

## **Examining Human Perfection in the thought of Abu Hamid al-Ghazali and Abraham Maimonides**

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Muhammad al-Ghazali (d.1111) is a prominent and influential character in the Islamic history who influenced later Muslim and non-Muslim generations. Al-Ghazali is also well-known with his strong emphasis on mystical experience. Hence perfection of human beings is the main argument in his works. Al-Ghazali influenced later Muslim scholars as well as other traditions such as Judaism and Christianity. There are plenty of works which discuss al-Ghazali's influence on Islamic tradition while not much works is existing to investigate his influence on other traditions, in particular Jewish tradition. Specifically, the concept of human perception needs to be investigated in al-Ghazali and Jewish tradition. Therefore, this research will investigate the concept of human perfection in the thought of Muhammad al-Ghazali and Abraham Maimonides and will compare and contrast both scholars' views. Understanding of religious practice and theology, philosophy, and mysticism are the key factors to understand human perfection according to al-Ghazali and Maimonides. This study will compare and contrast al-Ghazali's and Abraham Maimonides' views in terms of human perfection in three main areas which are religious practice (Sharia and Halakha), philosophy and mysticism (*tasawwuf*).

This research hypothesises that Al-Ghazali's main argument of human perfection also reflects Abraham Maimonides' work *Kifayat al-Abidin*. Al-Ghazali draw the road of the perfection in his works and laid down a path of ethical and intellectual perfection of human beings. On the other hand, Abraham Maimonides produced books to emphasise the importance of human perfection both ethically and intellectually. *Insan al-kamil* and *shlemut* are central concepts of human perfection in both scholars works respectively though their methods look varied in some respects.

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