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AL-GHAZALI'S INFLUENCE ON WESTERN PHILOSOPHY: A PRICKY STUDY ON YOUNG MUSLIMS' AWARENESS

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Abstract

During the translation era, the golden era of Muslims scientific engagement, and most especially during the Abbasid era, scholars studied all sort of alien philosophy as those manuscripts were translated into Arabic. Al-Ghazali was one of those Muslim scholars who contributed, not only to Muslims and Islam but also, to the Western world. Although there are people who allege that al-Ghazali was responsible for the declination of intellectual sojourns among Muslims, those claims lack substantiationIt is the aim and objective of this paper to highlight al-Ghazali's philosophical contributions, most especially in the perspectives of the western scholars. The study intends to prick on the awareness of Muslim youths concerning their knowledge about Islamic heritage, it wishes to identify to them some awareness on al-Ghazali and his contributions towards Western philosophy. This study uses qualitative method, through the library, fieldwork, questionnaire and interviews in accruing data for the study. A total of 58 respondents were selected for the questionnaire. The study concludes that Muslim youths are aware of Muslim scholars' contributions towards the West, and in the same spirit they are aware that al-Ghazali did contribute. But, there seems to be lack or very minimal knowledge of the degree of his contributions in philosophy generally and on Western philosophy in particular.

Keywords: Al-Ghazali, Influence, Western Philosophy, Pricky Study, Young Muslims, Awareness

INTRODUCTION

Philosophy is one of the greatest valuable knowledge, through it the West has risen from their darkness during the Medieval Era. The medieval era is well-known as the Dark Ages due to the decline of the Roman Empire and the control of the clergymen and the churches. Philosophy had helped in developing ideas, constructing theories, learning about sciences and many others. And it has produced notable philosophers, both from amongst the Muslims and non-Muslims alike, examples are Imam Al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina, Rene Descartes, John Locke, David Hume and many more.

Muslims have contributed towards the development of philosophy through the efforts generated by the Abbasid caliphate. The early seeds of the Arabic translation movement were sown in the middle of the fourth century CE. when Jovianus, the Roman emperor, ceded a large tract of land, including the modern Syria, to the Sassanian (Persian Empire). These translations, together with Syrian Christian translators, gave rise to the Arabic translation movement and so ultimately made *Falsafah* itself possible. The movement may roughly be said to have begun with the accession of the *Abassid* dynasty in 762CE (Jon McGinnis and David C. Reisman, 2007).

Historically, philosophy was cradled at the Greece. Bertrand Russel (1961) believes that philosophy began with Thales, who, fortunately, predicted an eclipse that occurred in 585BC. It developed through the Greek civilization and has produced many great and well-known philosophers, most notable of whom are Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. And their philosophical activities had contributed to the development of knowledge in the East and the West.

Philosophy began to spreading in the Eastern part, notably the Muslim populated dynasties, earlier than in the West. During the Abbasid era, 762CE, Muslims worked assiduously on translating Greek philosophy into Arabic. This was later known as Graeco-Arabic translation movement. In this regard, John McGinnis and David C. Reisman (2007) opine that "…the translation of Greek philosophical and scientific works into Arabic, the so-called 'Graeco-Arabic translation movement' must be reckoned as one of the great human intellectual achievements of all times", for it was through those philosophic and scientific works that many Muslim scholars, such as Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Ibn Sina (Avicenna), al-Ghazali (Gazelle) and many others, had devoted themselves to learn philosophy.

At the time when philosophy was flourishing in the Eastern Muslim dynasties, the West was

battling with the decline in knowledge and the struggle for freedom from Christendom and churches institutions. This was the Medieval era of philosophy when Christianity dominated and contained intellectuality. The medieval era could be sharply discussed in two phases; the Patristic phase and the Scholastic phase. It was so called based on the patristic domination of the clergymen and the confinement of educational activities only to the church members and their very close families (see Zaki Najib Mahmud (1936).

The glory of the West came with the Renaissance. Abdul Rahman Abdullah (2016: 161) explains that in the Europe's history, modern philosophy begun with the Renaissance movement in Italy span from 14th century until 16th century…, renaissance was influenced with humanism, human-centered ideology rather than God-centered directions.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

During the Graeco-Arabic translation movement, and under the control of the Abbasids, many Muslim scholars, such as Al-Kindiy, Al-Farabi, Ibn Rushd, and Ibn Sina, were equipped with Greek ideology, especially that of Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus. The list also includes Shi'ite and Mu'tazilite scholars who tried equating rationality to revelation, or even more superior.

Aware of the dangers of Greek philosophy on Islamic faith, Al-Ghazali attempted fixing many rational issues generating therefrom through his works and writings. His major criticism of philosophy and the philosophers are mostly contained in his popular *'Tahafut al-falasifah'* (The Incoherence of Philosophers), against which Ibn Rushd later wrote his '*Tahafut al-Tahafut*' (The incoherence of the incoherence). Al-Ghazali was, and still is, a famous Muslim scholar who expertise in Islamic theology, philosophy, jurisprudence, sufism, mysticism and many more. He was not initially interested in studying philosophy, but in a way to catch a monkey on its tail he had to engage philosophy in order to be just in his accusations. His *Tahafut al-Falasifah* contains about twenty accusations levied against philosophy and, by extension, the philosophers.

As a result of his criticism, al-Ghazali was accused of staging a *coup detat* against intellectualism among Muslims, he was alleged as being responsible for the destruction of philosophy in the Muslim world until it was taken over by the West (Abdul Rahman, 2016: 11). This position is maintained by many researchers and scholars. However, Cemil Akdogan (2008: 37) begs to disagree with that unfounded claim and position when he says: "How could AlGhazali, a religious thinker with no political power, stop the flourishing of science all by himself! …Al-Ghazali did not attack science, but the metaphysics of Aristotle promoted by al-Farabi and Ibn

Sina".

