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LEARNING FROM AL- GHAZALI

Şengül ÇELİK*

Introduction

It is an important question whether the old historical names finished their mission in their time or they can still teach the modern people. For the modern generations to learn from old sayings is problematic since the conditions are usually totally different. It is also possible to assume ancient names were for the ancient times they enlightened their contemporaries and that is all.

If every situation needs a particular tendency it is hard to say that thinkers have effects to the new generations. However it seems there is something universal despite the sayings of Heraclitus. At least, human beings still needs water and oxygen to survive. Thus the value of water and oxygen for human beings is indisputable for biological needs. Since water and oxygen are not necessary only for human but for all living beings there is no definition saying human is a water drinking being. There are definitions that point out the significant characteristics of human being such as: thinking, speaking, tool making. Therefore it is not surprising that “thinking” for Descartes is a proof of existence. If thinking can be a kind of proof for existence it can also be evidence for having some universal characteristics.

The stories of creation of man in each culture have similar characteristics. The famous creation stories of Babylonian, Greece, Jews, Christianity and Islam have some common points. Ancient mythology is a mirror of pagan culture and the creation stories of Abrahamic religions mirror the believers’ belief. Despite the certain difference in their worldviews the story of creation and the nature of man that is told in the stories have similarities. The most common Greek creation story is told by Hesiod in his *Theogony*. Man that is told in the story is created from clay like it is told in all Abrahamic religions and also Babylonian myths.¹ Mud, dust, clay and water are the most common mentioned source of human physical creation. The Abrahamic religions assume one omnipotent God whereas the Greek myths include lots of gods, goddesses, and half-god creatures. After

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1 Sir A. E. Wallis Budge. *The Babylonian Legend of Creation*, British Museum, Project Gutenberg, 2011. p.5.

the physical creation in Greek mythology it is Athena who gave life by a breath and in Abrahamic religions God gave man a piece from his soul. This piece of God is the source of every good thing in human and the evils come from the clay. Thus the most common specialty of human soul is it is imperfectness.

It is said the secrets of being human is tucked away in the creation story. That is may be why Thomas Hobbes assumes “wisdom is acquired, not reading of Books, but of Men.”² He believes “whosoever looketh into himself, and considereth what he doth, when he does Think, Opine, Reason, Hope, Feare, &c, and upon what grounds; he shall thereby read and know, what are the thoughts and Passions of all other men, upon the like occasions”³ In this sense we can enlarge Hobbes understanding going from one’s own self to humanity to from past to future. Thus, if a thinker is thought to be read men then of course there are great names that can be a source for learning for the future generations. From this point of view we can also say old sayings of ancient names especially that read human as it is and offer the habits to live well can still teach the forthcoming generations. Al Ghazali who is the one of the most discussed thinker in history of Islamic philosophy gives special importance to understand human. In order to learn from past Ahmet İnam assumes “it is necessary to go to the past and bring it to the future”⁴. He contends “the past that I cannot convey is not mine”⁵ He propounds “Ghazali is not a dead thinker of middle ages but he is a cultural being that lives the problems of our age, our country and Islamic Culture.”⁶

For Aristotle ethics is not a theoretical science since its aim is not to know what virtue is but it is for to become good. That is why his teachings on virtue focus on practicing. He contends “virtue of character is a result of habituation. From this it is clear that none of the virtues of character arises in us by nature.”⁷ His ethical principle lies on habituation. He thinks “For nothing natural can be made to behave differently by habituation.”⁸ So besides the importance of reading human being as it is, it is also crucial to find out which habits flourish the goodness.

During the Enlightenment human becomes a central authority in moral life. Hobbes and his forerunners give importance to human however it is after

2 Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan*, epubBooks, 1651, p.7.

3 Ibid. 8.

4 Ahmet İnam. “Gazali’nin Kalb Ordusu”, *İslami Araştırmalar Dergisi*, İstanbul, 13: 3-4, 2000. p.511.

5 Ahmet İnam, p. 511

6 Ahmet İnam, p. 512

7 Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. p. 23.

