Al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad [addendum] Encyclopedia Article

Al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad [addendum]

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Contents

Al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad [addendum] Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad [addendum].....3

Al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad [addendum]

For comparisons with the western Christian tradition, Augustine comes more readily to mind than Aquinas, yet al-Ghazālī fulfills something of the role of each. He realized that understanding can be perfected in a faithful response to divine revelation, and that human reason can elucidate that response by showing the way through many pitfalls. Al-Ghazālī is aware of the deleterious effect of a simple reading of the scriptures, and so helps his readers to a sophisticated yet respectful grasp of the Word of God in the Qurʾan, all the while insisting that variant readings need to be discerned by careful intellectual examination. He is acutely aware of the way in which ordinary philosophical categories need to be stretched to accommodate the "creator of heaven and earth," and so of the necessary negative moments in using the names which the Qurʾan itself gives to God. Al-Ghazālī's recommended way to engage in that negative moment is via Sufi meditation, which can alert both mind and heart to their inadequacy as well as bolster both to continue the journey toward proximity with the divine. In this respect he can also be favorably compared with Moses Maimonides, who was probably cognizant of at least some of al-Ghazālī's writings.

See Also

Al-Ghazālī, Ahmad.

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