Thus, young Muslims and the laymen are made to believe that al-Ghazali was just a common philosopher whose philosophical thought was only to refute the heresies in Islamic faith, and that he neither developed any new ideas nor contributed anything. This is based on the general belief that Al-Ghazali was only a theologian, jurist and mystic. Only handful few youth knows about his philosophical works and contributions, and hence the necessity of this paper. The paper is aimed at studying Al-Ghazali's contributions in philosophy and pricking on the young Muslims' mind for awareness.

In addition, the paper is posited to answering the questions on who is al-Ghazali? What are his influences on Western Philosophy? How far is Muslim youths' awareness of al-Ghazali and his influences on Western Philosophy? And What is responsible for young Muslims' lack of awareness about al-Ghazali's philosophical influences on Western Philosophy?

Furthermore, the objectives of the paper are pristined on identifying who al-Ghazali is, examining al-Ghazali's influences on Western Philosophy, pricking on young Muslims's mind for awareness on al-Ghazali's philosophical influences, and identifying the factors responsible for young Muslims' lack of awareness about al-Ghazali's philosophical influences on Western Philosophy.

Thus, the importance of this study lays in clarifying societal misconception of al-Ghazali's philosophical efforts and works, educating the society about al-Ghazali's influences in philosophy, and suggesting ways of improving young Muslims' awareness of al-Ghazali. The study employs a mixed-mode method to obtain required data. Qualitative method is used to answer the first and second research questions while quantitative method is employed to explain the third and fourth questions. It is partly a library based research and partly a fieldwork research.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Population is a group of people or elements involved I a particular (Bob Mattews & Liz Ross, 2010: 154). The information of the population is important to specify the number of samples that will represent the population. Thus, the population for this research is a number of young Muslims. Sampling is also a part of population, it is the process of selecting number of people from a population as the research's subjects (Chua Yan Piaw (2011: 203). The sampling here is directed on students at the Department of Usuluddin, Faculty of Islamic Contemporary Studies, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UniSZA), using the purposive sampling technique. This technique is used to

obtain the similar characteristics of the samples. Through the purposive sampling technique, the selected samples are the best and suitable to obtain data and information required to answer the research questions and to support the researcher in understanding the research phenomena (Azizi Yahaya et. al, 2007: 83). The students are categorized into three major groups; Diploma of Islamic Studies, Bachelor of Islamic Studies (Usuluddin with Honours), and Bachelor of Usuluddin and Counselling with Honours. The sampling was majorly focused on 50 students from both Bachelor of Islamic Studies (Usuluddin with Honours) and Bachelor of Usuluddin and Counselling with Honours, who have taken philosophy subjects.

AL-GHAZALI AND HIS INFLUENCE ON WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

Imam al-Ghazali was a *mujaddid* (the reviver, the reformer) of the 5th century *Hijrah*, and has been accorded various titles, the most famous of which is *Hujjah al-Islam* (Proof of Islam) (Mohd Rosmizi, 2016). He is Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali al-Tusi, an outstanding jurist, theologian and Sufi (Osman Bakar, 1992: 155). He was born in 450AH/1058CE in or near the city of Tus in Khurasan to a Persian family of modest means, whose members had a reputation for learning and an inclination towards Sufism (Nabil Nofal, 2000; Frank Griffel, 2009; Ismail Haji Abdullah, 1996: 40). He was born in a poor family, with his brother Abu al-Futuh Ahmad. Although his father was a wool spinner (*ghazzal*), he was a very pious and honest person. His father loved to visit, and sit with, the *'ulama'* to seek knowledge and also offer them his services (W. Montgomery Watt, 1963: 20).

Al-Ghazali's success can be partially credited to the foresight of his father who was anxious to ensure that his sons benefited from a good education and to this end his entrusted part of his estate to a Sufi friend to secure this (Noor Shakirah, 2010: 7; As-Subki, 1992: vol. 4, 89). His early education, including Quran and hadiths, listening to stories about saints, and memorizing mystical love poems, started in Tus itself, after which he was sent to *madrasah* where he first learned jurisprudence from Ahmad al-Radhkani (Osman Bakar, 1998: 157; Ismail Haji Abdullah, 1996: 43; Al-Subki, 1992: vol. 4, 102). After his education under al-Radhakani, he went to study with al-Juwayni in Nishapur, about fifty kilometres south of Tus. And before arriving at Nishapur, he studied with Abul-Nasr al-Isma'ili in Gurgan at the age of fifteen (Frank Griffel, 2009: 68; Osman Bakar, 1998: 157; Noor Shakirah, 2016: 8; Al-Subki, 1992: vol. 4, 103; Ismail Haji Abdullah, 1996: 45). Besides, he also studied sufism during his stay in Nishapur. He studied its theories and practices under the supervision and guidance of al-Farmadhi. He even practised rigorous ascetic

and Sufistic exercises under his guidance but not to the desired effect.

AL-GHAZALI'S CRISIS

Al-Ghazali experienced two crises; the intellectual crisis and the spiritual crisis (Osman Bakar, 1998: 158). At a certain time, he became impatient with dogmatic teaching and abandoned the policy of dependence upon authority (*taqlid)*. He rose up to free his mind from irksome captivity, in order to seek that which aroused the attention of the rational soul itself, and thereby facilitated for the soul the attainment of its happiness and joy (Ismail Haji Abdullah, 1996: 46). He began to face the crisis in achieving the truth of knowledge at this period. His initial encounter with the methodological claims of the *mutakallimun,* philosophers, *ta'limites* and Sufis contributed to his personal crisis. It was essentially a crisis of finding the rightful place for each of the human faculties of knowing within the total scheme of knowledge. Distinctly, it was a crisis of forming the right connection between reason and intellectual intuition. As he was still young, he must have been troubled by the strife between reliance on supra-rational experience and reason. He, in fact, came to doubt the reliability of both sense-data and rational-data of the category of self-evident truths (*daruriyyat*). He believes that it was the light which God cast into his breast that delivered him from the crisis, and it was not through rational arguments or rational proofs. Al-Ghazali once again authorized the reliability of rational-data of the category of *daruriyyat.* But he now affirms that intellectual reason is superior to reason. This affirmation is of crucial importance to a proper understanding of his classification of knowledge, which he categorizes into four classes. Thus, al-Ghazali, upon the resolution of the crisis, proceeded to undertake a thorough study of them. He devoted himself first to *kalam* while still at Nishapur. He said in *al-Munqidh* that he wrote some works on the subject during this period. After the death of his beloved teacher, al-Juwayni, al-Ghazali moved into the camp of Nizam al-Mulk in Baghdad, where many of the Muslim scholars were gathering and he was received with honour and respect by them. He also been appointed as a professor at Nizamiyyah College and began teaching in the year 484/1091. Furthermore, he completed his promised in-depth study of the four classes of knowers. This was also his most prolific period of writing, which he established some works such as *Maqasid al-Falasifah*. After he studied *kalam* and written several works on *kalam,* he began to study and spent two years in learning philosophy by himself, without the help of a teacher. Al-Ghazali claimed that the best writings in philosophy by Muslim philosophers were those of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina. After he studied *kalam* and philosophy, he continues with the study of *ta'limites*, and wrote *al-Mustazhiri*