8 Aristotle, p. 23.

Enlightenment that human authority takes place of God's authority including the moral life. The Hegelian liberal individualistic life model finds its golden age by developing technologies. Consuming Culture is living its zeal in most of liberal states. Marx from his economical viewpoint was certain about the side effects of this individualism that is why he always supports human nature as social. Eugene Kamenka states, for Marx; "The human essence or spirit is what is common to all men: their eternal nature. It must therefore express itself above all in the unity of men, in overcoming the divisions created by their empirical particularity."⁹ He asserts "Conflict for Marx stems from the empirical particularities and distinctions among men" he quotes from Marx "That the individual locks himself into his empirical nature against his eternal nature." These claims about human nature are indeed an introduction to state a social organization with civil society. The rationality of human is enough for him to organize society thus there is no need for a state authority like in traditional morality and laws accept. However Marx belief about the reality of the existence depends on matter. His attempt to draw a universal human nature that can overcome the empirical particularity and reach eternal essence is a contradiction in his material world. Moreover the Darwinist theory that alternates the traditional religious ethics and laws helped the capitalist understanding instead of socialist revolution. Shaw states;

Nineteenth-century social Darwinism interpreted evolutionary theory as a justification for laissez faire ideals. Accordingly, 'the survival of the fittest' was interpreted as a legitimation of the emerging capitalist economy, with natural selection supposedly favouring the 'captains of industry'¹⁰

Although the Darwinist theory helped the Capitalist understanding instead of Marxist Revolution it becomes a source to devastate the religious assumptions. The atheist existentialism with Darwinian Evolutionary theory brings out the transcendental human. The arguments of moral foundation reached a point where people discuss to create themselves in new forms. The *Second Sex* of Simone de Beauvoir was asserting "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman."¹¹ She states her thoughts from a gender biased perspective. It was an unusual rebellion of an existentialist woman to inequalities between the two sexes. Foucault goes further to say "As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end."¹² He states a continuous

9 <http://www.marxists.org/archive/kamenka/1962/ethical-foundations/ch04.htm>

10 Debra Benita Shaw. *Technoculture: The Key Concepts*, New York: Berg, 2008. p. 99.

11 Simone de Beauvoir. *The Second Sex*. Trans. Constance Borde, Sheila Malovny-Chevallier, USA: Vintage Books, 2011. p. 283.

12 Michel Foucault. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, London: Routledge, 1989. p. 422.

creation and recreation of the self and the world. The antihumanism of Foucault is a continuation of the secular humanism. Nietzsche announced to his contemporaries the “death of God”. For Foucault the death of God and the last man are engaged in a contest with more than one round”¹³ he thinks “man and God belong to one another, at which the death of the second is synonymous with the disappearance of the first, and at which the promise of the superman signifies first and foremost the imminence of the death of man.”¹⁴ Nietzsche’s promise of superman give a birth today’s transhumanism and cyborgs.

It is claimed “The origins of European modernity are often characterized as springing from a secularizing process that denied divine and transcendent authority over worldly affairs.”¹⁵ In the modern era the new understanding of human lost its spirituality and is lack of nexus with God and afterlife. The new era is a constitution of science and technology. Hardt and Negri assume “The powers of science, knowledge, affect, and communication are the principal powers that constitute our anthropological virtuality and are deployed on the surfaces of Empire.”¹⁶ They think a radical change occurred.

What in the midst of the crisis in the 1920s appeared as transcendence against history, redemption against corruption, and messianism against nihilism now was constructed as an ontologically definite position outside and against, and thus beyond every possible residue of the dialectic. This was a new materialism which negated every transcendent element and constituted a radical reorientation of spirit.¹⁷

Today with the developing new technologies of genetic engineering it is discussed whether a parent can reshape their babies before birth by genetic modifying. Cryonics becomes a new technique of a delayed recurring with a hope of an eternal life. Most scientists are waiting for the whole decipher of Human genome to update the beliefs about human being, new medicine, or may be to realize the eugenics. It is stated that “Biotechnology raises not only ethical questions but also broader and more profound philosophical questions—about the goals of medicine, about human nature, about the nature and purpose of technology, and ultimately about one’s view of the world.”¹⁸ Transhumanism is not a mere fantasy of science-fictions any more. It is possible to transplant tissues from human

13 Michel Foucault, p. 420.

14 Ibid. 373.

15 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. *Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000. p. 71.

