ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF GHAZALI'S CRITIQUES IN TAHAFUT AL-FALASAFAH TO IBN SINA IN THE CONTEXT OF THEOLOGY

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Abstract: The theological and philosophical understanding of issues related to the divine has always been a complex and contentious debate. Ghazali's work, Tahafut Al-Falasafeh, faces significant challenges in these issues, isolating and excommunicating philosophers on three specific points and accusing them of heresy and innovation in seventeen other areas. However, criticisms of Ghazali by Ibn Rushd in Tahafut Al-Tahaft, coupled with fundamental differences between the philosophies of Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd, necessitate an exploration and analysis of Ibn Sina's perspective to dispel pessimism within the Islamic community regarding his philosophy. This study employs a literature review methodology with a descriptive, analytical, and critical approach. The research focuses on theological issues such as the proof of God's existence, the creation of the universe, the eternity of the world, and the science of God in Ibn Sina's works. Through a detailed analysis of Ibn Sina's viewpoints, it becomes evident that Ghazali's theological anxieties might stem from misinterpretations of the core tenets of Ibn Sina's philosophy.

Abstrak: Pemahaman teologis dan filosofis mengenai isu-isu ketuhanan selalu menjadi perdebatan kompleks. Kitab Tahaft Al-Falasafeh karya Ghazali menghadapi tantangan signifikan dalam isu-isu ini, mengucilkan dan mengkafirkan para filosof dalam tiga isu serta menuduh mereka sesat dan bid'ah dalam tujuh belas isu lainnya. Namun, kritik terhadap Ghazali oleh Ibnu Rusyd dalam Tahaft Al-Tahaft dan perbedaan mendasar antara filsafat Ibnu Sina dan filsafat Ibnu Rusyd menimbulkan kebutuhan untuk menjelaskan dan menganalisis pandangan Ibnu Sina, agar masyarakat Islam tidak merasa pesimis terhadap filsafatnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi pustaka dengan pendekatan deskriptif, analitis, dan kritis. Fokus penelitian ini adalah pada isu-isu teologis seperti pembuktian keberadaan Tuhan, penciptaan alam semesta, keabadian alam, dan ilmu Tuhan dalam karya Ibnu Sina. Dalam analisis mendalam pandangan Ibnu Sina, tampak bahwa kegelisahan teologis Ghazali mungkin disebabkan oleh kesalahpahaman terhadap esensi filsafat Ibnu Sina.

Keywords: *Ghazali's Critique, Ibn Sina's Philosophy, Islamic Theology, Tahafut al-Falasafeh*

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Introduction

The spread of Greek rationalism and philosophy into the Islamic world, as well as its development and procreation by Muslim sages like Farabi and Bou Ali Sina, are regarded as the pinnacle of the clear and unmistakable separation between religion and intellect. In fact, religious people have opposed philosophy throughout its history, beginning with the Greek intellectual and philosophical movements, which were later developed and propagated by Farabi and continued by his opponent Bou Ali Sina. The high position of rationalization and imitation of the Greeks, which came with great prestige and attention in the fifth century, incited the opposition and hostility of the Shari'ah people because the philosophers' research

had been expanded to include the fields of theology, supernaturalism, and divine knowledge, as well as some conflicts and novel justifications in these fields.

According to Ghazali, the opinions of philosophers on three matters—the Pre-eternity of the universe, which is an ancient jewel; denying divine knowledge of specifics; and denying the return of the bodies and their resurrection on the Day of Resurrection—are in opposition to Islam and deny the prophets and anyone who holds such views is a Kafir, and those who do so are also considered to be opponents of Islam. Regarding the remaining seventeen issues, he has taken a mild and reasonable position and thinks that the philosophers' opinions about these issues are remarkably similar to Mu'tazilas or other cults. Philosophers should be considered Kafir for making such claims if people believe that other Islamic denominations besides their own are heretics and condemned to be Kafir, but if other denominations are not labeled as such, then philosophers are not excommunicated or declared Kafir[1].

In his book of Tahaft al-Tahaft, Ibn Rushd made an effort to disprove Ghazali's unfounded claims against philosophers. Ghazali, however, focused on Ibn Sina more specifically. In his text, Ibn Rushd himself referred to Ibn Sina more than 80 times[2]. In addition, there are several novel arguments and viewpoints that distinguish Ibn Sina from Ibn Rushd and the Greek philosophers.