against them after, between writing *Maqasid* and *Tahafut*. His book, *al-Mustazhiri* provoked a debate between him and the *ta'limites* that lasted many years. It is the only work that we can be sure he established during his first stay in Baghdad (Osman Bakar, 1998: 161).

In his autobiography, al-Ghazali claims that in the month of Rajab 488AH/July 1095CE, approximately six months after the completion of his *Tahafut*, he experienced a second personal crisis after his study of Sufism. He asserts to have mastered the teachings of Sufism through the writings of Sufis such as Al-Muhasibi, Al-Junayd, Al-Shibli and Al-Basami. He concluded with the beliefs of Sufism and was convinced of its ways in seeking the truth. (Osman Bakar, 1998: 162; Ismail Haji Abdullah, 1996: 62). During his spiritual crisis, he fought his desire, struggling between the voice of his faith, calling him to abandon his worldly life and the whispering of evil desire not to lose it. It lasted for six months and his scepticism affected his health so badly. In Dhul-Qa'dah 488AH/November 1095CE, he left Baghdad on the pretext of making the pilgrimage to Mecca, but in reality, he was abandoning his professorship and his career as a jurist and theologian to devote himself completely to the Sufi path as mentioned in *al-Munqidh.* He led an ascetic and contemplative life for eleven years, with occasional returns to his family and society. In Dhul-Qa'dah 499 / July 1106, he once more assumed public teaching in Nishapur (Osman Bakar, 1996; Noor Shakirah, 2010).

He spent his first spiritual retreat at the Umayyad Masjid in Damascus, where he disappeared into the minaret of the Masjid to be alone to perform prayers and for his contemplation. He lived in poverty as a Sufi whilst writing *Ihya*. He moved to Jerusalem in 489AH and stayed at a *zawiyah* (Sufi convent) situated in the vicinity of the Dome of the Rock. In the same year, he set out for Mecca to perform the *Hajj* after visiting Abraham's tomb at Hebron. The period of his stay in Syria, including the time he spent for pilgrimage, is less than two years. He returned to Nishapur in 499AH/1106CE largely because he thinks his responsibility it was to teach the knowledge of God to mankind. He resumed his position at the Nizamiyyah College after been invited by Fakhr al-Mulk, the son of Nizam al-Mulk, for at least three years. Around 503-504AH/1110CE, he returned to his hometown in Tus, setting up a *madrasah* for students of the religious sciences and a *khanqah* (Sufi convent) for the Sufi adepts, spending the rest of his life as a religious teacher and a Sufi master (Osman Bakar, 1998: 165; Noor Shakirah, 2010: 11). He died on Monday, 14th Jumada Thani 505AH/18th December 1111CE, in Tabaran at approximately fifty-five years old. His body was interred outside Tabaran in a grave near to that of the Persian poet, Firdawsi. His death came only a few days after he finished his last work, *Iljam al-'awamm 'an 'ilm al-kalam*

(Restraining the ordinary people from the science of Kalam).

AL-GHAZALI'S WORKS

According to Frank Griffel, in the index of works by al-Ghazali, in his '*Al-Ghazali's philosophical theology*', notable among Al-Ghazali works are A*l-Arba'in fi usul al-Din*, A*l-Basit fi al-Ffuru' fi madhhab al-Shafi'*i, *Bidayah al-Hidaya*, *Fadaih al-Batiniyyah*, *Faysal al-Tafriqa bayn al-Islam wa al-Zandaqah* (Decisive criterion for distinguishing Islam from clandestine apostasy), *Hujjah al-Haqq fi al-Radd 'ala al-Batiniyyah* (Proof of truth responding to the Ismailites), *Ihya' 'ulum al-Din* (Revival of the religious sciences), *Iljam al-'Awamm 'an 'ilm al-kalam* (Restraining the ordinary people from the science of Kalam), *Al-Imla' fi ishkalat al-Ihya'* (The dictation on difficult passages in the Revival), *Al-Iqtisad fi al-I'tiqad* (The balanced book on matters of belief), *Jawahir al-Qur'an* (Jewels of the Quran), *Kaymiya' al-Sa'adat* (Alchemy of happiness), *Al-Lubab min al-Ihya'* (The kernels of the Revival), *Al-Ma'arif al-'Aqliyya* (Intellectual Insights), *Al-Mankhul min ta'liqat al-usul* (The sifted among the notes on the method of Jurisprudence), *Maqasid al-Falasifah* (The aims of the philosophers), *Mihakk al-Nazar fi al-Mantiq* (Touchstone of reasoning in Logic), *Al-Munqidh min al-Dalal* (Deliverance from error), and *Tahafut al-Falasifah* (The incoherence of the philosophers).

AL-GHAZALI'S INFLUENCE ON PHILOSOPHY

As mentioned in *al-Munqidh*, Al-Ghazali composed his philosophical works after two years of self-learning, while at the same time teaching at Nizamiyyah College in Baghdad (Abdul Salam Yussof, 2003: 20). He was introduced to the study of philosophy, logic and natural philosophy included, by al-Juwayni. And he spent one more year in observing and refining what he learnt in the past two years (Mohd Fauzi Hamat, 2005: 25).

