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Ghazali on Education
Contemporary Practical Applications
from an Enduring Legacy



H.E. Sheikha Dr. Hessa bint Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani

How can the shadow be straight if the stick is crooked? al-Ghazali's approach on Teachers

Training: the call for holistic self-development in teachers training

Teaching has historically been a vocation, a calling to bring learning and knowledge to the youth in a community. However, with the professionalization of education, teaching has also transformed into a more standard salary job that affords the teacher a reasonable standard of living. We argue in this paper that teaching must be elevated to a noble vocation to teach character, values, and bring learners closer to their creator.

One challenge of improving the teaching profession is the self-development of the teacher to be prepared and qualified for his or her mission. In this regard, Al-Ghazali's discussion of teacher training emphasizes the role that character development can play in governing the relationship between the teacher and the student. More specifically, the tazkiyah program that Al-Ghazali discusses in his book – *Ihya Ulum al-Din* – is a practical guide and a resource for teacher training and character building.

We argue that teachers, as role models, need to be trained to foster an imaginative, creative classroom environment that allows full integration of students' values, needs, and interests. This study examines how to prepare teachers as value-educators. Value education builds character, which is beneficial for growth of both the teacher and the learner and the society in general. Understanding the principles and aims of value education enables teachers to create effective learning environment for values education. The aim of this research is to provide a platform in transforming teacher training programs through a method based on Al-Ghazali's character development in *Ihya Ulum al-Din*. al-Ghazali's methods of self-development offer a holistic transformation to human character, particularly to teachers.

The primary research questions are: How can we create a teacher training program based on tazkyia (self-purification) in light of our understanding of al-Ghazali's methods of self-development? What kind of impact will this approach have on the students according to al-Ghazali's methodology? How can we actualize al-Ghazali's system of tazkyia into a modern holistic educational program for teacher training? The major challenge is to sustain the same model offered by al-Ghazali, yet contextualize it to be easily digestible for a contemporary audience.



Dr. Ahmad Snobar

من العلوم المتممة إلى العلوم المركزية:

دراسة في نظرية الإمام الغزالي في تصنيف علوم الحديث، ومقارنتها بواقع تعليمها المعاصر

د. أحمد صنوبر

اعتنى الإمام الغزالي في كتبه بتصنيف العلوم وبيان مراتبها، وشمل ذلك التصنيف العلوم الشرعية وغير الشرعية، مصنفا العلوم الشرعية إلى أصول وفروع ومقدمات ومتممات، وكان من الملفت للنظر وضعه علم النقد الحديثي الذي يقتضي معرفة الرواة وتمييز الروايات في سياق العلوم المتممة لا الأصول ولا الفروع ولا المقدمات.

وقد أكد الغزالي أن سياق علم النقد الحديثي لا يكون من الأصول عند ذكره في موضع آخر مراتب علم الحديث التي تمثلت في: السماع ثم التفهم ثم الحفظ ثم العمل ثم النشر، جاعلا غرض السماع تثبيت الحديث، وكان عنده في مرحلة أولية يجب ألا يقتصر عليها طالب الحديث، بل لا بد من تجاوزها للمراتب التالية لها، من الفهم والعمل والنشر.

ولما تعرض لمراتب كل علم عنده من الاقتصار والاقتصاد والاستقصاء، بين أن مرتبة الاقتصار في علم الحديث هي «تحصيل ما في الصحيحين بتصحيح نسخة على رجل خبير بعلم متن الحديث»، فهي مرحلة أساسية في التثبيت ويمكن أن يكتفي بها المحدث مع تأكيده على أن حفظ متون الصحيحين ليس مطلوباً، إذ المطلوب هو أن يحصل الطالب تلك الأحاديث «تحصيلاً يقدر منه على طلب ما يحتاج إليه عند الحاجة»، فالأمر إلى أن المهم هو التثبيت العام من الأحاديث وهو الحاصل في نسخة الصحيحين، واستحضار ما يمكن أن يحتاج إليه، ثم جعل مرتبة تالية أوسع منها وهي مرتبة الاقتصاد ليصل إلى علم النقد الحديثي في مرتبة الاستقصاء

وهذا كله يُظهر أن الغزالي لا يرى علم النقد الحديثي علماً مركزياً بين العلوم الإسلامية، بل هو من متممات العلوم، مؤكداً على أن علماء الحديث السابقين له قد كفوا الطالب بما تحملوه عنه قبله، وله «أن يعول على كتبهم»، وهذه الرؤية منسجمة مع رؤيته الكلية للعلوم الإسلامية وتصنيفه لها، إذ إن استقرار العلوم المركزية مثل العقائد والفقه والأخلاق بعد القرون الأربعة الأولى كان ظاهراً، ولم يكن لتغيير الأحكام الثابتة المستقرة بمجرد تصحيح حديث أو تضعيفه، بل المعول عند الغزالي كان فهم الحديث وتوظيفه في سياق جميع العلوم الإسلامية، بحيث يكون فهمه منسجماً مع القواعد الأصولية والدينية العامة، وهو ما اضطلع به الغزالي في كتبه جميعاً، فتراه يشرح الأحاديث ويفهمها وجميع بين المتعارض منها ويوفق بناء على الأصول العلمية الثابتة.

ورؤية الغزالي هذه في تصنيفه لعلوم النقد الحديثي متماشية مع شخصيته العلمية بحيث لا نجد تركيزاً منه على هذا العلم في كتبه، وهو الأمر الذي انتقد عليه، لكنه كان يرى ذلك العلم من فروع الكفاية، وقد تحقق به عدد من العلماء في عصره، فلعله انشغل بغيره عنه لذلك، فلم يكن هذا العلم مركزياً عنده من حيث الفكر، ولا من حيث الاشتغال، بخلاف علماء كثيرين خلفوا الغزالي فكان علم النقد الحديثي عندهم مركزياً من حيث الاشتغال، لكنهم وافقوا الغزالي في عدم مركزيته من حيث الفكر، فكانت مركزية الفكر الإسلامي عندهم في الميراث العلمي الواسع الذي ورثوه في الفقه والعقائد والأخلاق، وكانت السنة أصلاً هاما من أصول تلك العلوم، لكنها بقيت مصدراً أساسياً من عدة مصادر يأخذ منها علماء الفقه والعقائد والأخلاق، ويرجعون ويجمعون ويوفقون ويتزكون، دون أن يجعلوها حاكمة على كل ذلك التراث.

إلا أن تطورات كثيرة هامة طرأت في القرن التاسع عشر الميلادي وبدايات القرن العشرين زعزعت ذلك الاستقرار فيها، فتغيرت النظرة إلى مصدرية السنة، وانقلب اشتغال كثير من الباحثين في علوم النقد الحديثي إلى جعلها مركزاً بعد أن كانت من العلوم المتممة، فانتشر الحكم على الحديث ونقده، وترتب عليه أن صار تمييز الحديث الصحيح من الضعيف أساسياً ليفهم الدين مرة أخرى، وهو ما جعله في المركز، ولتلك المركزية مظاهر كثيرة تحتاج دراسات مستقلة، لكن تركيز هذه الورقة يكون على جانب التدريس المعاصر لعلوم الحديث لا سيما تدريس علوم النقد الحديثي وتدريس أحاديث الأحكام بوصفها بديلاً عن التراث الفقهي.