Ghazali critiques and disproves the philosophers' viewpoints instead of offering a solution to the difficulties, and even when he does explain the essential ideas behind those viewpoints, he only goes into as much detail as is necessary and his critiques are therefore more rhetorical and polemic[3]. In his own words, Ghazali does not choose a particular stance or approach while criticizing the philosophers; rather, he rejects their beliefs in possible way, whether this ignorance is based on the theoretical basis of Mu'tazila, Ash'areh, Karamiyyah, or any other approaches; of course, in some cases, his disagreement with the philosophers is limited to their claims and evidence, and his intention is to expose the weaknesses of their arguments[4].

Some critics of Tahaft al-Falasaf believe that Ghazali did not understand Ibn Sina's thinking or reality of situation. Ghazali and his supporters pretend that he opposed philosophers and ultimately referred to them as Kafir with regard to religious intents and for God's sake, while his opponents claim that firstly, religion and philosophy can coexist, secondly, that political considerations had an impact, and thirdly, Ghazali studied the works of philosophers without a teacher, which may have prevented him from entering the oppositional side. In addition, going into detail regarding Ghazali's inspirations for writing Tahaft al-Falasafeh is beyond the scope of this paper.

Because there are many important distinctions between a theologian and a philosopher, including those relating to the methodology of these two sciences, it is fairer to refer to Ghazali

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[1] Abu Hamed al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, Suleiman Dunya's research, (Cairo: Dar al-Maarif: 1954), 293-295

[2] Mohammad Abed Al-Jabri, *Ibn Rushd, Biography and Thought: Study and Texts*, (Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies: 2001), 150

[3] Zarin Koob Abdul Hossein, *Collection of discourses, thoughts and searches*, (Tehran: Ayam office: 1986), 12

[4] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 68-69.

as an Ash'ari theologian rather than a philosopher. Both philosophers and theologians rely on reason and the value of rational argument in epistemology; the difference is that the philosopher uses preliminaries that are known as rational axioms in the science of logic, such as the impossibility of contradiction, in his arguments and reasons, while the theologian uses circumstances that are shared by all people and circumstances that are accepted by people due to trust in others as the basis of reasoning. In addition to these, two cases also deal with the following two situations: the theologian's purpose is to defend religion, whereas the philosopher has no prior commitment to a particular purpose and only seeks to know the truths of existence and follows the outcomes of cognitions that are acquired with wisdom.

Discussion

Philosophers' reasons in proving God's existence from Ghazali's point of view

There are two groups of people: those who are Yarsanism and believe that the universe is coming into being after nonexistence and they are aware that being cannot occur on its own; it requires a creator, and as a result, their religion believes in the presence of a creator. The Dahris are another group who claim that the universe has existed as it does since the beginning of time and that the existence of the creator is proof of this. Their belief is understandable, even though the proof indicates its invalidity. But the philosophers claim that the universe is old and at the same time they also prove a creator for it. And this is religion that has a contradictory basis and there is no need to invalidate it[5].

First justification

Philosophers claim that the universe is old and at the same time they also prove a creator for it. Philosophers refer to the origin of the universe, also known as the first source, when they claim that the universe has a creator. They do not mean an arbitrary subject who started working after doing nothing. It means that he is the source of all existence outside of himself and his existence does not require an origin[6]. And philosophers claim that he is merely a being that is undoubtedly constant and without a cause for its being[7].

Second justification

According to conclusive evidence of impossibility of infinite causes, we can say that each of causes by itself is possible (Mumkin) or necessary (Wajib). Since every possibility (Mumkin) requires a cause outside of its essence, this entire chain requires a cause beyond itself and entire chain will be possible if it is possible (Mumkin). If it is necessary (Wajib), it will not require a cause[8].

Ghazali's critique on the mentioned justifications

Ghazali founds his basic argument to prove God on the basis of the occurrence of the universe. In this sense, he claims that every Huduth (coming into being after nonexistence) needs a cause, and that cause is none other than God. He claims that the universe is a coming into being after nonexistence that relates to time. So, the existence of the universe is based on

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[5] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 141.
[6] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 141
[7] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 141.
[8] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 143.

the cause and this cause is God. Therefore, philosophers' reasons based on causality or possibility are criticized.

The first justification is criticized by Ghazali because, in his view, it is impossible to demonstrate infinite causes from a philosophical standpoint and it is incompatible with the principles of the causes themselves. Ghazali also criticizes the second justification, claiming that the words possible (Mumkin) and necessary (Wajib) are ambiguous unless we define necessary (Wajib) as something whose existence is not caused and possible (Mumkin) as something whose existence has a cause. If this is the meaning, then we return to the word possible (Mumkin) and claim that each link in this chain is possible, this means it has a cause beyond and outside of its essence, while their whole is not possible (Mumkin) and if they derive another meaning from the word possible (Mumkin) than what we intended, that is not understandable[9].