Al-Ghazali had written and established a countless of works in different fields including philosophy, theology or Islamic beliefs, sufism and jurisprudence. Ismail Haji Abdullah (1996: 69) states that "his works on philosophy are: *Tahafut al-falasifah, Maqa.id al-falasifah, Mi.akk al-na.ar fil man.iq, Miyar al-'ilm fi fann al-man.iq...*". Massarat Husain Zuberi (1992: 43) recognizes *al-Munqidh* as one of al-Ghazali's philosophical works when he mentioned some of al-Ghazali's works. There are contradictions among scholars in classifying *al-Munqidh*, whether it was a philosophical work or just a biographical account of al-Ghazali himself. In addition, Massarat Husain Zuberi classified *Mi.akk al-na.ar fil man.iq* and *Miyar al-'ilm* as al-Ghazali's works on

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Logic compared to Ismail Haji Abdullah, who combined his philosophical and logical works together, because Logic is a branch of philosophy.

According to Encyclopaedic of Islam (1999) after the period of skepticism described in *al-Munqidh,* al-Ghazali in his quest for certainty made a thorough study of philosophy. He established his first work on philosophy, *Maqasid al-falasifah* (The aims of the philosophers), a great piece referred not only by Muslims but also the Non-Muslims especially the West, in 488AH/1095CE.

There are some arguments as to when al-Ghazali started and completed the writing of *Maqasid al-falasifah.* Che Zarrina (1999: 57) states the completion between 486AH/1093CE and 487AH/1094CE, while George F. Hourani (1984: 227) states that, because it was written in Baghdad, it could not have been started earlier than 484AH/1091CE. It is a preface to *Tahafut,* making it haven been completed hardly later than 486AH/1094CE, considering the publication date of *Tahafut* and *Mustazhiri.* It must have been written during the less than two years al-Ghazali spent studying philosophy. Muhammad Amin Abdullah (1992: 14) agrees with Hourani but stresses that al-Ghazali started writing after 484AH. Even though the publication date of *Maqasid al-falasifah* is contradictory, it is unanimously approved as al-Ghazali's first work on philosophy and a preface to *Tahafut al-falasifah*.

Al-Ghazali wrote *Tahafut al-falasifah*, his second philosophical work during his teaching carrier at Nizamiyyah College in continuation of his arguments in *Maqasid al-falasifah*, and there is no reservation claiming it was written after *Maqasid al-falasifah*. In the end of *Maqasid al-falasifah*, al-Ghazali promised to refute certain philosophic claims in another book, which happens to be *Tahafut al-falasifah* completed around 11th Muharram 488AH/21st January 1095CE (Muhammad Amin Abdullah, 1992: 14; George F. Hourani, 1984: 227; Osman Bakar, 1998: 160; Che Zarina, 1999: 64).

After *Tahafut* was *Miyar al-'ilm fi fann al-mantiq* and *Mihakk al-nazar fi al-mantiq. Mi'yar* was written to explain the technical terms used in *tahafut*, it is an extension to *Tahafut* (Che Zarina, 1999: 65; George F. Hourani, 1984: 228). Although *Mihakk al-nazar* was written after *Miyar*, it was published first (George F. Hourani, 1984: 228; Che Zarina, 1999: 64) as the former was still awaiting corrections.

Other books on philosophy *Mizan al-'amal* and *Al-munqidh min al-dalal. Mizan* is closely related to *Mi'yar*, because while the former discusses ethics and practices the later reiterates on knowledge. It was published in the last year of al-Ghazali's stay in Baghdad, 488AH/1095CE (Muhammad Amin Abdullah, 1992: 15; Che Zarina, 1999: 65; George F. Hourani, 1984: 228). Al-

Ghazali wrote *al-Munqidh* approximately towards the end of his life. It has been widely debated whether *al-Munqidh* is a philosophical work or just an autobiography. But it was written when al-Ghazali was fifty years and during his stay at Nishapur after his pilgrimage in 499AH, without an exact date (Osman Bakar, 1998: 165; Muhammad Abu Laylah, 2001: 17; Noor Shakirah, 2010: 18) Abu Laylah posits that although the precise date of this book is not written, it is not impossible to identify it as been written between 499-500AH/1105-1106CE, about five or six years before his death. And, so far, it is scholarly acknowledged as the last of al-Ghazali's long life work.

It is thus crystal clear that al-Ghazali have written several works on philosophy based on the evidences provided along his lifetime. Majority of his philosophical works are written during his skeptic and intellectual crisis period, determining the truth in his quest for certainty.

Maqasid al-falasifah aims at showing in what respects the Neoplatonism of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina were incompatible with Sunni Islam it is an exposition of their philosophy without any criticism. Al-Ghazali explains thus:

> Indeed, you have asked a discussion exposing the mistakes, errors, contradictions and incoherence of the philosophers in their teaching. Don't be too greedy and harsh in fulfilling your ambition before you learn and know their principles. It is impossible for us to correct something without any knowledge of their teachings, because it will drive us into failure. Therefore, in this work, I intend to elaborate and explain briefly their doctrines of Logic, Metaphysics and Physics, without classifying them between right or wrong. My purpose of writing this work is to give an understanding and explanation of the intentions of their discussion in philosophy. Thus, I named this book as Maqasid al-falasifah.

This acknowledges that *Maqasid* is barely al-Ghazali's understanding and summary of philosophy (Greek philosophy, in particular that of Aristotle, Plato and Plotinus, as well as Islamic philosophy or known as 'Neo-Platonist', in particular that of Ibn Sina and al-Farabi) and he did not give his own views or thoughts in the book (Osman Bakar, 1998: 160; Mohd Fauzi, 2005: 30), it is a summary of the principles of philosophy and philosophers without classifying whether it was right or wrong. He classifies philosophy into four, saying:

> …I will explain to you that there are four categories of philosophy; Mathematics, Metaphysics, Logic and Physics. Mathematics is a theory of calculation and engineering, there is no contradiction with rational and our faith, thus we will not elaborate it. There are many errors and mistakes in their teaching of Metaphysics with the Islamic faith. As for Logic, it gives us many benefits along with a few mistakes. The contradictions occur only in terms used, not the intentions. We have to amend the methods of argumentations only. Finally, in Physics, the truth is corrupted by the untrue.