وحتى تكون الورقة في اتجاه عملي، فإنها توضح هذه الظاهرة من خلال الدروس العملية في مواد الحديث التي تدرس في الثانويات الشرعية وفي كليات الشريعة في الأردن وفلسطين، مقارنة ما تخلص منه الاستبيانات بما كانت عليه نظرة الغزالي في تصنيف علوم الحديث وتدريسها.

ثم إن الباحث يختم ورقته بتصوير عملي مستخلص من نظرة الغزالي وتصنيفه لهذا العلم وما توارثه العلماء في نظرتهم لهذا العلم ليضع خطة تدريسية لعلوم الحديث في الثانويات الشرعية وفي كليات الشريعة.



Dr. Alparslan Açıkgenç

Spiritual Foundation of Education in Al-Ghazali

Education is a discipline that has many aspects, such as pedagogy, methodology, teaching methods, its epistemology and philosophy. It is possible to study al-Ghazali's thought from all these respects. Undoubtedly, one aspect of education that must be the very basis for al-Ghazali's understanding of education which makes up its foundation and thus the most significant aspect of his educational theory and philosophy. Someone who studies his *Iḥyā'* can easily see that for al-Ghazali education has aspects some of which cannot be rendered by the concept of "education in English. For instance, *tazkiyat al-nafs* (to that effect also the concept of *taṣfiyat al-qalb*) is related to education but has nothing to do with education in the sense of teaching. But these are all understood to be part of the education in Islamic tradition. That is why al-Ghazali does not limit education to only theoretical studies and training the mind and filling it with information, but he extends it especially to all aspects of human faculties and capacities as related especially to the persons' religious, moral, physical and spiritual needs. I shall try to show in my paper that al-Ghazali actually develops a philosophy education which is based on this spiritual approach in such a way that we may even go so far as to say that no spiritual upbringing means no intellectual and scientific progress is possible for the individual. Even if we assume that this is possible it is not the goal of Islam to lead to such an education. My approach will try to follow the footsteps of *Iḥyā'* chapter by chapter paying attention not to the direct issues but rather their effect on al-Ghazali's conception of education.

Key Words: Theory of education, al-Ghazali, epistemology, Islamic educational terminology, philosophy of education, spirituality, spiritual curriculum development.



Ayaz Asadov

Educating for Intellectual Virtue: A Perspective from Ghazali and His Ottoman Followers for Today's Education

The central inquiry underpinning this paper pertains to a major issue in the philosophy of education and educational theory: What are the proper aims of education and how can these aims be best realised? Aims of education can encompass various dimensions, including epistemic, moral, political, and more. This paper focuses on the epistemic aims of education, which, for many scholars, go beyond mere transmission of propositional knowledge. Recently, some virtue epistemologists, most notably Baehr (2013), have advocated that education should have the goal of fostering the growth of intellectual virtues such as open-mindedness, intellectual humility, carefulness, and intellectual tenacity. The proposal has generated ongoing discussions among the philosophers of education, virtue epistemologists and educational practitioners, raising questions such as: Which virtues hold the utmost importance to education? How precisely should these virtues be conceptualised and interpreted? What are the most effective pedagogical approaches for cultivating intellectual virtues? How do intellectual virtues relate to other epistemic and non-epistemic educational aims such as knowledge acquisition, the promotion of critical thinking and the development of moral character? Additionally, objections have been raised regarding the overall viability of this idea, particularly within the current state of virtue theory.

I begin by providing a brief overview of contemporary discussions surrounding the notion of educating for intellectual virtues. In the second part, I introduce the concept of *malaka*, the primary term in classical ethical thought for virtue, from al-Ghazali's writings to illustrate its use as an educational aim. Next, I turn to the educational writings of the 17th and 18th-century Ottoman scholars who were highly influenced by al-Ghazali and further developed the notion of *malaka* as intellectual virtue. I primarily analyze the concept of *malaka* through the accounts of Mūneccimbāṣī (d.1702) in his works *Fayḍ al-Ḥaram* and *Sharḥ Akhlāq al-'Aḍudiyya*, while also considering other significant educational texts from the period, such as Kātib Çelebi's (d.1657) *Kashf al-Ẓunūn*, Sājaqlizādah's (d.1732) *Tartīb al-'ulūm*, and al-Basrī's (d.1749) *Kevākib-i Seb'a*. I explore how *malaka* was incorporated into educational discourse as the goal of higher learning. This exploration will encompass understanding how the term *al-malaka al-'ilmīya* was interpreted and the pedagogical practices deemed essential for its acquisition within educational contexts.

In the final section, I will shift focus again to contemporary discussions that I provide in the first part, guided by two fundamental questions: Firstly, how does the Ottoman concept of *al-malaka al-'ilmīya* compare with the contemporary notion of intellectual virtues? Secondly, how does this specific Ottoman perspective on epistemic virtues stand in response to objections and concerns raised against the proposal of educating for intellectual virtue?



Dr. Badrane Benlahcene

التكامل بين العلوم وأثره في البناء التربوي:

دراسة في فكر أبي حامد الغزالي

يعتبر التكامل المعرفي مفهوماً ومبحثاً جديداً من حيث التسمية، ولم يتم تداوله بين العلماء المسلمين في تاريخهم الفكري المبكر، غير أنه في مستوى الممارسة، فإن هناك عدد من الشواهد تدل على أن مضمون هذا المفهوم يستمد أصلته من التقاليد الإسلامية الفكرية المبكرة. ذلك أن العلوم التي نشأت في ظل الحضارة الإسلامية نابعة من الرؤية الإسلامية للكون والحياة، ونشأت مستمدة خلفيتها الفلسفية ومنهجيتها من التوحيد باعتباره مبدأ للمعرفة والقيم والاجتماع كما هو مبدأ للاعتقاد.

وهذا التكامل بين العلوم في تراثنا العربي الإسلامي استرعى انتباه الباحثين، وجعلهم يسعون إلى معرفة أسبابه، ودواعيه، ونتائجه، ويقرون في نفس الوقت، بأن التداخلية بين العلوم، كانت من أبرز الخصائص المميزة، للعلوم في التراث العربي الإسلامي، وأنها وصف علمي لا يمكن التنكر له أو التغاضي عنه. فعندما نطلع على كتب التراث مثل التراجم والطبقات، وكتب إحصاء وتصنيف وترتيب العلوم، نكتشف كيف تتداخل حقول المعرفة العربية الإسلامية بشكل واضح. كما ندرك الطابع الموسوعي لعلماء العرب والمسلمين، حيث يكاد يكون العالم الذي يختص في مجال واحد فقط نادراً جداً. بالعكس، ستجد أن العلماء يتمتعون بمعرفة شاملة في تخصصات متعددة، ويستخدمونها تلك المعرفة من تخصصات متعددة في مباحثهم وكتاباتهم.

ولكن الإشكالية التي نواجهها اليوم هي أن عطاء المعرفة العربية الإسلامية اليوم، وبخاصة في حقل العلوم الشرعية، يعاني من جمود؛ لانغلاقها داخل حدود ضيقة، وتحولها إلى انساق اعتقادية مغلقة، وبث الحيوية فيها يقتضي انفتاحها على الحقول المعرفية المجاورة أو البعيدة، خاصة على العلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية، مما يزود حقل العلوم الإسلامية (الشرعية خاصة) بآليات جديدة ومناهج جديدة، ويربطها بحركية المعرفة المعاصرة.

