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## Humanistic Elements of Al-Ghazzali

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### **Abstract:**

Humanism is an attitude to based on reason, autonomy and self-knowledge of the human individual and the belief in the betterment of the human being, mostly on of its own efforts. Everyone has the right be treated with dignity and to have the opportunity to flourish and authentic. Humanism has acquired the connotation of a rejection divine and other supernatural powers in a secular naturalism. The philosophy of Humanism represents the moral values for human capability, freedom in the universe and the nature of human beings, and the problems of their knowledge, economics, social justice and various needs. This paper will explore a simply humanistic system based on Muslim orthodox theology and the moral philosophy in the world. Al-Ghazzali is one of Islam's most prominent and profound figures. His humanistic philosophy impact on human mind to Ghazzali's long hard work to reconciliation between religious practice and philosophical thought. From Al-Ghazzali's hard work to changed the human psyche and find the origins of the ethical philosophy among the society by his knowledge. Thus the knowledge of his productive image, we can hope to gain some understanding of a rich and neat humanistic life.

**Key words:** *Humanism, Ghazzali's humanism, Knowledge.*

### **Introduction:**

The term Humanism is a much used word. In present times the term has gained so much popularity that every theory, every institution claims to have a humanistic outlook, without making any concise effort to clarify the meaning of the term. This makes our task of defining the term "Humanism", compulsory. To understand the exact implication of the term we must make a brief survey of its history and examine the multiple perspectives that generally come within the folds of humanism. Humanism broadly indicates a shifting of the centre of gravitation from supernaturalism to naturalism, from transcendental to the existing, from absolute reality to a living reality. Julian Huxley says that, "*Humanism will have nothing to do with Absolutes, including absolute truth, absolute morality, absolute perfection, absolute authority, but insists that we can find standards to which actions and aims can properly be related*" (Julian Huxley, *The Humanist Frame*, 1961). This philosophical perspective in a very broad sense centres on the belief that man is endowed with immense potentialities which should be and can be realised. In this sense, humanism is not a new trend. Its roots can be traced to the philosophical traditions of ancient India, China, Greece and Rome.

Humanism as a philosophy has ever competed with other philosophic viewpoints for the allegiance of human beings. Philosophy brings clarity and meaning into the careers of individuals, nations, and civilizations. Philosophy as synthesis attempts to work out a correct and integrated view of the universe, of human nature, of society, and of the chief values individuals should seek. This is an immense and unique task. Plato's claim that "*the philosopher is the spectator of all time and all existence*" (Plato, *Apology*, Sections 38, 39,41). Hence philosophy has the task, not only of attaining the truth, but also of showing how that truth can become operative in the affairs of human beings, of helping to bridge the age-long gap between thinkers and doers, between theory and practice. The philosophy of Humanism represents a specific and forthright view of the universe, the nature of human beings, and the treatment of human problems. To define twentieth-century humanism briefly, I would say that it is a philosophy of joyous service for the greater good of all humanity, because the human beings have to their methods which advocating are reason, science, and democracy in this natural universe. While this method has many reflective implications to the human beings and then which is not difficult to understanding. Humanism in general is a way of thinking merely for all human beings, and not a dogma for men and women seeking to lead happy and useful lives.

### **Humanistic Elements of Al-Ghazzali:**

Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazzali (AD 1058-1111, the full name- Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ta'us Ahmad al-Tusi al-Shafi'i), was born and died in the same city of Tus in the Khurassan region of Persia, presently known as Iran. Al-Ghazzali is one of the most prominent and influential philosopher, theologian, jurist, and mystics of Sunni Islam. Al-Ghazzali occupies a position in the history of Muslim religious and philosophical thought is unique. The religious movements of Ghazzali's time and develop by Islam in his own intellectual significant and personality, which the peoples were gathered and lived over again in the inwardness of his soul the various spiritual phases it is not be doubted by the ethical point of view. Ghazzali was not a religious mover and a scripture-lawyer, but also a scholastic, a sceptic, a mystic and a theologian, a traditionist, a moralist and the humanistic philosopher. He is the most eminent position in the history of Islamic philosophy, and he was also reoriented the values and attitudes in Muslim theology by his creative and energetic personality. And his outlook on philosophy is also remarkable characterized and originality which, however, is more critical than complicated.

Al-Ghazālī is the best known Muslim writer on moral subjects and humanistic philosopher. But his philosophical theory mainly derived from the Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic doctrines and his writings of the Muslim philosophy were Hellenic in spirit. Undoubtedly, Al-Ghazzali was a widely read scholar and well versed in the philosophical thought of the Greeks, which did influence him. But he was not dependent on Greek philosophy for his inspiration in humanistic philosophy. In fact, he was against the philosophers and their heretical doctrines. Al-Ghazzali takes his

stand upon Islamic teachings and the Qur'an and his writings, the traditional flowers support his views. Following the Qur'an, for example, he lays emphasis on spiritual values like gratitude (*shukr*), repentance (*taubah*), reliance (*tawakkul*), fear (*khauf*) of God, (*Tahāfut at-Falasifah, 1888-1889*) etc., which were completely unknown to the Greeks. Ghazzali says that, "Those who repent and believe and do righteous work, for such Allah will change their evil deeds to good deeds" (Al-Ghazzali, part-iii, 50). In Ghazzali's autobiography, the *Revival of Religious Sciences* he teaches humanism that is based on the development of human character traits (*akhlaq*) and his morality. He criticizes the traditional concept of muslim philosophy which is limited to fulfil the ordinances of the religious law (*shari'a*) for the purpose of society developed in his time. Traditional Sunni philosophy is closely linked to jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and limits itself, according to Al-Ghazzali, to determining and teaching the rules of *shari'a*. Al-Ghazzali became acquainted with an humanistcal that focuses on the development of virtuous character traits through the works of Muslim *falasifa* like Miskawayh (d.c.1030) and Muslim scholars like al-Raghib al-Isfahani (d. c.1025), who make philosophical notions compatible with Muslim religious scholars by his movement (Madelung,1974).