Thus, al-Ghazali's concentration is metaphysics, logics and physics, and not mathematics since it contradicts not with the truth, and hence the encouragement to learn it. And he did promise producing another book to explain fallacies in metaphysics, logics and physics in details. It is evident that *Maqasid* has great impact on Western Knowledge, as it is widely referred. It is an irony that this book is classic for the West and al-Ghazali for his clear thinking and clearer exposition is hailed as a great Aristotelian (Massarat Husain Zuberi, 1992: 45).

Tahafut al-falasifah is a refutation heresies of the Neoplatonism of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina and the previous philosophers, the Greek and Muslims. In *Tahafut*, alghazali sets out to overturn the main Neoplatonic and Aristotelian views of reality, in the form of twenty theses which he argues are invalid (Oliver Leamen, 1985: 25). He states his motive of writing the book as:

> When I saw this vein of folly pulsating among these idiots, I decided to write this book in order to refute the ancient philosophers. It will expose the incoherence of their beliefs and the inconsistency of their metaphysical theories. It will bring to light flimsiest and the obscurest elements of their thought which will provide some amusement for, and serve as a warning to, the intelligent men… We propose to show how they slipped into error and falsehood. But our examination will not obscure their solid achievements which lie beneath the repulsive façade of their thought.

Tahafut al-falasifah is a twenty-one chapters' book; an introduction with four prefaces and twenty chapters on the problems and errors in philosophy. Unlike *Maqasid*, *Tahafut* is al-Ghazali's views and critics on philosophy, as stated in *Maqasid*. He summed up his views in twenty major points; sixteen on metaphysics and four on natural sciences, which he classified as heresies in Islamic faith. Three, dealing with God, the universe and man, of which he charged not only as heresy but also utterly irreligious and disbelief in Islam (Frank Griffel, 2009: 207). Al-Ghazali is particularly incensed over the nature of Ibn Sina's views on three topics; the creation of the world out of nothing or theory of pre-eternal world, that God only knows the universal characteristics of particulars, and that bodily resurrection will not take place in the hereafter, only human souls are resurrected.

Al-Ghazali made a serious charge against the philosophers, that they say that the world is everlasting, without beginning, or it was co-existed with God. It is inconceivable that something which has a beginning in time should proceed from the Eternal without there being an intermediate period. If we suppose the eternal was a stage when the world had not been created by Him, then we should ask ourselves why did He not create the world before its originations. We could not say that He was unable to bring the world into existence or that it was impossible of the world's coming to being. This would mean that He changed from inability to ability and impossibility into

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possibility. Both statements show that Allahu SWT is powerless, therefore weakness is not attributed to God. The nearest to the truth is that Allah did have power before the creation of the world, His power is infinite and the power and will to create includes the power and the will not to create. He had the power but did not exercise it, and He created it when He wanted and willed to. *His command is only when He intends a thing that He says to it, "Be!" and it is* (*Surah Yasin*: 82). Maintaining that God only knows the universal characteristics of particulars and not the details reckons philosophers as infidels (*Kuffar*). On the claim that only human souls are resurrected, and their denial of bodily resurrection, coupled with claiming that pleasures and punishments are only meted to the souls and not the bodies; the assertion that rewards and punishments are spiritual and not bodily, al-Ghazali says that they certainly speak partial truth. They speak truth in affirming the spiritual ones since they do exist as well, but they speak falsely in denying the bodily ones and in their pronouncements, disbelieve the revelation.

Tahafut is a tremendous contribution to Muslims, as it discusses errors and false teachings of philosophy that were contrary to the Islamic faith. However, it does not expound al-Ghazali's affirmative views on the questions in dispute. As for his positive views, al-Ghazali intends to expound them in *Qawa'id al-'aqa'id* (The foundation of the articles of faith) (Osman Bakar, 1998: 160). *Tahafut* of al-Ghazali was later criticized by Ibn Rushd in his *Tahafut al-tahafut* (Mohd Fauzi, 2005: 31; Oliver Leaman, 1985: 23).

Al-Munqidh min al-dalal was written in al-Ghazali's fifties, and it has been translated into many academic languages along with his other works. Al-Ghazali declares the motive behind the writing of *al-Munqidh* as a response to people's insistent requests. He says:

> You have asked me, my brother in religion, to show you the aims and inmost nature of sciences and the perplexing depths of the religious systems. You have begged me to relate to you the difficulties I encountered in my attempt to extricate the truth from the confusion of contending sects and to distinguish the different ways and methods, and the venture I made in climbing from the plain of naive and second-hand belief (taqlid) to the peak of direct version… (Noor Shakirah (2010: 22; Ayman Haj Yasin, 2016: 105).

Most scholars, Muslims and Non-Muslims alike, ascends to the autobiographic nature of *al-Munqidh* because al-Ghazali himself describes therein his intellectual and spiritual development and a critical review of different contemporary thought (Ayman Haj Yasin, 2016: 98).

Therein, al-Ghazali divides the seeker of knowledge of his time into four classes, namely *al-Mutakallimun, al-Falasifah*, *al-Batiniyyah* (*Ta'limites*), and *al-Sufiyah*. Al-Ghazali claimed that his interest in the various classes of knowers was generated by his inner quest for the knowledge

of the true reality of things. He excluded the jurist from the stream of seekers of knowledge as he considers them the most important religious group (Osman Bakar, 1998: 181). He declares:

> When God Most High, of His kindness and abundant generosity, had cured me of this sickness, I was of the view that the categories of those seeking the truth were limited to four groups: the *Mutakallimun* who allege they are men of independent judgment and reasoning; the Batinites who claim to be the unique possessors of *al-ta'lim* and the privileged recipients of knowledge acquired from the infallible Imam; the Philosophers who maintain they are men of logical demonstration; and the Sufis who claim to be the familiar with the Divine Presence and men of mystic vision and illumination (al-Ghazali, 1988: 31).