وفي هذا السياق تسعى هذه الورقة إلى استدعاء نقدي لتراثنا العلمي، من خلال تناول تراث أبي حامد الغزالي، الذي يدل دلالة واضحة على وعيه بحاجة العلوم بعضها لبعض، وارتباطها ببعض، وتعاونها وتداخلها. كما عالج أبو حامد الغزالي مسألة تكامل العلوم تكاملاً بنائياً، من حيث بنية المعرفة وتداخل حقولها، وارتباطها ببعضها البعض. ولا أدل على ذلك من تجربته الذاتية وتقلبه في مختلف مجالات العلم والعمل، وكذلك كتابته وريادته في حقول معرفية متنوعة جمعت بين العلوم النقلية والفلسفية بتفرعاتها المختلفة. مما يجعل تجربته مهمة جداً في تطوير حقول المعرفة الإسلامية في زماننا، من أجل بناء مناهج تربوية تحقق نهضة أمتنا في عالمها اليوم.

وستحاول هذه الورقة طرح الأسئلة التالية:

1. ما طبيعة بنية التكوين العلمي لأبي حامد الغزالي وتجربته الحياتية؟
2. ما هي رؤية الغزالي لتكامل العلوم (التكامل والتداخل والتقريب).
3. ما أثر التكامل المعرفي على تراث أبي حامد الغزالي؟
4. ما هي آفاق الاستفادة من التكامل المعرفي عند أبي الغزالي في البناء التربوي اليوم.



Dr. Dania Wattar

Integrating Islamic Worldviews across the curriculum: Lessons learned from two Canadian provinces

This proposal is related to the following themes (bolded)

1. The implications of the levels of existence (marātib al-wujūd) on education.
2. The implications of the levels of human existence (body, mind, and soul) on education.
3. The implications of classification of knowledge and sources of knowledge (marātib al-ulūm), on education and curriculum preparations.
4. Combining academic and professional education (ta'lim) with moral and spiritual education (tazkiyah).
5. The interaction with, and rejection or integration of ideas from, non-Islamic civilizations from an Open Civilization perspective.
6. The ethics and etiquette of the teacher-student relationship.
7. The ecosystem for the educational environment that integrates and nurtures spiritual, intellectual, social, and ethical values.
8. Core values for diverse aspects of the educational system.
9. The concept of ideal human beings and their development.
10. Success stories/best practices

In this paper, we share insights regarding the integration of Islamic Worldview across various subjects in the curriculum. We reflect on over 15 years of experience working with schools that have successfully integrated Islamic worldviews in different Canadian provinces, with a particular focus on Alberta and Ontario. Inspired by the teachings of Imam al-Ghazali and the endeavor to integrate academic, professional, and spiritual education, we highlight the use of thematic teaching to promote a holistic approach to education. Furthermore, we explore how Imam Al Ghazali's legacy can assist in addressing contemporary challenges faced by Muslim educators in Canada.

We begin by showcasing schools that have aimed to nurture students' Islamic identity through the incorporation of Islamic principles into the school curriculum. We provide an overview and insights into how Islamic values have been seamlessly integrated into the curriculum from the program's inception and curriculum planning stages. Subsequently, we delve into specific examples from various subjects and grade levels. Finally, we conclude by sharing successful practices and the impact these programs have had on Muslim students in Canada, with a particular focus on the curriculum. Our findings underscore the importance of professional development and the adoption of thematic teaching across diverse subjects, including English, Arabic, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics), and social studies.



Dr. Elif Medeni and Dr. Kerim Edipoglu

Ghazali's quest for knowledge between reason and heart: Impulses for a contemporary Islamic religious education

This article examines Ghazali's work "The Savior from Error" (al-Munqidh min ad-Dalal) under the following aspects and attempts to derive implications for an Islamic theory of education:

Part 1 deals with the foundations of Ghazali's epistemology and the question of unshakeable conviction. Part 2 addresses the question of how to deal constructively with crises of meaning in life.

In intellectual history Ghazali's thinking was criticized from various directions:

a) Ghazali mixes religion with philosophy. While religion (according to this interpretation) should be limited to religious devotion and blind acceptance, Ghazali brings neoplatonic ideas (Mishkat al-Anwar) into religion - but only selectively and inconsistently.

b) By blocking rational thought, Ghazali has led Islamic intellectual life into mysticism and prevented it from connecting with modernity. According to this criticism modernization and integration into world civilization is only possible through a stance against Ghazali.

The quest for unshakeable knowledge (epistemology) is a central theme in Ghazali's autobiography "The Savior from Error". Ghazali does not accept the assertion of the Kalam scholars and Fuqaha that the religious sources already offer a rational, comprehensible answer to everything. Ghazali delves deeper and raises epistemological questions concerning the conflict between (a) empirical knowledge (sensory perception) and (b) rational knowledge (daruriyat: logically necessary truths) and how this contradiction can be resolved on a higher level through (c) a direct and undoubted experience of God (the so-called "tasting": dhauq).

In this article Ghazali's autobiography will be examined for its epistemological potential for an Islamic theory of education (and consequently for religious education). The discussion about faith, doubt, firm conviction, and anchoring belief in the heart can and should also be dealt with in Islamic religious education. In the sense of a holistic Muslim theory of education, which is based on Islamic sources and an Islamic view of the human condition, every religious educator should have a fundamental knowledge of these central philosophical questions of knowledge. As soon as these philosophical debates are excluded, two developments might arise:

- a) The naive religious approach which avoids philosophical questions as dangerous. Pure imitation (taqlid) would therefore be sufficient because the Islamic sources have answered everything anyway. One concrete consequence is that religious educators (without their fault) tend to limit empirically unprovable parts of religion (Alam al-Ghaib, prophetic wonders) to the primary school level. Fatally, this gives the impression that the supernatural contents of religion can only be expected of younger students. However, the impression that these are "unbelievable", "fantastic" stories destroys trust in religion.
- b) Without a spiritual basis and a sound understanding of Alam al-Ghaib on the other hand, there is a danger that religious educators will selectively view Islamic sources through the lens of the aforementioned intersubjective paths of knowledge (empiricism and reason). This degrades revelation (wahy) to an auxiliary source. The Qur'an therefore only has the task of providing argumentative support for what is already recognized as true in society (contemporary values, utilitarianism, orientation towards this world, current political orientation). Religious education at secondary school level is therefore



in danger of becoming a general ethics class. Independent Islamic thinking comes to a halt, a self-confident theory of education is stifled in the bud and the cycle of dependence on others' intellectual history is perpetuated.

Many religious educators today feel uneasy when they are asked to talk about spiritual experiences. The solution of switching to "socially recognized" topics (environmental protection, gender equality, resource justice) only appears to offer a solution. How to avoid these two extremes and find a healthy middle ground is the topic of this article.

Competencies and specialized knowledge to be acquired by the religious educator.

For Ghazali empiricism and reason are not enough, as he describes using the example of dream and reality: "And what if another judge, who has not yet appeared, also accuses the judgments of reason of lying?" Ghazali searches for a standard that promises immediate religious experience and finds it in lived Iman through the purification of the heart's mirror. This raises the question of whether this would not ultimately lead to a rejection of the world and a mysticism that is alien to life. However, such an approach would render today's religious education ad absurdum.

