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**A Study on Seyyed Jalaluddin Ashtiani`s Critics on Ghazali's Objections
Regarding Knowledge of Particulars by God**

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Abstract

The problem of divine knowledge with respect to particulars is one of the three issues that on Abu Hamed al-Ghazâlî's opinion is denied by philosophers. Philosophes are accused of heresy by Ghazali on the issue of knowledge of particular by God. In this article, it is attempted to examine al-Ghazâlî's view on God`s knowledge of particulars and his allegations that philosophers have denied that God knows particulars. The method in this paper is analytical and descriptive, and the purpose in writing this article is to explain Sayyed Jalaluddin Ashtiani's criticisms regarding al-Ghazali's criticisms and arguments. The authors conclude in their studies that, contrary to Ghazali's opinion, Islamic scholars do not in any way deny that God does not have knowledge of particulars, rather they, like theologians, hold that God knows both universal and particulars, in detail. The difference that philosophers have with theologians is that according to philosophers, God`s knowledge belongs to the particulars through knowing their causes, in the sense that f God`s knowledge of particulars is universal and unchanged.

Keywords: Ashtiani, Ghazali, philosophers, Avicenna, God's Science, General Science.

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Problem Statement

Sayed Jalaluddin Ashtiani, is the first philosopher of the Sadrian school of thought to respond to al-Ghazali's objections. Ashtiani's enterprise is appreciated as he was the first philosopher who deal with Ghazali's objections. His response to Ghazali in a book entitled as " Objection to Tahafot of Tahafot" is based on Sadra's thought and Islamic mysticism, and in some case his response is given by using Shi'ite narrations.

God's knowledge of Particulars

God knowledge of particular is placed at the heart of al-Ghazâlî's criticisms of philosophers. According to Ghazali, philosophers denied God's knowledge of particular and by doing so they have destroyed one of the Islamic basic beliefs. He writes: " and this God's lack of knowledge of particulars look like a law that all philosophers accepted it and they have destroyed the root of religions, for, according to this law they hold that whenever any individual, for instances, Zaid commit any sin or obey God's command, God does not know this individual's states as God have no knowledge of sensible things and individual being and the practices taken place by individuals are also particular and hence are beyond the limit of God's knowledge. He also states that this law means even that God's knowledge does not belong even to one's faith or blasphemy and God only knows people's faith or blasphemy in general way and lacking the knowledge with regard to individual's faith and heresy. (Tahfat al-Falasaf, p. 158)

Reply to al-Ghazali's Objections

This objection is important and since Ashtiani did not deal with it we aim to deal with it in this paper. It seems that Ghazali did not perceive Avicenna's view. Here the main difference between Avicenna and Ghazali has to been seen in basic assumption they have adapted about God. Ghazali, as a matter of fact suffered from anthropomorphic concept about God which led him to commit a mistake. According to Ghazali there is no difference between God and man in attributes such as knowledge and contemplation on example given by Ghazali reveal this point. But Avicenna make at first a distinction between the term knowledge and the term science and accordingly make distinction between knowledge belong to God and knowledge belong to man. However, Ghazali was not possibly aware of such distinction or did not perceive Avicenna's view properly. According to Avicenna man's knowledge is followed by its known object and by any change in known object the knowledge itself change. Contrary to man's knowledge, God's knowledge is not followed to its known object and it is not subject to any change by the changes take place in known object. (Al-Ta'liyat, p. 15 and 122-123)

In continuing his critique of philosophers about the God's knowledge with respect to particulars, al-Ghazali first describes the philosophers' expression and then critiques it. In part thirteenth he begins by this title:

"This issue is about the philosophers' discourse who hold that God has no knowledge to particulars that are divided to past, present and future due to their temporal character. "(Tahfat al-Falasfeh, p. 155).

Some believe that God only has knowledge of himself, and others, like Ibn Sina, say that God has knowledge of himself and others. (Ibid)

Ghazali writes: "When the sun eclipses and disappears and it raises again, there are three conditions for the eclipse's state: first, the state in which the sun was extinct, the second, expectation of its rapid emergence; and the third, being in the state of eclipse. In each of these triple situations, we have three types of knowledge: 1. We know that the eclipse has disappeared and will soon raise again. 2. We know that Eclipse has existed.3. But we know that it does not exist. "(Ibid, p. 156) Ghazali says that these three kinds of knowledge are different from one another, and as they gather in one place, it changes the creature it possesses. For anyone who has knowledge of them, if it became known after the sun has risen that the

eclipse already exists, would certainly be ignorant and unaware in this state. For anyone who has knowledge of them, if it became known after the sun has risen that the eclipse already exists, would certainly be ignorant and unaware in this state. If it were not known at the time of the eclipse, then it would be ignorant. (Ibid) It is clear that al-Ghazali considered that God's knowledge to be followed by its known object and also considered him to be passive, not active. Al-Ghazali adds, however, that Ibn Sina thought that God was aware of the eclipse and all its attributes and effects, but not in the temporal way of knowing, rather in the everlasting unchanged knowledge by means of knowing its causes and objects of course. According to Ibn Sina, there is no mention of the primordial knowledge that was used by Ghazali. According to Avicenna the God's knowledge is rational (as opposed to tangible) which is universal and unchangeable.

Method

This research has been conducted by descriptive-analytical method and the philosophical views discussed are cited by reference to the main sources and then analyzed according to logical criteria.

Findings and Results

Ashtiani state that there is no disagreement among Muslim philosophers on the quantity of God's knowledge with respect to corporeal and non-corporeal, particulars and universals, and the disagreement is seen only about the quality of God's knowledge. This reconciliation is a response to al-Ghazali's claim that all philosophers have all denied the knowledge of God with regard to particulars, and they agree on this matter. We quoted his view earlier.

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