Al-Ghazali started with studying *kalam*, after which he studied philosophy. He classifies philosophers into three groups, saying:

> Know that the philosophers, notwithstanding the multiplicity of their groups and the diversity of their doctrines, can be divided into three main divisions: Materialists, Naturalists, and Theists. The first category, the Materialists, were a group of the most ancient philosophers who denied the existence of the omniscient and omnipotent Creator-Ruler… The second category, the Naturalists, were men who devoted much study to the world of nature and the marvels found in animals and plants; they also were much taken up with the dissection of animal organs… The third category, the Theists, were the later philosophers, such as Socrates, the master of Plato, and Plato, the master of Aristotle…

He initially classifies philosophy into four groups; metaphysics, physics, mathematics and logics, in *Maqasid*, but later added two other classifications, the ethics and politics. He affirms: *"know that the sciences of the philosophers, with reference to the aim we have in mind, include six divisions: mathematical, logical, physical, metaphysical, political, and moral"* (al-Ghazali, 1988: 31).

Al-Ghazali devoted in Sufism after he was unsatisfied with *kalam,* philosophy and thr *ta'limites* for certainty. His study of Sufism is important because from it we derive both his theory of knowledge and his theory of the soul, and the theory of body and soul (Noor Shakirah, 2016: 69).

HIS INFLUENCES ON THE WEST

The development of knowledge in Islamic world reached its peak during Abbasid Caliphate. There are three main factors that contributed to the development of philosophical studies during this reign, they are the influence of Muslim Caliphs, such as Harun al-Rashid who built the *Bayt al-Hikmah* (Library) in Baghdad, who encouraged scientific research, the Graeco–Arabic translation

movement supported by the Abbasid Caliphate, and the research developments that were significant in mathematics, geography and literature which needed wider understanding by philosophical theories. However, we can say that defending Islam was the most important factor because it required creative methods for the explanation and commentary of Quran and *Hadith*. Through Graeco-Arabic, many Muslim scholars developed interest in learning and teaching philosophy, and it was through this many great and influential Muslim philosophers, such as Ibn Sina, al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn-Rushd, and al-Ghazali, have evolved.

Many Muslim scholars are influenced by al-Ghazali's thoughts specifically in theology, jurisprudence, *kalam* and Sufism. But it is not a simple task identifying Western scholars under the influence of al-Ghazali as most of them do not credit his name when quoting or taking from him. Only a few of them can be traced as they transmitted directly some of al-Ghazali's text in their works. Examples are Saint Thomas Aquinas in his Contra Gentiles, Rene Descartes in his *Discours de la méthode* (Discourse on the method), *Meditationes de prima philosophia* (Meditations of first philosophy), and *Principia philosophiae* (Principles of philosophy), Dante, David Hume, and Immanuel Kant. The West began referring the works of Muslim scholars, such as al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd and al-Ghazali, after the establishment of a translation bureau proposed by Raymond of Toledo towards the end of the 5th AH/11th CE century. The Muslim rule in Spain, the Crusades, the seminaries in Sicily, the inadequacy of the old Western scholastic and scientific systems, and the density of population and internal congestion necessitated relations of the West with the Muslim world. Muslims and Christians lived side by side in Toledo, and it was here that Raymond I, Archbishop of the provincial capital (525-545AH/1130-1150CE), established a translation bureau to render Arabic masterpieces into Latin (M.M. Sharif, 2010: v.2, book 6, p. 588).

In the 6th-7th AH/12th-13th CE, the main Arabo-Latino translation centres were Toledo, Durgos, Sicily, and Naples, with John of Seville and Gundisalvus translations being of primary importance. John of Seville translated Arabic texts into Roman language and Gundisalvus translated from Roman to Latin. Ibn Sina's *al-Shifa* was partly rendered into Latin as Suffacientia, while *Kitab al-Qanun fi al-tibb* was translated as the Canon of Medicine.

Al-Ghazali works and treatises were not spared of translation. Most of his works were rendered in Latin in the 12th century, and were later translated into Hebrew and English. Most of his works had been translated into Latin before the middle of the 6th AH/12th CE, and had since then exercised a considerable influence on Jewish and Christian scholasticisms. From those days

onwards, the Western scholars began to refer to his works, especially in theology and philosophy. His most referred works by the West are the *Maqasid al-falsifah, Tahafut al-falasifah, Mizan al-ʿamal* and *al-Munqidh min al-dalal* (M.M. Sharif (2010: v.2, book 6, pg. 588).

Miguel Asin Palacios, Masarrat Husain Zuberi, M. M.Sharif, Bruno Nardi, and Margaret Smith maintain that some Western philosophers of the Medieval and Modern eras were influenced by al-Ghazali's works. A good instance is Archbishop Raymond Martin (Raymond of Toledo) who quotes directly from al-Ghazali's *Maqasid al-falasifah, Mizan al-ʿamal* and *Ihya' ʿulum al-din* in his two books *Explanatio Simboli* and *Pugio fidei* to buttress his arguments (Masarat Husein Zuberi, 1992: 143). Another instance is the French Blaise Pascal whom Asin Palacios compares with al-Ghazali. Palacios says, Pascal, just like al-Ghazali, is of the view that our senses may deceive us. He compares the text of *al-Munqidh* with Pascal's *Pensees* where both say God is felt not in the intellect but in the heart.

THE INFLUENCE OF *AL-MUNQIDH* ON DESCARTES

Rene Descartes was a French mathematician, philosopher and scientist, born on 31st March 1596 at La Haye, Tourine. He occupies the position of the father of philosophy in the West, and was influential in developing philosophical teachings of the Modern era. He produced many philosophical works, some of which were mentioned above. Historically speaking, he was born approximately 490 years after al-Ghazali's death. Meaning he could not have had any influence on al-ghazali as he never met him. M.M. Sharif in his *A History of Muslim Philosophy* points out countless similarities between both philosophers, especially the influence of *al-Munqidh* on Descartes' thought. He concludes that it is impossible to deny its influence, although he asserts he had no evidence of a Latin translation of al-Ghazali's works that Descartes read (M.M. Sharif: 1382).