1. Religious educators should comprehend the relationship between rational and empirical parts and their relation to spiritual dimension of religion. What kind of mediation does Ghazali propose?
2. To what extent can Ghazali's path of knowledge be followed by everyone? Is this a plausible way to achieve heart security? Is his path merely the testimony of an extraordinary thirst for knowledge of one individual that cannot be put into practice?
3. One criterion for religious education training should be the formulation of targets and ideals. This also includes working honestly on one's own search for knowledge as a prerequisite for being able to communicate religion credibly. Self-reflection and lifelong learning are also a natural part of education in other subjects (such as psychology and pedagogy).

Ghazali's search leads him into a psychological crisis. This opens important subject areas for the Islamic Education:

1. How can we be sure of our own knowledge?
2. Are empiricism and reason (i.e. the basis of this worldly experience) enough for reliable knowledge?
3. What happens when people lose confidence in their ability to recognize?
4. What is the subjective personal experience of religion that cannot be understood from the outside?

These questions have significant implications for Islamic Education in three respects, namely for a holistic understanding of teacher training, the development of curricula, and the design of appropriate teaching materials. These implications are going to be discussed in the article.

Thus, to summarize we can state that religion must address the subjective and the supernatural if it does not want to make itself superfluous. However, insisting on the subjective nature of religion and the personal level of experience could bring conflict and dispute between irreconcilable beliefs into society. Religious educators must be aware of this challenge. However, religious education can and even must formulate religious experiences linguistically to open up new perspectives. If implemented with pedagogical sensitivity, dealing with such epistemological and spiritual questions will by no means lead to a turning away from and neglect of the external (empirical) world.



Dr. Fella Lahmar

From Aesthetic Appreciation to Behavioural Transformation: Al-Ghazali's Educational Framework

Al-Ghazali, the prominent Islamic philosopher, intricately weaves a nexus between aesthetics and human conduct through his treatises. He posits that artistic experiences, although initially sensory and evocative, can serve as profound catalysts for spiritual enlightenment and behavioural refinement. At the heart of this exposition is the idea that the arts, in their myriad forms—songs and poetry—serve as potential channels to connect individuals with the sublime, fostering a divine connection and guiding them towards moral virtues.

To systematically unravel this relationship, our methodology employs a detailed content analysis of Al-Ghazali's magnum opus *كتاب آداب السماع والوجد* with a pointed emphasis on *إحياء علوم الدين*. This analytical approach aids in extracting rich insights about the nuanced interplay between aesthetics, ethics, spirituality, and action, as articulated by Al-Ghazali.

The paper is structured to first explore The Relation of Aesthetics to Perception in Al-Ghazali's Philosophy, offering a fresh perspective on how beauty, in its multifaceted forms, is perceived and internalised. It then transitions to the Educational Implications—a section dedicated to unearthing the pedagogical innovations inspired by Al-Ghazali's holistic integration of aesthetics, ethics, and spirituality. The conclusion synthesises the profound impacts of Al-Ghazali's philosophy, championing its timeless relevance in shaping holistic educational paradigms for contemporary times.

Al-Ghazali's philosophical insights present a multilayered, in-depth approach to educational practices investing in art education for nurturing faith and changing behaviour. The following are some aspects that the paper will further explore in depth:

1. Holistic Learning
2. Critical Thinking and Reflection
3. Value-based Art Curriculum
4. Character Development
5. Interdisciplinary Approach
6. Mindfulness and Well-being
7. Environmental Stewardship



Furkan Senturk

Ghazzali's Multiplex Perspective on Learning Environments

The purpose of education is to affect behavioral change and improvement. In this paper I will explore a portion of Ghazzali's advice to the Seljuq Sultan, Muhammad ibn Malik Shah, in his *al-Tibr al-Masbuk fi Nasihat al-Muluk* wherein Ghazzali stresses the importance of creating special learning environments to facilitate such change. An examination of his remarks on the topic reveal that Ghazzali understood "environment" in a multiplex manner that emphasized the interconnectedness of spatial, temporal, bodily, and spiritual practices. Further, Ghazzali's pedagogical approach reveals that the learning environment itself is not merely a background in which learning takes place, instead, it is an important factor in itself. I will conclude by arguing that Ghazzali's advice, albeit addressed to the ruler of his time, still preserves its relevance and is easily applicable to all stages of learning.



Dr. Hamza Elbekri

العلم بين رسم الألفاظ وذوق المعاني

دراسة في مقارنة الإمام الغزالي للتعليم في العلوم العقلية

يُنَبِّه الإمام الغزالي في أوائل كتابه «الاقتصاد في الاعتقاد» إلى إشكالية خطيرة في العملية التعليمية، وهي صَرْفُ أذهان الطلبة أو انصرافها إلى التمسك بألفاظ المسائل ورسومها والتوقف عندها من دون تحقيق معانيها وإدراك حقائقها، ولا غوص في العلل التي من أجلها استحكمت هذه الألفاظ والعبارات تلك الأحكام والنتائج. ويذكر في هذا السياق أن «أكثر الأغاليط نشأت من ضلال من طلب المعاني من الألفاظ»، وفي تعبيره بـ«الضلال» إشارة مهمة إلى خطورة هذه الإشكالية وأثرها السلبي الشديد في ذهن المتعلم الذي يَشْقُ عليه تخلصه منه كما يذكر في سياقٍ مُشابهٍ الفرق بين مقدورات الله ومعلوماته في بعض الأحكام، مبيِّناً منشأ التوهم في التسوية بينهما. ويذكر في سياقٍ آخر مسألة الأحوال، وهي من المسائل التي طال النقاش فيها في علم الكلام، وقال بها كثير من المعتزلة وبعض قدماء الأشاعرة، واصفاً هذا الرأي بـ«الهوس المَحْض»، مبيِّناً أن «من يأخذ المعاني من الألفاظ لا بد أن يغلط».

وهذه الإشكالية حاضرة اليوم في التعليم المعاصر للعلوم العقلية، كاللغويات والمنطق والفلسفة، حيث تُدرِّس هذه العلوم أحياناً بأسلوب ظاهري يفتقر عند ظواهر ألفاظها واصطلاحاتها، فيستقرُّ في ذهن المتعلم ارتباط الأحكام بتلك الألفاظ لذاتها، كما في ألفاظ «الدور» و«التسلسل» و«التعدد» و«التناسخ» وغيرها، فيظنُّ أن الحكم عليها بالبطلان لذات لفظها، ثم يتفاجأ بالحكم عليها في بعض حالاتها بالصحة، فيضطرب ذهنه، وربما يظنُّ تناقضاً في العلم نفسه، أو اختلافاً بين علمائه، والحال ليس كذلك.