All philosophical approaches that have as their starting point about what it means to be human. These philosophical beliefs have changed dramatically over time and differ among themselves. The central concern of humanists, however, has remained the distinction between humans and nonhumans. Ghazzali comments in his book *al-Munqidh min al-Dalal*, "This should be adopted in our methodology" (Yousuf al Qaradawi, 1993). Hence humans were considered uniquely rational and had souls and many properties bestowed by God. Humans were also perceived as having bodies because they have to achieve the ability of their various sources like desires, passions and physical powers. "The interaction relationship between the spiritual and the physical is one" (Al-Attas, 1990) says Ghazzali. Hence, the spirituality is most powerful action to over materialism, and then man's will is determined to absorb the spirituality not by desires but by a rational purpose. This free will rather than determinism is clearly denotes the religious position for their social right. After that Ghazzali describes, "man can choose between the means of realizing good and his rationality entails action out of consent rather than compulsion" (Sajadaz ali, H.M. (1991). Unfortunately, as we will show later that issue of human rationality was inflated out of proportion with man being perceived as godlike.

Al-Ghazali addressed the humanism that the human nature are basically on metaphysical issues. Throughout his works he insists on the limitations of the theoretical reason, while he acknowledges the role of the will, and religious and moral experiences in efforts to access knowledge. To him any account of the nature of human nature, the mold in which humans are created, cannot be fully appreciated without an understanding of the purpose of creation and meaning of the present life. Allah (SWT) states in the holy Qur'an: "I have only created jinns and men that they may serve Me" (51:56). "The human's spiritual states are depend on their different categories i.e., cognition, emotion, affection, perception, motivation and lastly their

*behaviour*”, according to Ghazzali. This is because personality as construed by Al-Ghazzali, includes an outward form (physical) and an inward self (spiritual). The physical form (body) is perceived by the vision of the eyes, while the spiritual self perceives by means of the insight. To Ghazzali describes, *“the soul which perceives by means of the insight is of greater value than the body which perceives by means of the eyes”*(Al-Ghazzali Ihya, 3: 46). To this spiritual entity he reserves, in many of his writings, the term heart. He asserts that *“the heart is the real essence of man which differentiates him from inhuman’s, for the heart is that which knows God, which approaches unto Him, works for Him, and strives after Him”*( Al-Ghazzali Ihya, 3: 2).

Al-Ghazzali’s main objectives were the unity of knowledge, which are rooted in the Oneness of God, and reason as the path for all moral concepts as well as his ultimately leading to the belief in God. The similar philosopher Kant for who reason which is known as the categorical imperative of freedom and free will. Kant, however, believed that a clear exposition of morality led to belief in God. Al-Ghazzali’s concept of a unified knowledge is the source of his political theory. But the core of his humanistic theory is basically derived from a holistic, harmonious, well-organised cosmos, which is created by God for the purpose of good government. The individual with a spiritual as well as a social personality is the centre of Ghazzali’s mental state. Spirituality is the heights inner strength for humans personality through their internal and contemplation, even in mystical experience, as exemplified in Ghazzali’s own life. But this own’s social and material needs to enable complete living being. The human beings have their satisfaction demanded is moderation and avoidance of excess, because human as a social being and their life is temporal, but they had needs their basic opportunity. After Islam, the concept of “individual-in-community” emerged based on a synthesis of ethics and economics. He contrasts virtues and vices, knowledge and ignorance, and details moral guidelines for ethical living.

### **Conclusion:**

The history of human civilization is a witness to intermittent phases of crisis, which once in a while makes the mankind lose its faith in the very foundation of life. During these periods the man feels suffocated by social, cultural and moral orders which had nourished his hopes and had given significance to his life, earlier. Ghazzali feels an urge to find out new goals which may revitalize his hopes in human destiny. He frantically searches for a model which may provide him with an outline for his future. When humans think they know, for instance, that lying is bad, their judgment is determined by a consideration of their benefits. The ethical value is not for benefit of our actions and not tendency in our mind that moral value is benefit. Our general tendency is that moral values are collective benefit, but this benefit to our collective interest is morally good, while this is harms us morally is bad. The kind of connection between human actions and reward or punishment in their life can only be learned from revelation. The Muslims behaviour is the science because Muslim rules are scientific and then they have to follow this rules from their revelation. And others most religious are scientific also, but their aims at advancing humans prospect of

salvation in the world to come. Thus the Muslims must be based on the Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet which this uses logical and other rational rules to general for their simple to the follow. Al-Ghazzali's humanism are based on social justice make him a political and moral philosophical order. It is testimony to his greatness that his ideas on good government, *Dawlat*. Relatively unknown in the West, Not only the thoughts of this medieval Muslim scholar can help construct a new world order but also the western thought is developed the humanistic approach to their freedom, responsibility etc., in the twenty-first century based on global fairness and social justice.

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