16 Ibid. 365.

17 Ibid. 378.

18 C. Ben Mitchell et al. *Biotechnology and the Human Good*, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006. p. 32.

to human from animal to human. It is possible to remake organs from stem cells. It is possible to transplant mechanic organs. Human is thought to be perfected by modification of new technologies. Technologies for perfecting human performance are developing but the old questions of how should one live stands still. The famous question of ethics that Plato stated in the Gyges ring myth considering the possibility of running away with what have you done is today a matter of collecting evidence that laws command to prove innocence. If you have chance to cheat the law you are free to run away with what you have done.

Ghazali's Theory of Man and Morals¹⁹

It is thought that before Islam in Arabia virtue is “mainly consisted in courage, in defending the honour of the tribe” and “Generosity was another well-known aspect of the Arab Character.”²⁰ Since they are predominantly a bedouin nation “they had neither developed and refined culture nor any moral order worth that name.”²¹ The way they conduct their life by the governance of their economical state was “hedonistic.”²² It is after Islam they “changed their whole outlook.”²³ In Islamic science tradition all Islamic sciences are originated by Qur’an. Ethics also, “takes its origin from the Qur’an.”²⁴ It is a general acceptance that “The Qur’an lays down the foundation of a religious system on purely ethical principles, hence there is not much to distinguish between Islam as such and Islamic Ethics.”²⁵ The important books on ethics before Al Ghazali are “Ibn Miskawaih’s Tahdhib al-Akhlaq, Abu Talib al-Makki’s the Qut al Qulub, al-Qushayri’s the al-Risala al-Qushayriya and Raghbi al Isfahani’s Makarim al-Shari’a”²⁶ all these books are trying to formulize the ethical teachings of the Qur’an and the prophet. Following his forerunners Al Ghazali also wrote his books “following Qur’an in spirit and keeps the Prophet before him”²⁷

Al-Ghazali in his books *Ihya* and *Kimya* include parts that are devoted to understand human. His ethical understanding depends upon the meaning of being human. For Muhammed Abul Quasem, Al-Ghazali’s ethics starts from “the core

19 The summary of Ghazali’s thought is mainly from *Kimya-i Saadet* in Turkish and translated by the author.

20 M. Umaruddin. *The Ethical Philosophy of Al-Ghazzali*, New Delhi: Adam Publishers&Distributers, 2003. p. 64.

21 M. Umaruddin, p. 64.

22 M. Umaruddin, p. 64.

23 M. Umaruddin, p. 64.

24 M. Umaruddin, p. 64.

25 M. Umaruddin, p. 64.

26 M. Umaruddin, pp. 71-72.

27 M. Umaruddin, pp. 71-72.

of man, which is the soul.”²⁸ However he does not draw a dualist picture of human. In his system every organ of the body and each attribute of the soul have a place in building a good character.

The Alchemy of happiness for Ghazali is a divine way of hearts which can be surmounted only by the guidance of prophets. In the very beginning of *Kimya* he claims the alchemy of happiness should not be searched in a crone’s box. The treasures of God are hidden in angelic essence in the sky and in the prophets’ heart on the earth.²⁹ That is why the source of happiness for him should be searched not in anywhere but only in the prophets. By the word Alchemy it is intended to mean discarding redundant qualities and to be equipped with perfected qualities. Thus Alchemy is for purifying the hearts from vicious qualities and to fill it with virtuous heart’s essence through striving. In this striving the prophets are the basic guides. For Ghazali, happiness which is the core issues of ethics is purifying the hearts by the guidance of prophets. So as for all the Islamic scholars, for him, the foundation of Islamic ethics is God and His revelation. The foundation of ethics can neither be a list of rational imperatives nor feelings. It cannot be derived only from the acts. It is a matter of thinking, feeling, and living in the light of revelation.