ثم يبيِّن الغزاليُّ مقارنته لحلِّ هذه الإشكالية بقوله: «ولقد كان من حقه أن يُقدِّر المعاني أولاً ثم ينظر في الألفاظ ثانياً، ويعلم أنها اصطلاحات لا تتغير بها المعقولات»، ويُعيد التذكير في موضع آخر بأن «الوجه في أمثال هذه المباحث أن نطرح الألفاظ ونُحصِّل المعاني في العقل»، فهو بهذا يرى أنه ينبغي أن يرتكز محورُ البحث على معنى المسألة، ويُناظ النقاش بفحوى القضية، وتُخطَّط مسارات التعليم بروح العلم وجوهه، لا بالاصطلاحات المتغيرة، والألفاظ المتبدلة، وهذه المقاربة هي ما يُعزِّز عنه الغزاليُّ بالذوق، وهو ما يُمكن التعبير عنه كذلك بالملكة العلمية الراسخة المتحصِّلة بإتقان العلم والتشبع به، وذلك في إنكاره على «الذين سمعوا من العلوم والاعتقادات أساميها ولم يدركوا من أنفسهم ذوقها».

ولا يقصد الغزاليُّ من مقارنته المذكورة إهمال الألفاظ وإسقاطها بالكليّة، ولذا يُنبِّه في موضع آخر من كتابه المذكور إلى ما يُسمِّيه «حقّ اللغة»، ويُصرِّح في كتابه الآخر «فضائح الباطنية» إلى أنه «إذا سقطت الثقة بموجب الالفاظ الصريحة فلا يبقى للشرع عصماً يُرجع إليه ويُعوَّل عليه»، وهذا جارٍ في العلم كذلك، فكما لا يبقى للشرع مرجع يُحتكم إليه إذا أسقطت الثقة بالألفاظ الصريحة، كذلك لا يبقى للعلم أساسٌ يُبنى عليه ولا معيار ينضبط به إذا أسقطت الثقة بالألفاظ. ويمكن في هذا السياق توظيف مراتب دلالة الألفاظ عند الأصوليين من حيث الظهور والخفاء، والقطعية والظنية، على ما وقعت الإشارة إليه عنده في هذا السياق أيضاً.

ولا يقتصرُ التنبيه على هذه الإشكالية عند الغزالي على مسائل العلوم العقلية، بل يتعدّها إلى أدلة تلك المسائل، حيث يصف من سمّاهم «المتوسِّمين باسم العلم» بأنهم «لم يفارقوا العوام في أصل التقليد، بل أضافوا إلى تقليد المذهب تقليد الدليل»، يعني: أن تمسكهم بالأدلة تمسك ظاهري، بحسب ما سمعوه تلقيناً، وبِقَصْد نُصرة المذهب المقرَّر عندهم تقليداً، من غير تحرير وتدقيق في وجه دلالتها على المطلوب، ومن دون تجرُّد وتحقيق في مقتضاها.

وترتبط هذه القضية عند الغزالي بإشكالية أخرى في العلوم العقلية، وهي التعبير عن بعض الآراء والمذاهب الفاسدة، بألفاظ حسنة وعبارات مقبولة في ظاهرها، فإذا كان تعليمها بمسلك ظاهري مُنصَّب على الألفاظ، من غير تحقيق فحواها وتحرير مآلاتها، لم يستطع المتعلم تمييز تلك الآراء المخطئة عما يقاربها من آراء صحيحة.

وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إبراز خطورة هذه الإشكالية في العملية التعليمية المعاصرة، مُتَّخِذَةً العلوم العقلية نموذجاً لها؛ نظراً إلى عِظَم تلك الخطورة فيها مقارنةً بغيرها، وتماشياً مع السياق الذي أوردها الغزاليُّ فيه، ثم تقصد إلى إيضاح مقارنته لحلِّها والخلاص منها بالتحليل والمناقشة، مع تأكدها والاستشهاد لها ببعض الأمثلة من كلام غيره من العلماء المشتغلين بالعلوم العقلية،



كالتفتازاني وصدر الشريعة، حيث جاء في كلامهم ما يؤدي نفس المقصود، وإن لم يكن بوضوح ما صرح به الغزالي. وأخيرا تنتقل الدراسة إلى بيان الضعف الواقع في تعليم العلوم العقلية في العصر الحديث وبعض الجوانب المتعلقة بها.



Humeyra Konuk

A Pedagogical and Philosophical Comparison of Student-Centredness and al-Ghazālī's Educational Conception

Student-centeredness represents a widely acknowledged and pragmatic pedagogical approach applied in diverse educational contexts, including Islamic settings, which prioritize the individual learner's central role in the learning process. This approach accentuates the customization of instructional methods to cater to the specific needs, interests, and capabilities of each student, thereby fostering active participation, critical thinking, and self-directed learning. Utilizing student-centeredness entails the implementation of personalized learning plans, collaborative group projects, inquiry-based learning, and leveraging technology to facilitate individualized learning pathways.

However, the predominant philosophical underpinning of student-centered education predominantly aligns with constructivism, a paradigm that may not always harmonize with the epistemological tenets of Islamic education, potentially resulting in a misalignment between pedagogical methodology and philosophical or worldview principles.

Hence, this paper delves into the potential contradiction arising from the use of constructivist educational methods in conjunction with an Islamic *weltanschauung*. The primary assertion of this paper is that educational methodologies and educational philosophy or epistemology should be congruent. To substantiate this assertion, the paper first elucidates the constructivist epistemological perspective, particularly emphasizing the role ascribed to the student within it. Subsequently, it investigates al-Ghazali's epistemology, with a particular focus on the student's role, to elucidate the central figure in education from an Islamic perspective and the functions attributed to the student within such a framework.

According to the constructivist perspective, the process of learning is construed as an active mental construction within the student's mind, shaped by their individual experiences and pre-existing beliefs.

In contrast, Al-Ghazali's understanding of knowledge acquisition diverges from this constructivist paradigm. According to his perspective, knowledge emanates from the divine source, with God being the ultimate and unerring origin of objective knowledge. In this framework, the student's foremost responsibility lies in cultivating the utmost sincerity and unwavering dedication to the pursuit of knowledge. Conversely, the teacher assumes the vital role of discerning and attending to the mental and spiritual states of the students, tailoring their guidance and instructional inputs accordingly to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge in harmony with the divine order (al-Ghazali, 2005).

The significance of this topic lies in the fact that the paper refrains from making specific recommendations for course or curriculum development, nor does it offer instructional activity suggestions. Instead, it engages in an in-depth examination of the foundational premises upon which curricula and educational courses are constructed. This scrutiny underscores the importance of ensuring that pedagogical approaches are congruent with the epistemological perspectives held by



educators, highlighting that alignment between educational methods and the underlying philosophy is paramount.

Finally, this paper advocates for a thoughtful exploration of alternative philosophical traditions, particularly drawing insights from Al-Ghazali's thought, to establish a more epistemologically harmonious framework for student-centered education, while also addressing the central role of the student in the context of Al-Ghazali's perspective on education.



Dr. Issam Eido

The Ghazālī's View on Futūwwa

An Analysis of his Educational Trajectory, Levels of Existence, and Levels of Human Faculties

Every stage of the Ghazālī's scholarly life does not represent only a new shift but also manifests a new high bar reflecting the escalation of comprehension of both physical and non-physical world. Through the taxonomy of realms (Physical and non-physical or Mulk and Malakūt) and the taxonomy of human faculties or dimensions (self, mind, and spirit/ nafs, 'aql and rūḥ), Ghazālī educates us how to approach and construct knowledge on multiple educational levels.