Mohammad al-Wahaib (2017) quotes Sami Najm saying "the two cases of dealing with the problem of doubt are profoundly comparable", but refrains from arguing that "al-Ghazali influences Descartes since it is a matter for which he has no evidence. It is hard tracing al-Ghazali's influences on Descartes as he was never mentioned or quoted in his works.

Massarat Husein Zuberi (1992: 144) says there is no direct or indirect acknowledgement from Descartes to any Muslim thinker, but when all the recently established universities and intellectual circles were buzzled with the uncommon ideas acquired through the freely circulating Latin translations of Ibn Sina, al-Ghazali, and Ibn Rushd, the influences of Muslim thinkers can be

traced in his *Meditations of first philosophy* and *Principles of philosophy*. He agrees with other scholars that Descartes must have been influenced by al-Ghazali because a lot of Muslim thinkers' works have been translated into Latin in the 12th century, hundreds of years before Descartes was born. There are many similarities in al-Ghazali and Descartes philosophy. Descartes followed the method of al-Ghazali on skepticism and dualism, he followed al-Ghazali's method, but however laid emphasis on philosophy or human reason rather than theology (Cemil Akdogan, 2008: 117). Descartes says: "*I have always thought that two issues-namely, God and the soul-are chief among those that ought to be demonstrated with the aid of philosophy rather than theology*" (Descartes, 1998: 47). Mustafa Abu-Sway (1996: 143) maintains that Uthman Ka'ak related that he found a translated copy of *al-Munqidh* in Descartes' library in Paris with his comments in the margin. Although there is no account of the nature of these comments, making a comparison of Descartes' epistemology with that of al-Ghazali to be in order, because of the remarkable similarities. Both *al-Munqidh* and *Discours de la method* is autobiographical, and they start with the stories of the authors' youth lives respectively. Both realizes how, despite having the same reasoning faculty, the children of Muslim or Christian parents, thanks to custom and example, had different beliefs from the beliefs held by those brought up by Jewish parents, and how those brought up among Frenchmen were different from those brought up among the Germans. Both, therefore, decided that they would not believe anything that was based on tradition, custom, or example, and both walked into every dark spot to discover the truth.

The Cartesian Doubt of Descartes is very similar to the skepticism of al-Ghazali. Descartes says:

> But immediately afterward I noticed that, while I wanted thus to think that everything was false, it necessarily had to be the case that I, who was thinking this, was something. And noticing that this truth— I think, therefore I am—was so firm and so assured that all the most extravagant suppositions of the skeptics were incapable of shaking it, I judged that I could accept it without scruple as the first principle of the philosophy I was seeking (Descartes, 1998: 18).

It is remarkably surprising that this method is similar to al-Ghazali's starting point of self-examinations in 'I will, therefore, I am'. Descartes also begins with a study of his self and has the formula 'I think, therefore, I am' (Cogito Ergo Sum) (Massarat Husein Zuberi, 1992: 144). Like al-Ghazali, Descartes expresses his dissatisfaction with authoritative instruction which he considered deceptive. Therefore, as he reached the permitted age to pass from under the control of his instructors, he abandoned formal studying and he began travelling and holding intercourse with

men of different disposition by way of studying what he described as the great book of the world. This position is similar to that of al-Ghazali regarding conformism. Descartes described his delight in the certitude of mathematics. Likewise, al-Ghazali made the certitude of mathematics as the criteria he aspired to reach in all knowledge (Mustafa Abu Sway, 1996: 142).

Relying on the above scholarly evidences, one could conclude that Descartes was influenced by al-Ghazali. And one could thus believe that Descartes was being dishonest by writing the *Discourse on Methods* without giving any academic reference to al-Ghazali.

AL-GHAZALI'S THEOLOGICAL INFLUENCE ON ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

Saint Thomas Aquinas was born in 1225CE, probably in the castle of Roccasecca, Aquino, in the Kingdom of Sicily. He was an Italian Dominican friar, Catholic priest, and Doctor of the Church, a title given by the Catholic Church to saints recognized as having made significant contribution to theology or doctrine through their works. He was an immensely influential philosopher, theologian, and jurist in the tradition of scholasticism, within which he is also known as the '*Doctor Angelicus'* and the '*Doctor Communis'* (John Placid, 1911: 1). He was an eminent Christian scholar of divinity, metaphysics, and philosophy, and he was sainted by the Catholic Church that refers him as the model teacher for priesthood, the highest expression of both natural reason and speculative theology. He was reckoned as the father of Thomism and published many works such as the famous *Summa Theologica*, *Summa contra Gentiles*, *On Being and Essence*, and many more.

St. Thomas' works are confirmed to have been influenced by Muslim scholars, and particularly the works of al-Ghazali. Science first became married to Christianity through the agency of revelation, namely through the church, since the medieval universities, where students were taught seven liberal arts and the Aristotelian natural philosophy, were under the control of the church…The largest community of philosophers and students in the Middle Ages learned the ideas of Aristotle through the interpretations or commentaries of Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd at these institutions and tried to develop them further (Cemil Akdogan, 2008: 46).

Muslim theological influence on the West is secondary because of the tension between Islam and Christianity. Muslim theologians got known to the West indirectly through the works of their philosophers, only al-Ghazali's theology is known to the Western scholars directly. St. Thomas refers to the theologians in his *Summa contra gentiles.* He used some texts of al-Ghazali in the same book either directly or through the mediation of Raymond Martini. Al-Ghazali's arguments in favour of the *creatio ex nihilo* (the view that the universe, the whole of space-time,

is created by a free act of God out of nothing, and not either out of some pre-existing material or out of the divine substance itself), his proof that God's knowledge comprises particulars, and his justification of the resurrection of the dead, as discussed in *Tahafut al-falasifah*, were adopted by many western scholars, St. Thomas Aquinas included.