Analyze and evaluation of Ghazali's critiques

In the evaluation of Ghazali's critique of philosophers, we must note that it seems that Ghazali was unable to respond to philosopher's justifications, and as a result, any justifications he offers will be disproven rather than responding to another statement with persuasive value. because Qidam (pre-eternity) are accepted by philosophers.

Philosophers, unlike theologians, have never used the Qidam (pre-eternity) to demonstrate the existence of the creator; instead, they have demonstrated it by possibility, even if every possibility is either an occurrence to an inherent Huduth (coming into being after nonexistence), an old occurrence to a Qidam (pre-eternity), or a time-based occurrence. Additionally, the word "possibility" has a comprehensive definition that includes anything other than God and it is the possibility that needs a cause, not the Huduth (coming into being after nonexistence). Furthermore, the possibility is real and obvious.

The problem that philosophers deal with that is, we can't consider a beginning for time, hence the argument of temporal Huduth (coming into being after nonexistence) will be incorrect. Some of the main objections of this argument are as following:

The word Huduth (coming into being after nonexistence) describes a period of time that this being did not exist and afterwards did. And time itself is one of the phenomena of the universe that has emerged. As a result, first being of the universe was created in first instant of time of universe. There was no time prior to the first instant of time. additionally, if we consider all living things as a creature, time itself must have been created as well, that means there must have been a past in which the present had not yet emerged. While we have just one "time"[10].

The most important argument that Ibn Sina used to prove Al-Wajib- Necessary existence- is Seddiqin argument. The definitions "The Necessary existence by reason of itself" and "The possible existence by reason of itself" are highlighted in this argument. "There is no doubt that existence exists, and every existence is either necessary (Wajib) or possible (Mumkin). If it is necessary (Wajib), the existence of the necessary indicates that the outcome

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[9] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 144.

[10] Mohammad Hossein Tabatabaei, t*he Beginning of Philosophy*, research and suspension by Abbas Ali Zarei, 24th edition (Tehran:Islamic Publishing Institute, 2007), 66.

we are seeking is established; if it is possible (Mumkin), we will show that the possible finally result in "The Necessary existence by reason of itself""[11].

This phrase provided a response to Ghazali's critiques of the presence of beings other than God, who had existed from the beginning (There was no time when there was no universe). Since God is the only existence that truly exists, neither "the possible existence by reason of itself" nor "the necessary existence by reason of another" exist. Nevertheless, some of these possibilities took place out of time (There was no time when there was no universe).

Philosophers' arguments on Qidam (pre-eternity) from Ghazali's point of view

Various arguments are mentioned to prove the Qidam (pre-eternity) in terms of its relationship with God including:

First argument:

Existence of a creature from the past is impossible. Some questions emerge if the world was created after the time of the ancients, such as whether or not something regarded as superior existed at the time the universe was created. Will the universe still be in its possibility state if something considered superior does not exist? And if it is occurred, we will ask again about the occurrence of this superior thing after nonexistence and question why it is created now and not earlier. And the question of how something considered superior was occurred is still unsolved[12]. As a result, neither it is possible to presuppose a change in the past nor can occur come from the past without a change in the past.

Critique of the mentioned argument from Ghazali's point of view

Ghazali emphasizes that the universe has been created in accordance with the eternal decree and the old will of God and ignoring the viewpoint of the philosophers who thought the universe to be old. He rejects the causality principle and thinks that things change miraculously and not in accordance with the laws of cause and effect. He rejects the claim of Ibn Sina that the existence of "contingencies" cannot exist on their own.

The order that is formed in accordance with God's will, according to Ghazali, is represented by the chain of matters, but that blessing could be revoked at any time. He claims that when we state that God existed before the universe, we simply mean that God existed at a time that the universe did not, and it was created in accordance with God's will.

Ghazali believed that God had decided the universe to exist at a specific time, and that the creation of the universe after nonexistence, which was decided by God's old will at an adopted time by him, did not necessitate the violation of fundamental logical truths. In the creation of the world, God justly preferred one time over another and there is no need to ask further about this decision because God's will be completely gratuitous. According to Ghazali, there are many contradictions in the intellectual tradition of philosophers, including the same

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[11] Hossein bin Abdullah Ibn Sina, *Al-Mabda and Al-Ma'ad – The beginning and Resurrection,* Vol 1, (Tehran: Institute of Islamic Studies of University of Tehran: 1983), 22 and Hossein bin Abdullah Ibn Sina, *Rescue from Drowning in the Sea of Illusion*, introduction and correction by Mohammad Taqi Danesh Pajoh, second edition, (Tehran:University of Tehran: 1379), 566.