Though Ghazālī reiterated and explained his worldviews in many treatises he wrote throughout his scholarly life, his book *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān* is among these treatises that are penned in the last stage of his life. In *Jawāhir*, four trajectories or levels can be traced: his scholarly life, the levels of human existence, the level of human faculties, and the levels of Islamic sciences. These personal, philosophical, theological, and educational levels are connected to each other in a hierarchical way. His personal life shows an escalating interest in Islamic sciences beginning with theological, legal, philosophical topics and ending with ethical, spiritual, and metaphysical interests. His personal life echoes his worldview on the hierarchy of the eleven levels of Islamic sciences beginning with the science of letters ('ilm al-ḥurūf), the science which is labeled as the furthest point to the shell (ṣadaf) and ending with the science of knowing Allah; the closest point to the essence of jewel (jawhar). Similarly, the escalation of the personal life and Islamic sciences represents his views on the hierarchy of human existence; from Mulk to Malakūt, and the hierarchy of human faculties; from self or ego to spirit or soul.

This educational system can be used as guidelines for all educators, practitioners, students and general seekers of knowledge helping them in their classrooms, institutions, and workplace. Ghazālī's worldview and personal life opens our eyes to how we cure human characters and characteristics. His works show two types of human capacities: the capacity of peeling the texts, the realms, and the human faculties, and the capacity of opening new vistas for understanding the world. Among multiple fascinating applicable outcomes of the Ghazālī's educational system that our modern societies pursue to construct or cure are two: human mannerhood and human mental health. The first one can be approached as preventive care that helps in healing the second one: mental health.

Futūwwa is one of these holistic aspects that deal with human mannerhood and can be manifested through multiple layers: physical, psychological, mental, and spiritual. This paper attempts to examine the concept of futūwwa in the Ghazālī's writings particularly these texts that show his theoretical views on the hierarchy of human existence, human faculties, Islamic sciences and practical escalation of his personal life.



Dr. Junaid Qadir

The Ghazalian Project for the AI Era

This proposal addresses the challenges posed by Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology for Islamic education. Trained on large amounts of Internet data, these generative AI tools can be used to answer questions, ruminate thoughts, engage in creative tasks, and solve problems, and write persuasively using language with impeccable grammar and syntax. We consider the question of how we can design a framework for educating Muslims in the modern AI Era where technological advances put into question what is it that differentiates humans from computers and algorithms.

Slowly and steadily various “essential” defining characteristics of humans have been encroached upon by machines. Earlier, it was thought that it is only humans who are capable of rational thought unless computers showed that they can do mathematics and logic quicker than us. Language seems to be a formidable fortress that was impregnable to algorithmic attempts; however, with the success of Large Language Models (LLMs) and generative AI, computers have become adept at generating flowing and persuasive narratives that are uncannily human in appearance. Despite their impressive ability, these generative AI tools based on LLMs are mindless and have been shown to suffer from the tendency to hallucinate, be overconfident in its abilities, and employ sophistry (i.e., the answers persuade rather than pertain to any notion of truth).

This turn of events is literally forcing people to turn inwards to find the essence of their humanity. Can we call a trained LLM educated or knowledgeable? Generative AI and modern technology also pose formidable challenges to spirituality, traditional metaphysics, and particularly to education. When the answers are accessible so readily, how will the learning process be impacted? Should education still require memorization? How do we ensure that the education of the students is gradual so that the students do not take self-defeating shortcuts? How can we teach the students to learn from such potent yet imperfect tools who are useful but not reliable? Should the use of these tools be restricted to some contexts and users or not?

To come up with the solutions to this problem, we propose to derive a principled framework from the thought of Imam Al-Ghazali. Using the philosophy of Al-Ghazali, we will describe why modern education still requires an inward turn as proposed by Al-Ghazali, one that is based on purification of the soul (Tazkiyah), moral action and virtue (Akhlaq), and proper conduct and behavior (Adab).

What can we learn from the works of Al-Ghazali about safeguarding one’s faith in such times, especially if one is exposed to tools such as ChatGPT as a tool to learn from? How can a learner know enough how to distinguish truth from falsehood? How to determine the incoherence of these tools yet leverage them where appropriate and useful? In our proposed paper, we will attempt to address these questions.



Dr. Mariam Attia and Muhammad Umer Farooq

A Ghazalian Perspective on the Neoliberal Academy

1 Introduction

Drawing on the works of Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (1058-1111), his own lived experience, and research into classical and contemporary higher education, this paper sheds light on al-Ghazali's contribution to teacher development in higher education. More specifically, it analyses the conceptual and practical significance of his triad of intention, sincerity, and truthfulness to the enhancement of the field of Academic Practice internationally.

2 Framing the Teacher Educator

As observed by Günther (2006), "Al-Ghazali has come to be seen as one the great architects of classical Islam's educational philosophy and ethics" (p. 381). His pedagogical theories and practices can be discerned from his writings, such as his *Ihya' 'ulum al-din*, *al-Munqidh min al-Dalal* and *Ayyuha al-Walad*. A clear Divine-centred orientation with a focus on purifying the heart and equipping seekers with 'the knowledge of the path to the Hereafter' is what gives al-Ghazali's approach to education its hallmark. Understood in this light, his *Book of Intention, Sincerity, and Truthfulness of The Revival of the Sciences of Religion (Ihya' 'ulum al-din)* may be considered the backbone of his educational philosophy.

In this research, we analyse the teachings within that specific text examining its relevance to teacher development in higher education nowadays. In doing so, we weave al-Ghazali's theoretical understandings with his actual practice as vividly depicted in his autobiography *al-Munqidh min al-Dalal*. As such, we frame al-Ghazali as a teacher educator, per excellence, who not only underscores the significance of intention, sincerity, and truthfulness but also 'walks the talk' by articulating his reflections on these deep aspects of the self during his tenure at *al-Nizamiyya* (1092-1096), highlighting the struggles and transitions he underwent. The transparent account itself foregrounds the role of intention, sincerity, and truthfulness for lasting inner transformation.

3 Situating al-Ghazali within Contemporary Higher Education

Present-time higher education environments have been characterised by rapid change and mounting challenges, reflected in intense accountability demands, heavier academic workloads, relentless competition, increased internationalisation, and evident commercialisation. Research into these environments has tended to attribute these pressures to neoliberal ideologies. Such influences have - among other things – promoted academic cultures of performativity with heavy emphasis on benchmarks, reporting, and control thereby contributing to higher education contexts of high pressure and low trust. This has resulted in the gradual erosion of the moral and the social, as well as a change in the subjectivity of the academic as reflected in a need to 'impress' to the extent that academics are no longer able to recognise their true selves or find real meaning in what they do.

While the research cited here refers mainly to institutions of higher education in the UK, USA, and Australia, with intense processes of transnational education (TNE) (de Freitas et al. et al., 2023), one could argue that to varying degrees, similar features permeate institutions of higher education globally.



Dr. Mohamed El-Gammal

المبادئ المؤسسة للبرامج التربوية عند الإمام الغزالي

التربية والتعليم أساس كل تهذيب وثقيف، وسبيل كل نهضة وإصلاح، وعنوان كل تغيير وتحسين. قال تعالى على لسان إبراهيم عليه السلام: "رَبَّنَا وَأَبْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ" البقرة، من الآية (129) ومن ثم كان للمسلمين قصب السبق في ذلك، فحازوا مناهج التربية والعلوم التي أنتجت حضارتهم؛ وبرز فكر الغزالي في الجمع بينهم فأدرك أن العلم لا بد له من جسر وهو فن التربية.