Massarat Husein Zuberi (1992: 142) states that the influence of al-Ghazali is not only widely acknowledged but admitted by St. Thomas in his *Summa theologica*. He used the words of al-Ghazali in reference to the inability of the creatures to realize the majesty of the creator, by stating that "the Sun, though supremely visible cannot be seen by the bat, because of the excess of light. And when we compare between al-Ghazali's *Tahafut* and Aquinas' *Summa theologica* on the doctrine of divine simplicity, we may be able to indicate at least three similarities that contain enough overlap between their views of the divine simplicity: 1) In speaking of the nature of divine simplicity, both al-Ghazali and Thomas believe in the simplicity of God in the sense that He is completely simple without compositions. And also, God's simplicity does not necessarily rule out divine attributes; 2) Regarding the relationship between God's simplicity and His creations, both assert that the aspects of the nature of God and the nature of humans are similar but not identical; 3) Concerning the problem of divine attributes in God's simplicity, both agree that God's simplicity does not necessarily rule out divine attributes. But they disagree with their respective conceptions of these attributes with respect to the way in which the attributes are united or overcome in the divine simplicity; and 4) With reference to al-Quran and the incarnation of Christ (the Logos), both believe in the uncreatedness of the Word; but disagree on the meaning of the uncreated Word.

We could thus affirm that St. Thomas Aquinas was influenced by Muslim scholars' works, and especially al-Ghazali. Also, the notion that al-Ghazali staged a coup de-tat against philosophical teachings among Muslims is unfounded. He does not only contribute and influence Muslim scholars but also non-Muslims alike.

DATA ANALYSIS

The demographic information of respondents shows that 23 out of 58 (39.7%) respondents are males, while 35 (60.3%) respondents are females. It can be concluded that the number of female respondents is greater than the number of males, with the difference of 12 peoples. Majority of the respondents are between the ages of 21 and 23, 50 (86.2%) are between ages of 21 and 23, Six (10.3%) between ages 24 and 26, and the least, two (3.4%) are between ages 18 and 20.

Educationally, one respondent (1.7%) is a Diploma student, while the remaining

respondents 57 (98.3%) are bachelor's degree students. Thus, the number of bachelor's degree students are greater than diploma student. Also 15 (25.9%) of the respondents are students of BA Usuluddin with Counselling with Honor (USUK), and the remaining 42 (72.4%) are BA Usuluddin with Honor (USUL). The data shows that one respondent (1.7%) is in Semester 2 and Semester 3 respectively, four (6.9%) in Semester 4 and fifty-two (89.7%) in Semester 7. From the data, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents are from Semester 7. The study also reveals that all respondents (100%) are still studying, and none is working.

Regarding al-Ghazali's name and title 56 (96.6%) of the respondents answered 'True' while two (3.4%) chose 'False'. Fifty-six (96.6%) of the total respondents answered true to the title *Hijjah al-Islam* and two (3.4%) answered false. With regards to his date and place of birth and death, 56 (96.6%) out of 58 respondents chose 'True' to "He was born in 450AH/1058CE at Tus, Kurasan" and the remaining two (3.4%) respondents chose 'False'. Most respondents agree with the statements. Fifty-five (94.8%) out of 58 respondents answered 'True' to "He died on 14th Jumada thani 505AH, at the age of 55", while three (5.2%) do not agree with the statement. This shows that the respondents' level of awareness on al-Ghazali's date and place of birth and his date of death is high.

Fourteen (24.1%) respondents answered 'True' to "He was born in a very wealthy and rich family", while 44 (75.9%) out of 58 respondents chose 'False'. Thus, the majority is aware about the financial background of his family. And while 50 (86.2%) respondents chose 'True' to "Imam al-Haramain al-Juwaini was one of his teachers", only 6 (13.8%) respondents chose 'False'. It can be assumed that the respondents' knowledge on al-Ghazali's educational background, his teachers specifically, are moderate. The study also finds out that the respondents' knowledge on al-Ghazali's works and profession are moderate. Thus, the study concludes that the respondents have high level of knowledge on al-Ghazali overall. However, they must be exposed about his family members, teachers and his works and treatises.

With regards to respondents' awareness on al-Ghazali's contributions to Western philosophy, it shows that 26 (44.8%) respondents choose 'Strongly Agree', 20 (34.5%) choose 'Agree', and 8 (13.8%) are 'uncertain'. One respondent (1.7%) answers 'Strongly Disagree', and 3 (5.2%) respondents 'Disagree'. This shows the majority strongly agreed with the statement. But respondents do not seem to know the contributions of al-Ghazali on wetern philosophers, as 23 (39.7%) out of 58 respondents replied 'Neutral/uncertain' to "Rene Descartes, David Hume and St. Thomas Aquinas were influenced by al-Ghazali's philosophical works". 13 (22.4%) respondents

chose 'Strongly Agree', 17 (29.3%) chose 'Agree', two (3.4%) respondents answered 'Disagree' and only three (5.2%) answered 'Strongly Disagree'. By this, the study concludes that the respondents do have knowledge that al-Ghazali did contribute to Western philosophy, however they do not know his contributions and influences on Western philosopher precisely.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the above discussions that Muslim youths are aware of Muslim scholars' contribution to philosophy. They equally are aware that al-Ghazali also did contribute to philosophy as he was a Muslim scholar. However, they are unsure, and are unaware, to what degree is his contributions in philosophy generally and his contributions towards Western philosophy precisely. This conclusion is made based on the analysed data. The main obstacle faced by the youths in understanding philosophy is the language barrier. This item can be divided into two; language used in the philosophical texts by the authors and the intermediate language used in teaching and learning session of philosophical subjects. In addition, the data shows that the lack of knowledge on the importance of philosophy also caused the students lack of interest in learning philosophy. The study proposes that proper language be used when offering philosophical subjects, and that the language style and level used in the book must not very high. Moreover, it is best to use two languages as the medium of instructions. It would be burdensome if instructors use more than two languages. The study suggests using Arabic and English as most of the philosophical works are in English and Arabic. As for the youth the study encourages them to strengthen their English and Arabic languages. Instead of learning philosophy only in classes, philosophical programs could be organized as well.

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