[12] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 76.

concept of the preexistent creation of the universe that philosophers have mentioned in their works[13].

Analyze and evaluation

When we evaluate Ghazali's critiques of Ibn Sina's first argument, it appears that Ghazali was unable to provide an answer to Ibn Sina's argument and for this reason, rather than providing an answer to the fundamental question of why the world must be a time-based creature, it has led and raised unneeded questions to incorrect results such as the separation of the effect from the absolute cause and the distinction without a difference. First of all, the claim that the axiom must be accepted by everyone is an unacceptable statement. It is not necessary for something to be an axiom that everyone believes in it and it is an axiom that it exists. But sometimes it happens that a person is unaware of an obvious and necessary thing due to lack of attention to himself / herself (consciousness, mental health, wellbeing, lack of doubt and irrational activity)[14].

If we assume that the impossibility of the old will being a part of something's formation is a theoretical issue that requires careful thought, consideration, and argument, in this instance, according to Ibn Sina, if a cause is an absolute cause, then existence is an effect, this effect will be dependent on such a cause, and it is impossible for such a cause to exist while its effect does not and because this requires the separation of the cause from the effect and because God's relationship with the universe is of the type of relationship between the cause and the effect, in this case, the form, the absence of the universe indicates that God is outright, which with the presence of that feature, the transcendental God becomes the cause of all things, and with its existence, the existence of the effect becomes necessary[15].

In addition to these, Ibn Sina has provided additional reasons that are in accordance with Wajib al-Wujud and analysis of its attributes and states and he argued Wajib al-Wujud is preexistent, his creation cannot be preexistent because the universe is God's blessing, God is a constant benefactor, and his blessings are unceasing. It is impossible that there is no creation from eternity and then all its creation begins in a moment. In addition, it has been proven that Wajib al-Wujud is completely necessary in all aspects, and being outright indicates his deficiency[16]. In fact, if we notice to the fact that the universe is intrinsically Mumkin al-Wujud and it exists in the direction of Wajib al-Wujud, and this does not conflict with its Qidam (pre-eternity), we will find that the universe can always exist and that it always requires God's creation and grace.

Second argument:

According to philosophers, God's priority over the universe is either based on essence or on time. Priority is equivalent to cause over effect and number one over number two in

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[13] Mian Mohammad Sharif, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, Volume 2, (Tehran: Academic Publishing Center: 1365), 22.

[14] Mohammad Reza Muzaffar, *Logic*, translated by Ali Shirvani, Vol. 1, 12th edition, (Iran: Dar El Alam Publications: 2012), 37-38.

[15] Hossein bin Abdullah Ibn Sina, *Al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat* , by Mahmoud Shahabi, (Tehran: Tehran University Press: 1960), 114-115.

[16] Hossein bin Abdullah Ibn Sina, *Al-Najat*, second edition, (Tehran: Mortazavi Publishing House: 1985), 228.

terms of substance. God and the universe must both be creatures or equally old in such a hierarchy. The universe is old because God is old.

Priority over time refers to the idea that there existed a period of time before the universe was created, so that time has an end but no beginning. As a result, there has to be an infinitely long period of time before this time which would lead to a contradiction. So, the time that is the measure and amount of movement, must be old. Therefore, according to the philosophers, the universe is younger than God and God have priority over it. That is to say, although these two might have been together during the existence of time, God is prior in terms of essence rather than in terms of time, similar to the priority of number one over number two, which is a natural priority[17].

Critique of the mentioned argument from Ghazali's point of view

In his Critique of the second argument, Ghazali complains the "being without any preceding nonexistence" of universe –Qidam- because it is entirely improbable to assume that there was time before the universe. Because time is a creature, human beings have the same difficulty in understanding the limitation of time as they have with the limitation of objects. If we say there is no higher world above the surface and there is no dimension longer than that, the imagination will not accept it. For instance, the upper side is a portion of the surface that has an upper surface, leading people to believe there is a place beyond the world, whether that place is empty or full[18].

