

modern audience with the ideas of this great Muslim intellectual, as it represents one of his last works, as well as a summation of his thought and an attempt to reach the broadest possible readership.

This collection of excerpts from the *Alchemy* is based on an English translation made by Claud Field in 1910. Just as an earlier translation of this work had been made from a Turkish text,<sup>36</sup> Field worked, unfortunately, from an uncritical Urdu version of the text rather than the original Persian. Despite this, Field's translation has two great merits: It renders the text in very felicitous, although pleasantly archaic, English prose, and it translates the whole of the four introductory chapters of the *Alchemy*, thus making available that section of the *Alchemy* which has no parallel in the *Revivification*.

For this revision of Field's translation, I have compared his text to the appropriate sections of the recently published Persian edition. In contrast to the Persian text, Field's translation is considerably condensed in parts as it omits various redundant phrases, traditions, and anecdotes cited in the Persian text. Generally speaking, the opening and closing parts of each chapter are very close to the Persian text, but the middle sections tend to be abbreviated, sometimes to as little as a third of their original size. All in all, however, Field's translation is faithful to the Persian original and certainly does no violence to the essence of Ghazzâlî's message.

I have therefore limited myself to making only minor changes to the Field translation. I have corrected its typographical errors and changed the spelling of names and terms to conform with an acceptable modern system for the transliteration of the Arabic script. I have also reorganized the sequence of some of the chapters and altered the division of a

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<sup>36</sup>H. A. Homes, *The Alchemy of Happiness by M. al-Ghazzali the Mohammedan Philosopher* (Albany, 1873).

number of paragraphs to make them conform to that in the Persian edition of the *Alchemy*. Finally, Field's annotations to the text were both few and inadequate; I have therefore omitted them and substituted my own footnotes to identify the people and quotations mentioned in the text, to clarify any points which might prove puzzling to readers unfamiliar with Ghazzâlî and Islamic thought, and to note any major discrepancies between the translation and the published text.

In conclusion, I must make some apology for presuming to offer what is, after all, no more than a revision of an English translation of an Urdu abridgment of a Persian recension of a book first written in Arabic almost a thousand years ago. To my mind, there could hardly be better testimony to Ghazzâlî's universal appeal than this polyglot transmission of his writing. If, as I hope, the clarity and brilliance of his thought can survive so many layers of obfuscation to reach the modern reader, it is yet another testimony to the magnitude of his genius.

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