والتربية عند الغزالي تتصف بالمحافظة والإحياء والتجديد؛ ولعل قصده المحافظة على الهوية وتلبية متطلبات العصر والوفاء بمستجداته، فقدم نظاما تربويا متكاملًا بناه على مرتكزات العقيدة والأخلاق والفكر الإسلامي وحاجة المجتمعات والشعوب، فهو بحق أسهم في الحضارة الإنسانية ووازن تبعًا للمنهج الإسلامي بين الفكر المادي وحاجات الروح. بيد أن واقع مدارسنا وجامعاتنا بعيد عن تطبيق نظرية التربية الإسلامية بشمولها مما جعل العملية التعليمية متوقفة في أغلبها على كفاءة كل مدرس وقدرته على التربية والتعليم.

ولا شك أن أزمة التربية المعاصرة تدفعنا للنظر في معالم فكر الامام الغزالي للوقوف على أهم المبادئ التربوية التي يمكن بناء عليها صياغة برامج تربوية تتلاءم وحاجات العصر التربوية. ومن هنا حاولتُ الوقوف على أهم المبادئ المؤسسة للبرامج التربوية عنده، ومن ذلك: مبدأ الفصل الدراسي بين المتفوقين ومن دونهم، والود في التعامل مع الطلاب المستجدين، واتقان لغة الدراسة وعلوم الآلة، والدمج بين التربية والتعليم، وتدعيم الحفظ والتذكر، والتدرج في التعليم ... إلى آخره.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الغزالي ، المبادئ ، الأساليب التربوية، مناهج، طرق تدريس.



Dr. Qayyim Naoki Yamamoto

**When Japanese training (Shugyo) culture encounters Ghazali's theory of disciplining the soul:
Reviving multi-layered pedagogical practice**

Japan's education system is in crisis due to the adaptation of modern quantitative evaluation and the commercialization of education. According to the renowned Japanese philosopher Uchida Tatsuru, the modern American educational system, as represented by the syllabus, regards human beings as single-layered machines and has turned the educational arena into a game of utilitarianism and identity politics. Kiyoshi Oka (1901-1978), a world-renowned Japanese mathematician, argued that the modern Japanese educational system lacks the emotional education that once existed and advocated its revival. Traditionally, such emotional education consisted of a multidisciplinary approach of reading the classics with a master and practicing martial arts. In modern Japan, however, the culture of classical reading has been lost and only the practice of martial arts remains. Moreover, such martial arts culture is also losing its spirituality. In other words, Japanese education has lost its roots, leaving only the various colored leaves of Japanese culture.

The purpose of this presentation is to explore the possibility of reconstructing the Japanese educational system, which has lost its complex approach and spirituality, through Ghazali's theory of education. According to *Arbaʿin fi Usul al-Din*, Ghazali sees human beings as complex entities that contain both evil and good, through the process of disciplining the soul, human beings can deepen their spirituality and become oriented toward good. Ghazali's educational theory emphasizes that humans are not machines that can be evaluated quantitatively and output the same results, but qualitative beings that have different contexts and follow different spiritual paths. This view of humanity is precisely what Japanese society is losing. According to Marshall Hodgson, Islamic civilization has presented not only Islamic teachings but also Islamicate cultural creativity that can be shared by Muslims and non-Muslims as well. If this is the case, then Ghazali's theory of education should also be able to be presented to Japanese society as an Islamicate value.

This presentation will position Ghazali's *Ihya* and other works as new "classics" of Japanese education and explore the possibility of a systematic restoration of emotional education in Japan.



Dr. Sebastian Guenther

Al-Ghazālī's views on logic and spirituality in learning and their relevance for education today

Debates on logic (al-mantiq), its Aristotelian foundations, its place in the curriculum, and its role in the development of the human being were integral components of classical Muslim scholarship. While philosophers like al-Fārābī (d. 339/950) and Ibn Sīnā (d. 427/1037), for example, stressed the overall significance of logic as an “instrument” in training students to comprehend correctly and to advance and communicate ideas, al-Ghazālī's views in this regard are more nuanced. Indeed, it seems that al-Ghazālī restricted the use of logic to specific groups of scholars and a few disciplines while calling it unsuitable for others. Perhaps more importantly, however, he counterbalanced the rational approaches to arrive at knowledge that is certain (yaqīn) with the learner's spiritual training, a blend that still shapes the theory and practice of Islamic learning today.

This paper examines al-Ghazālī's views on logic and spirituality from three angles: What did al-Ghazālī say about logic as a means of religious learning in his major works? If we specifically consider the chronology of his works, will we detect a development of his respective views over time? And finally, in what ways are his pedagogical ideas relevant to humanistic education in the 21st century?



Dr. Seda Özalkan

Learning as Becoming: Al-Ghazali's Concept of Malaka and its Implications for Contemporary Education

Contemporary educational theories and practices are often characterized by binary oppositions such as student- or curriculum-centeredness, active or passive learning, the role of structure or agency in human development. These dichotomies have historically divided educational theorists and practitioners, reflecting divergent philosophies and priorities in the pursuit of effective learning and teaching strategies. This paper proposes that al-Ghazali's perspective on learning provides a multiplex educational philosophy that goes beyond the perceived dichotomies that have divided progressives and conservatives. Through the concept of malaka (inner disposition, also termed khuluq), al-Ghazali offers a holistic perspective on learning that takes into account behavior, ability, cognition, and soul\character—elements which have often been contentious points between behaviorists and constructivists. Following the exploration of al-Ghazali's insights, this paper then delves into how al-Ghazali's definition of learning can inform contemporary educational practices.



Tala Hammour

Reviving Play According to Al-Ghazali's Perspective on Childhood Development

Play has become an increasingly important area of interest within the field of contemporary research on education, making it a timely and relevant theme to explore in light of Al-Ghazali's writings on education. In his magnum opus *Revival of the Religious Sciences*, al-Ghazali discusses the necessity for play in the child's upbringing. Al-Ghazali states that play has multiple benefits related to the multi-layers of the human being: play has benefits for the child's physical body (jasad), mind (aql) and soul (qalb). Through play, the child's body rests, his heart is replenished, and his mind is given a break. However, studying is clearly a pre-requisite to fulfill the benefits of play for al-Ghazali. This multi-layered, holistic view of the human being is the distinguishing factor of Al-Ghazali's entire body of work, and the mainstream view of traditional Islamic scholarship. The purpose of this paper is to elaborate on what Al-Ghazali writes about play, for practical applications in contemporary educational contexts. To do this, I will first put forward an intra-textual analysis of al-Ghazali's two chapters "An Exposition of the Way in which Young Children should be Disciplined, and the Manner of their Upbringing and the Improvement of their Characters" and "Marvels of the Heart" to highlight the relation between play and al-Ghazali's conception of the human being composed of the body, mind and soul.

Next, I will juxtapose the traditional view reflected in al-Ghazali's work, through an inter-textual analysis with modern literature on play, with reference to Vygotsky as a primary example. This paper will recognize that his underpinning ontology leads to a reductionist and materialist understanding of the child devoid of the soul. In this light, this paper will also provide an analysis of Vygotsky's writings on play in childhood development, however from a comparative lens. To frame this comparative approach, the paper will utilize Şentürk's Multiplex Ontology to support an interpretation of al-Ghazali's multiplex conception of the human being against a materialist one. This paper will also draw on other Muslims scholars who wrote about the importance of play, such as al-Halimi. Finally, we will critically examine some contemporary case studies of play, from the established comparative perspective, and make practical suggestions for the revival of play rooted in the tradition.