According to Ghazali, time is a creature, and there was no time at all before then. On the basis of this, it is evident that God has priority over the universe. This implies that prior to his presence, the universe and time did not exist, and the meaning of priority is his solitariness in existence[19]. When Ghazali claims that God has priority over universe and time, he means that before the universe existed, he did. Now that the universe exists, he does as well. In other words, the world was created by the old will, which at that time its existence was required; Non-existence has persisted for as long as it persisted, and existence has started from where it started, up to that point, existence was not willed, but at the same time it came into being and has been subject to the old will[20].

Analyze and evaluation

In assessing Ghazali's critique of Ibn Sina's second argument, we must conclude that he is mistaken when he claims that "there was God and there was no universe, and then there was God and there was also the universe" without taking into account the third entity known as time; Because Ghazali expresses the creation of universe after nonexistence in any way, he is still forced to acknowledge the existence of time before the universe. This is because, as Ibn Sina points out, anything that was created after nonexistence has a past in which it did not previously exist, and this priority, which means nonexistence over existence, is not inherent but rather is time-based. Ghazali's claim about the imaginary of time remains unfinished. However, Ghazali is mistaken about God being posterior to the universe because priority and posteriority are two mutually exclusive concepts with same type. Therefore, if God's priority

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[17] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 96.
[18] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 96.
[19] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 96-97.
[20] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 80.

over the universe is not a time-based priority, his posteriority should not be time-based either. Of course, Ghazali does not believe that God's priority over the universe is a time-based priority, which is correct and right.

Third argument:

The existence of the universe is Wajib al-Wujud (necessary existence) or Mumkin al-Wujud (possible existence) or Momtane al-Wujud (impossible existence). The second and third assumptions are not possible in the real world of events, so the first assumption Mumkin al-Wujud remains. Because it is impossible for anything to first be impossible and then become possible, it means that the existence of universe was possible (Mumkin) before it existed, and because this possibility has no origin and is permanently fixed, the universe has always been Mumkin al-Wujud (possible existence). When possible is always possible (Mumkin), it will always be the same. As a result, whenever its continuous existence is possible (Mumkin), it will not be impossible, as if it were impossible, we would not be able to claim that its continuous existence is possible, and consequently, we would not be able to claim that it is a permanent possibility; When we can't say that possibility is permanent, it will be true that possibility has a beginning; and when the beginning of it is correct, it means that it was impossible prior to that. Finally, we will come to the conclusion that there was a present time in which the universe was not possible (Mumkin) at that time and God was not capable of it[21].

Critique of the mentioned argument from Ghazali's point of view

In criticizing the third argument, Ghazali states that: from the perspective of creation, the universe has always been possible (Mumkin), hence it is inevitable that it was created when he decided, furthermore, if we assume that the universe has existed from the eternity without beginning, it will not be a created case, therefore possibility will be the reason for the existence of universe. The likelihood that the universe may have been created in terms of priority and posteriority is unclear, but it is obvious that this is a created case. The universe is therefore undoubtedly possible (Mumkin) as they claim, and it is a body with a finite surface, but its values in terms of bigness and smallness are unclear[22].

Analyze and evaluation

In assessing Ghazali's critique of Ibn Sina's third argument, we must admit that, rather than offering a solution to Ibn Sina's issues, Ghazali again reiterates his prior, untested claim that the world is created case. from the perspective of creation, the universe has always been possible (Mumkin), hence it is inevitable that it was created when he decided, furthermore, if we assume that the universe has existed from the eternity without beginning, it will not be a created case, therefore possibility will be the reason for the existence of universe.

Ibn Sina and Ghazali disagree on the origin of the universe, whereas Ibn Sina claims that universe has existed since the beginning of time, but Ghazali claims that universe was created by God, the emergence of universe from nonexistence cannot be seen as a rejection of Ibn Sina's claim or as evidence that the universe emerged from nonexistence; because it begs the question to discuss such a topic. Instead of restating his position, Ghazali should respond

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[21] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 104.
[22] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 104.

to the question of why the universe, which is inherently Mumken al-wujud and relied on the impossibility of distinction without a difference, needs to be considered superior, and why didn't create before, as the absence of the universe has indicated?[23]

Fourth argument:

Material takes priority over any occurrence because occurrence does not require material. Therefore, although the appearance, accidents, and attributes of an events over material are occurrences, but the material itself is not an occurrence. The issue is that every occurrence before Huduth (coming into coming into being after nonexistence) is either Wajib al-Wujud or Mumkin al-Wujud or Mumtane al-Wujud (impossible existence). Because impossible existence in essence does not exist in any way, it is impossible for any occurrence to occur before or after coming into being after nonexistence; It is also impossible for an occurrence to be Wajib-al-wujud because Wajib-al-wujud is never disappeared. Since the Mumkin al-Wujud is a relative description and is not inherent, it must have an origin to be attributed to it; since an origin other than the material of existence does not have it, it is attributed to it. As a result, it turns out that the Mumkin al-Wujud was inherent and indicating that occurrence existed before its existence. And when we state that a material is open to heat, cold, darkness, whiteness, movement, or stillness, we are saying that these qualities and occurrence of changes are potential for the material; therefore, the phrase "being possible for matter" is descriptive[24].