To reach the Islamic moral life Ghazali follows a way of knowledge/action combination through revelation. In his *Kimya* there are four degrees for gathering knowledge in a Muslim’s way to God. The beginning of knowledge is from the knowledge of self to knowledge of God and knowledge of this world to knowledge of hereafter. In order to follow the right acts he first establishes the theoretical inside of ethics focusing on human essence. After stating what a human being consist of he try to tie this being with all other creatures and God by explaining the meaning of most act in life conduct. He examines why we need eyes, ears, legs, etc. He states why we are eating, sleeping, mating with respect to Human / God, Earth/Afterlife relations. In *Kimya*, after showing human place in cosmos in first four degrees he starts the action part.

The action part also has four elements two of them are for external principles and two of them for internal principles. The first principle of external element is for the acts of God command that is called worship. It is the basic of religion. The second principle of external element is the transactions between people that are called custom. It is the basic of law. The first principle of external elements is purging heart from misdeeds. It’s purifying, the first step. The second

28 Muhammed Abul Quasem. *Ethics of Al-Ghazali*. New York: Caravan Books 1978. p. 43.

29 Muhammed Gazali. *Kimya-i Saadet*. Trans. A. Faruk Meyan. İstanbul: Bedir Yayınevi. p. 15.

principle is to embellish the heart with virtues. It's adorning the second step in external elements.

The most important step is to understand the first degree that is "know yourself". The knowledge of self has also two types. One is exoteric that even the animals can have this kind of life conducting principles. The real esoteric knowledge is the one that can tie the nexus between the self and God through the significant questions of being: Who are we? Where did we come from? Where are we going? Why are we here? Why are we created? What is our happiness hidden in? What is our havoc?³⁰ After asking these questions he states the inner attributes of human dividing into four groups. These are the attributes

1. That human share with all animals
1. Those are shared with predators
2. Those are shared with devils
3. Those are shared with angels

One should know which of those characters he has as essence and which of them as accidental. Each of those four attributes has its own sustenance and its own happiness. The sustenance of animal is nourishment, repose, and mating. Of predators it is to claw, snipe and assault. Of the devils, to do evil, deceive, betray, and cheat. The sustenance of angels is to contemplate on God's grace.³¹

In first degree he profoundly analyzes human. He claims human is created as comprised of two elements. The external element that can be seen is the mold that is called as body. The second element is internal. It is called as soul, spirit, heart. This part is the original truth of human existence. He uses four basic concepts to draw human psyche. They are: soul, reason, heart, spirit. The truth of heart is not from this world. The heart in the body is the bearer of this reality and all other parts of the body are the soldiers of heart. It is from angelic essence. It is from God. From epistemological viewpoint there is no doubt about the existence of the heart since it knows itself directly. The mold stands still even after death so body cannot be the source of life. Heart is the truth of spirit. The spirit cannot be measurable like concrete things it is inseparable. It is neither accidental nor eternal. The heart is the spirit that knows itself essentially. The heart is one of the key elements to understand human being. Since Ghazali always focus on hearth as the supreme director of the both inner and outer sensations Umaruddin thinks for Ghazali "mind has supremacy over matter".³² He just puts forth all the aspects

30 Muhammed Gazali, *Kimya-i Saadet*, p. 17.

31 Muhammed Gazali, *Kimya-i Saadet*, p. 17.

32 Umaruddin. *The Ethical Philosophy of Al-Ghazzali*, p. 92

of human sensations with their functions. In this system you need your body as much as your heart for contemplation. There is not absolute superiority but there is continuity and relative superiority between the sensations of the outer sense organs and the heart. Of course the heart has an utmost function in contemplation. The grading between mind/body is not in a dualist sense. Ghazali's system is depending on a holistic and monistic system. The only authority over every creature is the omnipotent omniscience God. He uses metaphors such as reason is the vizier of the heart.³³ This does not mean that heart and reason are rivals. The ethical system he tries to set forth is a monistic one and the aim is to found the unity of mind/body, heart/reason, and earth/afterlife. The relations between these pairs are the key to the nexus between God and human. In Cartesian system one can drive a justification to use animals in experiments since they are "mere automata" and they are lower in degree by their nature. However the aim of a Muslim philosopher is to read the "ayat" of God's creation and follow the way to heaven that is shown by the Prophet. Thus to assign a superiority between the creatures or the attributes is not allowed to any human. Each concepts such as; heart, reason, soul, spirit is equated in Ghazali's Islamic Psychology. Fundamentally, Islamic Psychology is holistic. It rests on a perception of the self as "comprising several components and functions; Videlcit, the inner self (Qalb or "inner heart"), the intellect (Aql) and the lower drives (Nafs Amara), and the body."³⁴

