batinis, which has been seen as one of the most obvious reasons. However, Huseyin criticizes these arguments and makes the following objection:

"The fear would have been more appropriate for political leaders of that period. There are several facts that totally contradict this provocative theory. Namely that al-Ghazālī continued to write anti-Ismaili/Ta'limi works after and during his period of exile. Therefore this fear could not be a contributing factor to the cause of his crisis." [29]

Additionally, in his article, Al-Ghazali's Spiritual Crisis, M. Abu-Sway discusses the ideas of the researchers like McCarty, Margaret Smith, Abdulcelil and Nakamura on this topic. The author, who states that the reasons given by Ghazâlî himself in *al-Munqidh* are generally accepted, harshly criticizes Omer Ferruh who interprets the statements made in the text through an illness called Kunz. [30]

"We undoubtedly declare that al-Ghazâlî was sick with 'al-kanz' or 'al-ghanz', a psychological disease which appears mostly among those who have extreme religious orientation"

Abu-Sway critizes Omer Ferruh (about his arguments in his book of *"Târih al-Fiqr al-Arabi ila Eyyâm İbn Khaldun"*) for presenting Ghazâlî as a religious zealot without any evidence after listing the symptoms of this illness despite his not being a psychologist. [31]

So, can we really deduce this result from the statements of Ghazâlî himself?

"For almost six months, starting in the month of Rajab 488 (July–August 1095), I swung between the temptations of the temporal world and the call of the afterlife. Finally, by the sixth month, it ceased to be a matter of choice and became one of necessity, for God locked up my tongue and I became incapable of teaching. I would exert myself to lecture for even one day to satisfy the hearts of those around me, but my tongue would not utter a single word, and I would be completely incapable of doing so. Obstruction of the tongue eventually led to desolation of the heart, which in turn brought with it

[29] Muhammad Hozien, "Al-Ghazālī's Turning point: A critical look at writings on Al-Ghazālī's Crisis", *Middle East Studies Association* (MESA) November 18, 2001.
[30] Mustafa Mahmoud Abu-Sway, Al-Ghazālī's "Spiritual Crisis" Reconsidered. Al-Shajara (1996: Nos. 1&2, pp, 77-94). Kula Lumpur, P. 85-86.
[31] Mustafa Mahmoud Abu-Sway, Al-Ghazālī's "Spiritual Crisis" Reconsidered, p. 87.

a breakdown of the faculty that digests and assimilates food and drink; I could not even keep down broth or digest a single bite. This led to a weakening of all my faculties and the doctors lost hope for a cure. They said: "This is an affliction of the heart that has spread to the temperament, so the only way to cure it is by revival of the heart and removal of the derangement."

These statements, of course, become meaningful only with the justifications mentioned earlier, for Ghazâlî questions himself on his intentions and feels that things he did for fame and reputation rather than pleasing Allah would not be any use to him in the hereafter and for this reason, he was feeling that he was standing on the edge of a dangerous cliff. Taking into account the physical and spiritual symptoms described by our philosopher, it is obvious that there really was an illness. However, I agree with Abu-Sway that it is wrong to label this illness with unfounded and extreme diagnosis. On the other hand, I also believe that it is unavoidable to accept that Ghazâlî had been motivated by a dynamical structure effective enough to make him abandon his education, wealth and family. What is obvious here is that whether it was the political environment's becoming meaningless, the fear, or as mentioned by the author, the inclination to abandon everything, a custom of sufis, there is a state of real illness before this abandonment. Thus, putting aside the speculations on the preexisting illnesses and crisis of Ghazâlî, I believe that the matter of denunciation plays an important role as the reason of this crisis which occurs following the completion of a great book of rejection written against the philosophical authorities like Aristotle and Ibn Sina. At this point, I would like to mention another relevant detail: Although there is much to say about *Mîyâr's*, a book on logic, and *Mîzân's*, a book on ethics, being follow-ups of Aristotle's works, the fact that Aristotle is deliberately differentiated from naturalist philosophers in al-Munqidh and subsequently verses from Quran are being cited on the subject of metaphysicist philosophers' struggling with atheist philosophers and winning against them is a very important detail and it deserves serious attention.

"The third category, the theists, consists of the less ancient of the three groups of philosophers, such as Socrates, who was the teacher of Plato, and Plato the teacher of Aristotle, and Aristotle himself, who systematized logic for them, organized the sciences, rendered accurate what had been imprecise, and brought to maturity those of their sciences that were still in their infancy. ***The theists generally responded to the first two categories of philosophers, the materialists and naturalists, and in exposing their shortcomings relieved others of the task***. "God spared the faithful from combat" (Qur'an 33-25) due to the in-fighting of their opponents. Moreover, Aristotle refuted

Plato, Socrates, and the other theists before them, in such a thoroughgoing fashion that he ended up dissociating himself from all of them."[32]

Despite of these statements, Ghazâlî's discussing in al-Munqidh once again the issues where he denounces the philosophers and his continuing the denunciation must be related to the strength that comes from his starting to deal with teaching after a 10-year long solitude and his returning to the society as the "muceddid" of the century. In other words, it is impossible not to see the political side of the fact that the author, having now a mission, criticizes Ibn Sina and his followers on a different level[33] using a connection which is somewhat difficult to comprehend.