Critique of the mentioned argument from Ghazali's point of view

Ghazali responds by saying that possibility –Mumkin-, disagreement –Imtena-, and necessary –Wajib- are rational judgements and do not require a being to be defined by it. This is in response to the fourth argument's critique. Ghazali offers three arguments in support of this claim. The first is that if a possibility requires an existing thing to be added to it before it can be said to be its possibility, the disagreement will also require an existing thing before it can be said to be its disagreement. In contrast, the impossibility is non-existent in its fundamental nature, and there is no material that cannot be overcome so that the disagreement is attributed to that material.

Second, wisdom indicates that before blackness and whiteness existed, they were both possible (Mumkin). If this possibility is given to an object that contains both of these attributes, it signifies that the object may be either black or white; in this case, neither the attribute of whiteness itself nor its description are possible (Mumkin); only the object is. The wisdom does not need to assume the essence of a being in order to assign the possibility to it, as was declared clearly by reason and argument in this way.

Thirdly, according to philosophers, human ego has separate essences that are unrelated to or distinct from physical bodies or other forms of material. According to Ibn Sina and the Peripatetic philosophers, these egos are occurrences and the possibility takes priority over their occurrence because they have no an essence and material. This means that their

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[23] Hamed Alizadeh, Tayyaba Heydari, review and evaluation of Ghazali's critique on Ibn Sina in the issue of the Huduth and Qidam of the universe based on Avicennism principles, *Journal of Religious Thought of Shiraz University*, 17, No.1, (Spring: 2017): 81

[24] Alizadeh, Heydari, Review and Evaluation of Ghazali's Critique on Ibn Sina in the Issue of the Huduth and Qidam of the Universe based on Avicennism," 70.

possibility is descriptive rather than relative, and it is irrelevant to the subject's or the absolute power. Then what is the conclusion?

Analyze and evaluation

It seems that Ghazali's critique of Ibn Sina's first argument is a correct critique. Ibn Sina claims in his argument that the possibility is aware of the material that contains its possibility and that inherent possibility and possibility of potentiality are involved[25].

Ibn Sina argued that every occurrence before it occurs is either necessary (Wajib al-wujud), impossible (Mumtane al-wujud) or possible (Mumkin al- wujud) at the introduction to his argument to show that every occurrence is aware of its material. There is no doubt that the definition of possibility (Mumkin) offered here in contrast to necessary (Wajib) and disagreement (Imtena) refers to inherent possibility, Ibn Sina thus proved the inherent possibility. While in the claimed case, their integration has been caused by the possibility of potentiality. Remembering that Ibn Sina said at the beginning that the occurrence is possible (Mumkin) before it occurs. Due to the necessary (Wajib) and disagreement (Imtena) it faces, this possibility (Mumkin) is the same as inherent possibility[26].

Despite this, Ibn Sina's aim has been to demonstrate that every occurrence is aware of the material that underlies the power of its existence which is the possibility of potentiality; He must believe in the priori material even in incorporeality cases if his aim was to demonstrate the inherent possibility. Because every being, whether incorporeal or material, have inherent possibility, incorporeal groups lack possibility of potentiality while material ones do[27]. Of course, there was not any discussion about possibility of potentiality before the Ibn Sina; Sohrevardi seems to have been the first to do so[28].

Ibn Sina's arguments upon Qidam (pre-eternity)

Ibn Sina discusses the preexistence of the universe or inherent occurrence and Qidam (pre-eternity) in the form of two arguments, one of which is "posteriori argument or demonstration through the cause" and the other is "priori argument or demonstration not through the cause":

Posteriori argument or demonstration through the cause:

In this argument, it is claimed that since the Wajib-ul-Wujud is eternal, His creation cannot be eternal because God is an unchangeable source of blessing and excellence who is inseparably gracious. This is in accordance with the Wajib al-Wujud argument and the analysis of God's characteristics and states. It is impossible that there could be no creation from beginning and that creation would then start all at once and in a single instant. Wajib al-Wujud is an inherent and comprehensive feature in all respects, and there are no restrictions in it regarding the possibility and expected state. In other words, just as God's essence is necessary (Wajib), likewise his knowledge, power, life, will, and grace are necessary (Wajib); as a result, God's grace is eternal and constant, and he is eternally excellence. As a result,

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[25] Ahmad Beheshti, *Manufacturing and Inventing*, second edition, (Tehran: Tehran University Press: 2015), 153.

