"Imam Al-Ghazali's Methods of Inference in Islamic Beliefs"

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to explain Imam al-Ghazali's approach in deducing the Islamic beliefs, with a statement of the differences and similarities between his method and the different approaches of the other Islamic theological schools that were concerned with the study of the faith, and the extent of its influence on his thoughts, in order to clarify his methodology, showing its characteristic.

The importance of the research stems from Al-Ghazali's position as one of the leading scholars in the Islamic world, with his intellectual output having an impact not only on the Islamic world, but also on Western thought, in addition to Al-Ghazali's emergence in the theological sciences and his responses to the deviant sects and schools, which is obvious in his books in the field of faith.

In this research, I followed the inductive method by following the views of al-Ghazali in his various books. Then I worked on reviewing the texts, analyzing them and clarifying them, taking into account the timeline of his writings. Finally, I deduced the characteristics of his approach.

The study was divided into three chapters. In the first chapter I introduced al-Ghazali, his era and his intellectual heritage. The second chapter studied the relationship between al-Ghazali and Sufism, indicating the points of agreement and differences between his approach and the approach of some Sufi orders. In the third chapter I highlight his responses to the philosophers, his affiliation to the Ash'ari school, and his thoughts about theology.

I conclude at the end of the research that it was obvious the uniqueness of al-Ghazali's approach and its distinctive characteristics, clarifying his position of the theological schools, while his approach intersects in some aspects with the approach of the al-Ash'ari school and Sufism, its contradicting them in some cases.with a denial of philosopher's methodology, which depended totally on mind.