For example he quotes from Fath al-Mawsili that "the heart will perish if it is cut off from wisdom and knowledge for three days."³⁵ He says "He did indeed speak the truth, for the nourishment of the heart, on which its life depends, is knowledge and wisdom, just as the nourishment of the body is food."³⁶ Even every human has heart it does not mean they have the privileges of being the caliph of God if it does not do its function well. He claims

Whoever lacks knowledge has an ailing heart and his death is certain; yet he is not aware of his doom because the love of this world and his concern therewith have dulled his sense, just as a shock from fright may momentarily do away with the pain of a wound although the wound be real. Thus when death frees him from the burdens of this world he will realize his doom and will, though to no avail, greatly regret it.³⁷

It is the purified one who follows the way of Qur'an and The Prophet that is worth to be the caliph of God on earth. A human that abuse his capacity has no

33 Ghazali, *Kimya*, 21.

34 Mental Health, Religion & Culture

35 <http://www.ghazali.org/works/bk1-sec-1.htm>.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

value over any creature even it is originally a human by its nature. The superiority is hidden on functioning well, following Qur'anic way. Superiority is not lying on having a heart, soul, spirit or intellect. Although spirit and heart have a special place in Islamic tradition they are not sufficient for superiority. The functions of heart are described "quite frequently in the Qur'an along with the sensory capacities of human beings, indicating that what the qalb does is an extension and a superior function of what is being done at the lower level by the sensory organs like eyes and ears."³⁸ What Ghazali tried to do is to analyze the ethical system focusing on the functions ("hikmath") of each being and concept just for the sake of enlightening the way that a Muslim should follow for salvation. His system is not an invention but just a commitment to understand the Godly system. The spirituality is meaningful when the self can reach the love of God by following the rules of contemplation. The contemplation is a complicated process that needs every organ and its function in its full sense. May be, the superior function of the heart in contemplation makes us to think the superiority of it. However it is not every heart that can be superior over bodily attributes. It is only the heart that serves well for contemplation that can be superior. The hearts that does not functioning well in contemplation results in a degradation of the self below animals. Moreover, even the afterlife for Ghazali is not an all mental entity that we can support the idea of spirituality for him.

In his system there are good and bad attributes. He uses four metaphors for these attributes. They are 1. Animal character that is used for lust and ambition. 2. Monster for aggression 3. Devil for deceit and sedition 4. Angel for wisdom.³⁹ Then he counts not in human's essence but in its scab four things: Slavishness, Pigsty, Devilry, and Angelic. He calls these four things as wrestlers that are with human in this world and afterlife.⁴⁰ From each wrestler an attribute occurs. The attributes look like the doer. The attributes of these four wrestlers is called morals. All morals are a combination of these four wrestlers. If the combination is mostly from first three wrestlers it cause bad character if the angelic attributes overcome and direct the other three it is good. The acts those cause bad character is called as sin. The acts those flourish good character is called obedience.⁴¹

38 Zafar Afaq Ansari. "Introduction", *Qur'anic Cocepts of Human Pysche*, Ed. Zafar Afaq Ansari. Islamabad: Islamic Research Institue Press, 1992. p.6