[26] Beheshti, *Manufacturing and Inventing*, 153-154.

[27] Ibn Sina, *Al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat*, 117.

[28] Morteza Motahari, *Collection of Works; Detailed Account of The System*, (Sadra publishing, 2012) X, 212-214

there cannot be a separation between him and his creation. Regarding Posteriori argument, Ibn Sina made the following claim in his book of Al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat:

> *"Inherent wajib al-wujud is inherent wajib al-wujud in all its fundamental characteristics and circumstances"*[29].

The basic attributes—knowledge, power, life, will, grace—are the same inherent attributes that constitute both circumstances and characteristics. By mentioning the characteristics and circumstances, Ibn Sina sought to eliminate the secondary attributes of God's action[30].

Priori argument or demonstration not through the cause:

In this way, it is claimed that there was nothing that affected God's work and the priorities, he created before the universe was created and in its state of non-existence. This is because there are no distinctions between taking lives and none of them can be deemed superior to one another. There was simply no time before creation. Ibn Sina's statement in Al-Isharat about the priori argument is as follows:

> *"In pure non-existence, neither the subject is in priority in order to not create anything, nor are objects first created from the subject, nor is their opposing condition in priority"*[31].

As a result, there is no obstacle from cause and even from effect for playing its role. If the universe is to be created according to the aforementioned scenario, it should be created instantly, and if God cannot create the universe, it should never be created. Therefore, it is impossible to imagine a change on both sides (subject and action)[32].

The universe can always exist and will always require God's grace and creation if we are aware of the fact that it is intrinsically Mumkin al- Wujud, that its Wajib al Wujud is dependent on another, that his necessity for existence is Wajib al Wujud, and such a thing does not contradict with his being without any prior nonexistence - Qidam.

God's knowledge of details

The issue of God's knowledge is one of a total of twenty issues that Ghazali mentions in the book of Tahaft as contradictions of the religion of Ibn Sina and other philosophers. The philosophy that holds that God only knows the generalities and is unaware of the details is what disturbs Ghazali the most. When he discusses this issue, Ghazali especially refers to Ibn Sina's statements regarding the various points of view that have been opted for in his works. Later on, these issues will be discussed more in detail.

"They all agree with this point of view. There is a group among them, and it is clearly obvious that they believe that God knows nothing except his own essence. And another group also claim that he is aware of all things, in such a way that his knowledge cannot be fit into the form of time and the past, the future, or the present can't influence his knowledge and at the same time they claim that even he is aware of the particle that is in the sky and the earth

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[29] Ibn Sina, *Al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat*, 117.
[30] Beheshti, *Manufacturing and Inventing*, 278
[31] Ibn Sina, *Al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat*, 117.
[32] Seyed Yahya Yathrebi, *Analytical-Critical History of Islamic Philosophy*, (Tehran: Islamic Culture and Thought Research Institute Publishing Organization: 2008), 589.

because he knows the details in the form of generalities. This is also the position that Ibn Sina took"[33].

Ghazali claims that the philosophers agree with this idea, and hereby they harm the foundations of the Sharia -Islamic laws; Since its meaning is as follows, for instance, when Zayd has disobeyed God or rebelled, the omniscient God is unaware of what is happening in his life because He does not know Zayd properly, and because Zayd later acted in this manner, and when he does not know a person, he does not know his current state and actions, but he is not aware of Zaid's heresy and his Islam, and he only sees the general[34].

Analyze and evaluation

It seems that Ghazali rejected the rules of trustworthiness and unable to understand the depth of Ibn Sina's arguments. Ghazali has a human-like image of God, and this false perception is what has led him to make fallacies. He believes that there is no distinction between God and man in terms of awareness and knowledge, and the instances he provides confirm this idea.

It is not necessary to reject God's knowledge in order to accept Ibn Sina's claim that He is unaware of the details. Since knowledge is constantly dependent on what is already known, knowledge will also change if the known changes, and since there is no possibility of change in the holy characteristic of the blessed and exalted God, Ibn Sina claims that knowledge of generalities requires knowledge of details and that knowledge of generalities validates knowledge of details through knowledge of truth about generalities. But Ghazali did not want to pay attention to Ibn Sina's novel terms, therefore he labeled him as a Kafir[35].