Seeing that the faith of the people has weakened, Ghazâlî believes that he can strengthen the weakened faith by showing the people the true faces of the philosophers, Bâtinis and those who cloak themselves as scholars, all of whom he knows very well and he believes that he must go back to fulfill this mission. [34]

It can be seen that working thoroughly on supporting both the methods of reason and ethical paradigms through religious dogmas, and by this way saving them from being a property of philosophers, as a way to defend the previous efforts put forth in this direction, has caused important criteria to be formed in *al-Munqidh*. To be clearer, Ghazâlî's assertion that philosophers mix the ideas of the prophets and sufis with their own views while making statements on ethics and his careful evaluation of the consequences of this situation can be regarded as an effort to justify his conveying the entire thought systems of the philosophers in his works. In this context, one can clearly see the structure of the views which are taken from the philosophy and justified:

[32] Al-Ghazâlî, *The Rescuer from Error, p. 68*.

[33] It is too difficult to understand Ghazâlî's tinge of irony in drinking "issue" which not truly relied on fictitious treatise of Avicenna's Ahidname. Because if it is not fictitious there is no need of such an interpretation for this text; "Indeed, Ibn Sına even wrote in a will that he would promise God Almighty to undertake a number of tasks, including extolling the greatness of religious regulations, observing the ritual acts of worship, and refraining from drinking for entertainment doing so only for medicinal and therapeutic purposes. This is the furthest that he has gone as regards purity of faith and commitment to worship, namely that he reserved wine-drinking for therapeutic purposes! This is the faith of those among them who claim to be believers." Al-Ghazâlî,, *The Rescuer from Error*, p.89.

[34] "When I observed that all types of people had had their faith weakened to this extent for these reasons, I found myself devoting myself to dispelling these doubts. Exposing these people was easier to me than drinking water, since I had delved extensively into their sciences and methods, namely the methods of the mystics, philosophers, Instructionists, and those considered to be religious scholars. I became convinced that this activity on my part was destined to occur at this particular time." Al-Ghazâlî, *The Rescuer from Error, p.* 90.

"Some of the passages set down in our works on the secrets of the religious sciences have elicited objections from a group of those who have not inwardly mastered the sciences and have not penetrated the furthest goals of creeds. ***They have claimed that these passages are taken from the discourse of the ancient philosophers, even though some of them are the innovations of my mind*** (for it is not unlikely for two footprints to coincide), while others are to be found in religious books, and most coincide in meaning with what is found in the works of mysticism. ***Still, even if this discourse could be found only in the books of the ancient philosophers, why should it be shunned and discarded***, if it is rational in itself, supported by demonstration, and not contrary to the Qur'an and Hadıth? If we were to set the precedent that all truths that had ever occurred to a falsifier were to be avoided, then it would follow that much of the truth would have to be abandoned, including many verses from the Qur'an, the sayings of the Prophet, the narratives of our ancestors, and the statements of sages and mystics All these would have to be discarded simply because the author of the work "The Brethren of Purity."[35]

This passage clearly shows that in his lifetime, the author took a lot from the philosophers and used them in his works. Furthermore, it shows that he was aware of what he was doing and he that he had developed a defense, for the aforementioned structure is being qualitatively described a little before this passage:

1- The truth in a statement must be evaluated independently from whether the one that makes it is Christian or of another faith.

2- A wise man does not know the truth with respect to the person, on the contrary, he knows the person with respect to the truth.

3- It should be known that the ore of gold is mixed with soil and mastery is achieved by distinguishing the gold coin from the fake.

4- The one without any swimming skills must be prevented from dangerous things like jumping into the sea. [36]

Consequently, if it is rational in itself, supported by demonstration, and not contrary to the Qur'an and Hadıth its not necessary to discard and refute it. That is to say that as far as the opinions of the Philosophers are rational and supported by demonstration they should be accepted. However to being demonstrated just here does not mean so called mathematical certainty in the Incoherence of the Philosophers. Furthermore its sufficient to being

[35] Al-Ghazâlî, *The Rescuer from Error, p.75.*
[36] Al-Ghazâlî, *The Rescuer from Error, p.74-75.*

supported by an acceptable logical demonstrative argument. Therefore many philosophical thought which refuted and also branded with infidelity in the Incoherence had become acceptable after exposed to some different interpretation in different work like *al-Mishkât al-Anwar* (*Niche of Lights*)**.**

In conclusion, this original autobiographic work of Ghazâlî's which has unique qualities has yet a lot to tell and these still have an importance which should be evaluated with many different view points. On the other hand, al-Munqidh, being one of the last works of this most impressive and most inspirational genius in the history of Islamic thought, presents us a portrait of our philosopher which can be taken as map of his mind. As all his other works, this work, too, should be read after first getting to know Ghazâlî and then learning how to read him. In my opinion, it will of course not be sufficient to make a few remarks about this work, every line of which could be the subject of a separate examination.