39 Ghazali, *Kimya*, 23.

40 Ibid, p. 24.

41 Ibid, p. 25.

How to Convey Ghazali's Theory to Present-Day

The ethical system of Ghazali is indeed a God-oriented system that can never concede neither the transcendence of nature or human. There is only one transcendent being that is omnipotent, is the only God, the creator of all beings. According to Quranic revelation Human is the ultimate being among all the creatures. The historical approaches towards human and its nature show us that Derida start the deconstruction of transcendent man, Foucault claims continuous recreation of the self, and Nietzsche gives inspiration to the idea of transhumanism. However having extraordinary attributes or idea of God-like creature is not an original thought for neither to the old Greeks or for the Babylonians. Nor even for the believers. The main difference is that the possibility of transcendence is not a God-given attribute in modern thought unlike its predecessors. Another difference is that by the word Transhumanism it is intended to mean a continuous transcendence unlike the exceptional events in religious belief. An important difference is that the secularists think human can overcome the outdated dogmatic religious beliefs by becoming more powerful to control the nature. On the other hand believers believe that the possibility to have a great power always threatens the moral life of people. Power to dominate or control others with extraordinary attributes or just with having some more belongings is as old as human history. It is sometimes the power of hope from Pandora's Box to fight with evils or a piece of fire from Mount Olympus or it can be a centaur. A virtuous character who wins eternity like Maarkandeya in Indian culture or a messiah who will bring salvation in Abrahamic religions can represent the old form of transcendence. Indeed human has always a chance for transcendence in most of worldviews.

Transhumanism is not a word that is used in Islamic resources. However to have some extra ordinary specialties of human by following a special way of life conduct is possible. However in most of the religious belief power is for bringing justice and stopping suffering. So the power that will be misused is decried.

For Al-Ghazali subjective experience of believers that obtains unusual capabilities is possible through the conquering of heart. He alleges heart is like iron that produce mirror. If the iron is without rust it reflects the reality but if it has rust on it, the reflection deviates from reality. Rust is a metaphor that is used to mean the sins and misdeeds that dim out the heart. Even the dreams are the sources of reality but only the pure and refined heart can see it without deviation. This will bring the truth to the self. The pure truth can result in some gifted specialties.⁴² Other than miracles of prophets there are miraculous events that are called as

42 Ghazali, *Kimya*, pp. 25- 32.

“karamat”. It is defined as the extraordinary events that are shown by awliya.⁴³ Nicholson states “A miracle performed by a saint is termed karamat, i.e. a ‘favour’ which God bestows upon him, whereas a miracle performed by a prophet is called mu‘jizat, i.e. an act which cannot be imitated by anyone.”⁴⁴ In Sufi way it’s not a mere fiction that a Sufi can change dimension both in time and place. It is not surprising if a Sufi is heard to be walking on the sea, hearing disciples without speech. There are many examples from Sufi’s life. Nicholson points out that

It would be an almost endless task to enumerate and exemplify the different classes of miracles which are related in the lives of the Mohammedan saints—for instance, walking on water, flying in the air (with or without a passenger), rain-making, appearing in various places at the same time, healing by the breath, bringing the dead to life, knowledge and prediction of future events, thought-reading, telekinesis, paralysing or beheading an obnoxious person by a word or gesture, conversing with animals or plants, turning earth into gold or precious stones, producing food and drink, etc.⁴⁵

However these kinds of extra ordinary gifts never appreciated by religious authorities as they believe it is a kind of gift from God and thus it should be kept as a secret. Nicholson emphasize this “In the higher Sufi teaching the miraculous powers of the saints play a more or less insignificant part”⁴⁶ Thus it is thought these are only extra ordinary gifts that God can give who needs them. Whether to a heretic or to a Muslim, or pious or impious can have extra ordinary events.⁴⁷ The transcendence in this sense does not mean anything other than a gift and it never open a way to think the one who has a kind of transcendence can act over the rules of morals. On the contrary the ones that have extraordinary specialties should be following the rules more carefully than the others since they are gifted. The idea of modern Transhumanism is a heritage of old myths in new form. The problem is not having an idea of human with supernatural powers. However the idea is set forth to cut the nexus between man and God with a cost of destroying the essentials of moral life. It is an unchanging truth that from the beginning till now the creation theory has always antagonists also. So, although secularism as the basis of social systems is new the heretic culture is as old as ancient thought. The difference is that we are mostly not orienting our thoughts along with religious belief any more in modern age. The main problem is what it costs to us. Ghazali states a human being with all its dimensions both material and spiritual.