On the basis of the causal chain that extends through every aspect of existence, Ibn Sina highlights and proves God's knowledge of it all. But because he analyzes this knowledge, which is more advanced than our common knowledge, therefore he refers this attribute of God only belongs to him. While our knowledge of details and knowledge of variables is incomplete and variable, our knowledge of truth is universal and constant instead. It is obvious that understanding of this analysis requires tremendous accuracy and intelligence.

Ibn Sina believes that as God is omniscient, he is aware of both his own essence and entities other than it. In many of his writings, he has addressed this particular issue. Ibn Sina frankly clarifies the issue related to the claim that God's knowledge is similar to human knowledge in the book of Al-Najat (1264, pp. 593-594)-rescue-and he also addresses it in the book of Al-Taliqat (1379, p. 142)-suspensions- that God is aware of his essence and the necessity of his essence; and due to this, he also knows the creatures that arise from him. He also mentioned the source of this knowledge, stating that it was wholly his own and not something he had learned from elsewhere or that required the influence of others. He builds his argument based on the following introductions:

> *First introduction:* God praises the divine essence of the universe. *Second introduction:* The basic cause of everything is God. As a result, knowing an object's cause and absolute cause necessitates knowing that object.

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[33] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 192.

[34] Al-Ghazali, *Tahaft al-Falasafeh*, 194-195.

[35] Abdullah Nasri, *an Explanation of Thoughts Regarding Discourses About the History of Islamic Philosophy*, (Tehran: Soroush Publications: 2000), 181.

In other words, the knowledge of the absolute cause of everything is a part of God's knowledge to his essence. Additionally, understanding an object's effect is necessary to understand its cause[36].

The proof of the first introduction is clear, because God's knowledge of his essence is obvious. Since there was only one creator—the supreme creator—involved in the creation of things before they were created, the proof of second introduction is also obvious. As a result, only God is owner of creation of everything and its origin.

According to this interpretation of knowledge, anyone who does not believe that God has any knowledge beyond himself is rejecting God's wisdom in light of his own being. Furthermore, this interpretation of knowledge justifies God's knowledge in such a way that nothing is missing from his view of things. The uncreated entities and even entities that won't be created are known to God. He is aware of times. His knowledge is constant regardless of when and where objects are created, and furthermore, it is fallacious that by creating them, he will be led to a new knowledge; rather, his knowledge of "before things" and "after things" is the same.

Ibn Sina interpreted this to mean "knowledge in a comprehensive form" and assimilated it to a science that astronomers acquire by observing the solar eclipse and lunar eclipse and a science that never fades away.

Conclusion

In his discussions within the book Tahaft, Ghazali extensively relies on the Huduth argument, particularly the Kalam cosmological argument, to establish various aspects such as the existence of God, the origin of the universe without prior nonexistence, and God's knowledge. His central argument revolves around the universe coming into existence after nonexistence. However, Ghazali's explanations concerning the temporal occurrence of the universe raise questions. He acknowledges the concept of time before the universe, leading to a contradiction in his claim that God existed and not the universe, and then both God and the world came into being.

In stark contrast, Ibn Sina diverges from Ghazali's approach. Ibn Sina does not employ the Huduth argument to examine the existence of the universe's creator or the universe itself without preceding nonexistence or God's knowledge. Instead, he assesses these aspects through possibilities, emphasizing that every possibility or occurrence inherently comes into existence after nonexistence, making it as old as existence without any prior nonexistence. He underscores the absence of a cause or an occurrence as the foundation for this possibility. Moreover, Ibn Sina argues that the reason for an occurrence cannot mark the beginning of time, rendering the temporal Huduth argument invalid. Upon analyzing Ibn Sina's perspective, it becomes evident that Ghazali, despite his theological concerns, misinterprets the core tenets of Ibn Sina's argument in Tahaft al-Falasafah. This misinterpretation highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding of philosophical concepts, emphasizing the importance of accurate comprehension in theological discourse.

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[36] Hossein bin Abdullah Ibn Sina, *al-Shifa*, research by Hassanzadeh Amoli, (Tehran: Islamic Development Organization Printing Center: 1997), 385/ Hossein bin Abdullah Ibn Sina, *al-Tanbihat wa al-Isharat*, narration by Khwaja Nasir al-Din Tusi, research by Dr. Suleiman Dunya, (Beirut: Al Numan Institute: 1983), 278.

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