Dr. Tarek Badawia

Al-Ghazali as a master of critical thinking - an educational theory perspective

In today's digital age, Muslims are given more or less uncontrolled access to the Internet at a fairly young age. As a result, they are confronted with vast amounts of unfiltered information and variations of world interpretation. Affected by the ongoing changes in the digital world, the role of teachers is shifting enormously because, among other things, they have to familiarize themselves with the Internet and rethink their teaching standards. Thereby, an important question about educational professionalism arises: What skills can and should young people acquire in order to deal responsibly with this flood of information?

Without putting the young generation under unnecessary moral pressure, the education system can focus on promoting critical thinking as protection against dogmatism and fundamentalism.

I imagine the great master thinker al-Ghazali sitting at the PC and myself as a student asking him: "Dear Master! How should I deal with this flood of information?"

The answer, which I can imagine Al-Ghazali as "hujjat al-islam" (Proof of Islam) would offer, could be: Learn to think!

In my contribution, I would like to define thinking in accordance with the work "al-Mustasfa" as the conscious and deliberate control of mental processes and their orientation towards relevant objects. More precisely, al-Ghazali's explanations can be used to generate important didactic learning impulses for problem-solving thinking, reflective, creative, understanding and ethical thinking. These different forms and modalities of thinking can be learned at educational institutions.

As a hujjat al-islam, al-Ghazali considered argumentation to be a necessity against dogmatism, populism or fundamentalist hate messages and consistently advocated it as a model for critical and independent learning. Critical thinking can therefore be identified as an important thinking modality for Al-Ghazali. It means bettering one's own thinking process in order to gain intellectual autonomy in perspective and use one's own mind.

Al-Ghazali is a great example of how people can use their ability to think so well that they can rise above thought routines and conventions and take their own reflective paths. Moreover, as the great master of systematic argumentation, he can be used as inspiration today on questions of education and didactics so that critical thinking becomes the guiding principle of our educational work.

In my study, I would like to justify this position and present characteristics of critical thinking that should be given space in the training of theologians and religious educators.



Zehra Vlug Unver

Both Dīn and Dunyā: Reviving the Moral in Modern Education Through Ghazalian Ethics

Modern education in the West is experiencing a crisis of morality. Pre-modern Western civilization historically enjoyed an intellectual tradition of holistic education and pedagogy, which incorporated all levels of human existence (body, mind, and soul). Modern education – through a process of secularization and industrialization – is increasingly focused on knowledge production and professional formation. As a result of these (and similar) social processes, moral education has been on a decline in the West. Moral education – education of the soul – came to be seen as mere backward religiosity; not in tune with the modern scientific worldview. The focus on societal productivity and social engineering produced a new secular-liberal ethics of citizenship education, which focused on the formation of subjects of the state. As a result of this shift in paradigms, modern education essentially became ‘soulless’. Muslim scholar and pedagogue al-Ghazali (d. 1111), in his magnum opus *Revival of the Islamic Sciences (Ihya ulum al-din)*, provides a potent remedy for the modern crisis of morality in modern education. Through an in-depth analysis of key passages in Ghazali’s classical work in Islamic educational and pedagogical thought, this paper offers a critical analysis of the modern human condition and its lack of attention for the human soul; as one of the main dimensions of human existence. Instead, al-Ghazali offers a holistic approach to human existence and the different spheres of human life, representing both worldly (*dunyā*) and heavenly (*dīn*) aspects of human formation. Al-Ghazali argues, for example, that the human character is malleable and thus capable of transformation (*Mizan al-Amal*, 247; *Ihya* 3:129-30). In this context, he talks about different phases of moral formation. Each phase – from child to adult – has appropriate approaches to moral education (*Mizan al-Amal*, 92; *Ihya* 3:11). In doing so, al-Ghazali develops a theory of moral character and a system of personal pedagogy (*tarbiya*) that is both holistic and comprehensive. He combines academic and professional education (*ta’līm*) and spiritual education (*tazkiyya*) with a special focus on the ethics of teacher-student relations. This paper also discusses – through the lense of Ghazalian ethics – the potential of not only being an active and caring citizen, but also a complete and morally formed human being (*al-insān al-kāmil*).

Key words: Ghazali, crisis of modern education, moral formation, character building, soul, *tazkiyya*, Ghazalian ethics, *dīn* and *dunyā*, *al-insān al-kāmil*



Dr. Zeynep Serdar Çilingir

The Pursuit of Happiness: Possible Solutions from al-Ghazali to The Problem of Neoliberal Happiness

In the 20th century, neoliberalism had not only transformed economic policies by dismantling various forms of social solidarity, but had also effected reshaping of the individual. Neoliberalism envisions the subject as a rational, competitive, and entrepreneurial agent driven by the pursuit of personal economic gain, not bounded by religious and social affiliations. One strategy employed by the neoliberal discourse to manipulate individuals toward these attributes is the reconceptualization of the notion of "happiness." The neoliberal discourse promises to individuals that their proximity to the "neoliberal ideal individual" is directly correlated with an augmented state of "happiness."

The propagation of a neoliberal conception of happiness in the upbringing of Muslim Arab children should be a matter of concern for Islamic communities. This concern emanates from the disparities between the moral foundations underpinning the neoliberal discourse of happiness and those of Islamic thought. An Islamic vantage point discernibly posits that the neoliberal construction of happiness causes moral degeneration among individuals. In the present inquiry, the works of al-Ghazali, a renowned figure known for his pedagogical contributions, were examined, with the aim of elucidating the Islamic conceptualization of happiness.

The findings manifest that Al-Ghazali, in his corpus, delineates a list of virtues that lead to the attainment of happiness, which encompasses the notions of repentance, gratitude, fear and hope, asceticism, trust in God, love for God, sincerity, and self-observation. Moreover, he expounds upon the importance of knowledge, virtuous actions, and the cultivation of noble character traits as prerequisites for the realization of happiness. In al-Ghazali's thought, one of the causes of happiness is cultivation of "noble character". In contrast, the philosophical tenets of individualism posit that the determination of good and evil is the exclusive province of the individual self. Within the framework of al-Ghazali's thought, gratitude to the bestower of blessings is an essential component of augmenting happiness, while the neoliberal paradigm, devoid of a bestowing deity, fails to accommodate the concept of gratitude within its discourse. Furthermore, al-Ghazali propounds the idea that the greatest source of happiness stems from God's divine guidance, assistance, and support, a concept that is conspicuously absent in the neoliberal paradigm with individual responsibility being the sole determinant of one's actions and their corresponding outcomes.

The objective of this inquiry extends beyond the mere exposition of this problem, aiming to proffer potential solutions. Within the purview of this study, the dilemma of neoliberal happiness has been dissected through the lens of children's literature targeted at preschool and primary school-age children. Therefore, the recommendations to be proposed are inherently geared toward the development of a framework through which Ghazālī's articulated understanding of "happiness" can be effectively integrated into these narratives.

Keywords: neoliberalism; happiness; children's literature; education; Abu Hamid al-Ghazali's works.