43 *İslam Ansiklopedisi*. Cilt 25, “Keramet”, Ankara: TDV Yayınları, 2002. p. 265.

44 Reynold A. Nicholson. *The Mystics of Islam*, London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1914. p. 139.

45 *Ibid.* 129.

46 *Ibid.* 139.

47 *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, p. 265.

He does not reject the reality of the body and bodily needs although he believes the reality of human is underlying in his spirit. Thus the life he offers is a life that is not away from human needs. The important point is that his system is a religious one including the idea of hereafter. The most significant part of the thought of hereafter is its implication of a monitoring system that reports every kind of deeds. This kind of monitoring system is one of the best answers to the questions that Plato brings with Gyge's ring. Of course human is talented to create tools to stop the wrongdoers' running away with what have they done like cameras, retinal scanners, fingerprint scanner, voice authentication tools or any kind of biometric security devices. Despite the low probability there is always a chance to cheat these products. However theoretically there is no way to cheat an omnipotent, omniscience one that sees everything, hears every sound. The idea of an "Ideal Observer" has no possibility of being cheated. An understanding of human in unity of its body and spirit that cannot be seduced with any kind of transcendence can help human flourishing.

Öz Gazali'den Öğrendiklerimiz

İnsan doğası hakkındaki görüşler bir çok ahlak teorisini şekillendirmiştir. Ahlakın temelleri insane doğasının nasıl anlaşıldığından esinlenmiştir. Özellikle modern dönemde insane doğanın bir ürünü olarak görülmekte ve Tanrı-İnsan arasındaki bağ kopmaktadır. Gelişen teknoloji ile insanın aşkınlığı düşüncesi "transhümanizm" akımı ile sonuçlanmıştır. İnsan doğa bilimlerinin bir nesnesi haline gelmekte ve manevi yönü terk edilmektedir. Doğal ahlak ilkeleri de artık başladığı noktadan farklı bir yere gelmiştir. Mutluluk artık daha çok insanların ihtiyaç ve isteklerinin karşılanması olarak algılanılmaktadır. İslam düşünürü Gazali'nin maddeci insan anlayışından farklı bir insan doğası anlayışı bulunmaktadır. Gazali'nin kalb anlayışı maddeci dünya ile kaybedilmiş maneviyat arasında köprü olabilir.

Gazali'nin yönetsel farklılığı onun İslami dünya görüşüne dayanmaktadır. Gazali'nin ahlak anlayışı ruh ve beden bütünlüğünü vurgulayan insan varlığının hakikatine dayanmaktadır. Bedenin varlığını ve ihtiyaçlarını red etmeyen bilakis tefekkür için gerekli ve önemli olduğunu savunan bir anlayışa sahiptir. Vücut duyguların taşıyıcısı, duygular akıl için, akıl kalp için, kalp de tefekkür içindir. Bu makalenin amacı modern teknolojik insanın maneviyatını geliştirecek bir yol bulmaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Gazali, insan, insanlık ötesi, ruh, kalp, akıl, nefis.*

Abstract

Learning from Al- Ghazali

The theories about human nature shaped most of moral principles. The foundations of ethics are inspired how people understand human. Especially in modern times human is defined a product of nature and the God/human nexus is cut. The belief in the transcendence of human with developing technologies resulted in Transhumanism. Human became a subject of natural sciences and its spirituality is left. The natural ethics reached a different point than its ancestors. Happiness became more a matter of satisfaction of human needs and wills. Al- Ghazali the famous Islamic philosopher had a different perspective on human nature than the new materialist human. His theory of heart can bridge the gap between the material world and the lost spirituality.

The distinction of his method depends on his Islamic worldview. Ghazali's ethical understanding depends on the truth of human being that is a combination of both body and soul. He does not reject the reality of body and bodily needs. He contends body is an important vehicle that human can use for contemplation. Body is a bearer of feelings, feelings are for reason and reason is for the heart and heart is for contemplation. It is the main aim of this article to find a way to flourish the spirituality of the modern technological man.

Keywords: *Ghazali, human, Transhumanism, soul, heart, reason, spirit.*

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